

Annex 3

Assessment of Evaluation Areas Against the Technical Designation Criteria for National Park and AONB

1. Assessment of Evaluation Areas against the technical criteria

1.1. This annex summarises the technical assessment of each Evaluation Area against the criteria of

- a) Natural beauty (taking into account wildlife and cultural heritage) and
- b) Opportunities for open-air recreation.

1.2. It goes on to recommend which Evaluation Areas meet these criteria to a sufficient degree in order to be treated as Candidate Areas for inclusion in a proposed designation. Sections 4.15 to 4.36 of the Guidance for Assessing Landscapes for Designation (“the Guidance”) explains how we apply these criteria. Table 2 of the Guidance summarises this:

Appears likely to meet technical criteria for:		
Natural Beauty	Open-air recreation	Candidate Area for...
yes	yes	National Park or AONB
yes	no	AONB only
no	yes	Not a Candidate Area
no	no	Not a Candidate Area

1.3. The consideration as to whether it is desirable to designate any Candidate Areas as either National Park or AONB is presented in Annex 4.

2. Evaluation Area 1: BIRKBECK FELLS TO WHINFELL

2.1. **Recommendation:** The majority of this area has considerable natural beauty and opportunities for open air recreation and is recommended as a candidate area for designation as National Park or AONB. The weight of evidence is strongest in relation to the core of the area with areas of transition around the fringes.

2.2. **Natural Beauty:** The area forms the eastern edge of the Cumbria High Fells. It has much in common with the landscape to the west of the A6 within the National Park. Overall, it has great natural beauty. Landscape and scenic quality are high, especially the aesthetically striking contrast between the open moorland with its rugged scenery, dramatic views and colourful fell vegetation and the two sheltered dales, with their more intimate and complex patterns and colours. The fells at the core of the area are relatively wild, due to their sense of remoteness and lack of human settlement, despite the nearby main roads and railway. This also contributes to a sense of tranquillity. Natural and cultural features such as small patches of broadleaved woodland, hay meadows, sheepfolds and patterns of ancient enclosure walls in the lower dales contribute to the beauty of the landscape.

2.3. **Open-air recreation:** The area has considerable recreational value. It has good road links north and south, and rights of way are easily accessible,

particularly those through the dales. There are also extensive tracts of access land on the fell, of a similar scale to that at Bannisdale Fell within the National Park, providing access to areas of cultural and natural heritage interest. The Coast to Coast mountain bike route is planned to pass through Borrowdale and there are also proposed improvements for horse riders.

3. Evaluation Area 2a: HELSINGTON BARROWS TO SIZERGH and THE LYTH VALLEY

- 3.1. **Recommendation:** The majority of this area has sufficient natural beauty and opportunities for open air recreation to be recommended as a candidate area for designation as National Park or AONB. The weight of evidence is strongest in relation to the limestone ridge; it is weaker in relation to the adjoining Lyth valley, although part of this area may be suitable for inclusion to the extent that it forms part of a wider landscape that meets the designation criteria (“wash-over”).
- 3.2. **Natural Beauty:** This is the southern continuation of a prominent limestone ridge, which begins within the Lake District National Park. It is of high landscape and scenic quality with interesting limestone features and a strong and distinctive sense of place. Ancient woodland clings to the steep rocky west facing escarpment and a mix of woodland and parkland provides a contrasting experience to the south and east. Long distance panoramic views can be obtained of the Lake District fells and the sea at Morecambe Bay, and to the west the view is dominated by the low-lying mosslands of the Lyth Valley and the parallel and similar ridge of Whitbarrow.
- 3.3. The Lyth Valley is a flat flood plain landscape with river, levees and drainage ditches. Much of the area’s mosses have been drained. The improved pastures are divided by hedgerows and drainage ditches, interspersed with occasional flood-meadow, remnant moss and wet woodland. Landscape condition is mixed, with a considerable amount of hedging replaced by post and wire fencing. At close range, scenic quality is not high, and the Lyth Valley itself does not sufficiently meet the natural beauty criterion. Nevertheless, when viewing the flat, wet valley in the context of the imposing limestone scarps to either side, the effect is impressive, drawing the eye north across glacial moraines to views of the High Fells, or south to Morecambe Bay.
- 3.4. **Open-air recreation:** Although relatively small in extent the area is of high value for recreation. It contains a large proportion of well used open access land, common land or National Trust land and a good rights of way network all of which provide an easy way to reach relatively elevated areas with spectacular panoramic views and opportunities to enjoy an interesting and rare limestone scarp landscape. The Lyth Valley is accessible through minor roads and tracks. There is considerable potential here for interpretation of its natural heritage and tradition of Damson growing.

4. Evaluation Area 2b: RIVER KENT AND LEVENS

- 4.1. **Recommendation:** The majority of this area has insufficient natural beauty and opportunities for open air recreation to be recommended as a candidate area for designation as National Park or AONB. However, in the area around Levens Hall and Deer Park there is a strong weight of evidence in relation to both natural beauty and recreation.
- 4.2. **Natural Beauty:** The River Kent to Levens area contains the gently sloping, lower east-facing side of the Helsington Barrows ridge (see EA2a) and part of

the valley sides and floor of the River Kent. In the designed parkland of Levens Hall the juxtaposition of pasture, majestic avenues, woodland and the steep wooded banks of the River Kent creates a localised area of exceptional scenic value. The remainder of this evaluation area does not have especially high scenic value. The area is of reasonable landscape quality being typically improved and semi-improved pasture, contained by a network of drystone walls. Hedgerows and trees also occur on the lower slopes towards the Kent Valley. Substantial areas of broadleaved woodland, historic parkland including Levens Deer Park, associated with historic literature e.g. Thomas West's guidebook on the Lakes 1778, and the course of the River Kent, all add interest to this landscape. Two main roads (the A590 and A591) are dominant in parts of the area, although away from the roads this is still a relatively tranquil rural landscape.

- 4.3. **Open-air recreation:** In terms of recreation, the area of Levens Deer Park provides excellent access to an outstanding landscape and a significant recreational opportunity. In the remainder of this evaluation area there is no open access land and only a limited length of public rights of way, which do not offer an experience of landscapes of particular quality, or of notable relative wildness or tranquillity. It is also fragmented by the road network.
- 4.4. Evaluation Area 3: THE ORTON FELLS
- 4.5. **Recommendation:** This area has sufficient natural beauty and opportunities for open air recreation to be recommended as a candidate area for designation as National Park or AONB. The weight of evidence is strongest within the central areas (including the dry valleys and karst features) becoming less strong on the far western and northern fringes.
- 4.6. **Natural Beauty:** The Orton Fells are a distinctive tract of limestone upland and farmland. The limestone rocks are exposed in rugged scars and pavements, are used in the construction of walls and buildings, and create a very strong sense of place contributing to the natural beauty of the area. They have an interesting and colourful vegetation mosaic of heather, moorland and herb-rich grassland, with unusual plants in the limestone fissures. From the higher areas there are outstanding and memorable views to the surrounding mountain ranges, contributing to a sense of relative wildness.
- 4.7. In contrast with the upland core, the fell fringes and the enclosed and settled farmland valleys have a tranquil isolated character with patches of broadleaved woodland and mature trees contrasting with the fields. The historic character of the Orton Fells is also very evident in the landscape. Intact limestone villages, medieval field patterns and numerous archaeological features, including lime kilns all create a sense of history.
- 4.8. It is Natural England's view that the weight of evidence suggests that the core limestone area (including the dry valleys) fully meets the natural beauty criterion. In the far fringe areas, where the landscape is in transition to lowland areas or is affected locally by incongruous features, then the weight of evidence is less strong.
- 4.9. **Open-air recreation:** The Orton Fells contain large areas of open access land and a good network of well used rights of way, which together provide a very accessible, high quality experience of low fell landscapes. A sense of relative wildness and tranquillity, open panoramic views and local features of interest can all be enjoyed in this area, which is also highly accessible from the nearby main roads and the network of winding lanes. The area is crossed

by Wainwright's popular 'Coast to Coast Walk' and as a whole offers a real alternative to the more challenging landscapes of the high fells of the nearby upland areas. Recreation opportunities include walking, cycling and horse riding.

5. Evaluation Area 4: HOWGILL FELLS (NORTHERN)

- 5.1. **Recommendation:** All of this area has sufficient natural beauty and opportunities for open air recreation to be recommended as a candidate area for designation as National Park or AONB.
- 5.2. **Natural Beauty:** Together, the northern and southern Howgill Fells form a distinct geological entity, a continuous landscape whose natural beauty is strongly influenced by the underlying geology of hard, erosion-resistant rocks, which have produced the high, smooth, rounded ridges, and dome-like summits that contrast so markedly with the other uplands nearby. This distinctiveness makes them widely known and recognised, and gives the whole of the Howgill Fells a very strong sense of place. The fells are cut by deep valleys and small streams cascade down narrow rocky gills, resulting in occasional dramatic waterfalls. The vegetation is dominated by acid grassland, gives a smooth texture and light colour to parts of the fells, with textural and seasonal variations from bracken and remnant broadleaved woodland in some valleys. The open expanses offer memorable, uninterrupted long distance views. There is a strong sense of wildness with a feeling of remoteness resulting from the large tracts of open land and a notable absence of settlement, roads, buildings, walls or other enclosures apart from occasional sheepfolds. Away from the M6, this area is highly tranquil.
- 5.3. **Open-air recreation:** The northern Howgill Fells provide an outstanding recreation experience, similar to that gained in other remote parts of upland National Parks. The wide expanses of open access land and rights of way link seamlessly with the southern Howgill Fells. The steep terrain and the relative remoteness means that there are particular opportunities for challenging walks which offer a high degree of solitude.

6. Evaluation Area 5: MALLERSTANG AND WILD BOAR FELL

- 6.1. **Recommendation:** All of this area has sufficient natural beauty and opportunities for open air recreation to be recommended as a candidate area for designation as National Park or AONB.
- 6.2. **Natural Beauty:** The deep, glacial valley of Mallerstang, associated steep escarpments, and long, flat, upland summits at High Seat and Wild Boar Fell, form an area of great natural beauty. The landscape strongly expresses key characteristics of the Yorkshire Dales Character Area which it is a part of. It contains open uplands, with patches of white limestone pavements and scree, and grassy upper slopes. The dale has a distinctive pattern of limestone walls, farms and field barns. Added interest is provided by streams feeding into the River Eden and in the lower end of the dale, patches of broadleaved trees. The long, straight dale and the cliffs and vertical escarpments of High Seat and Wild Boar Fell, shaped by glaciers and later erosion, create a visually exciting landform on a majestic scale. Wild Boar Fell itself is one of the most distinctive summits of the central Pennines, with its flat level summit plateau and easily recognisable, steep, stepped profile of rocky cliffs to the east. Extensive areas of upland, without roads or tracks, give the area an open, isolated character, with a strong feeling of remoteness

and apparent wildness. This contrasts with the settled landscape of the dale which is set against the wild and dramatic backdrop of the fells. The ruins of Pendragon Castle are a romantic landmark within the dale associated with Anne Clifford and commented on by Defoe. This is a highly tranquil landscape, with an absence of intrusive features or significant traffic or other disturbance.

- 6.3. **Open-air recreation:** A combination of extensive open access land and a network of rights of way make this area valuable for recreation, with good opportunities to enjoy a variety of landscape experiences. Upland walks offer a high degree of solitude and an experience of relative wildness. In contrast, routes along the dale floor offer a sheltered and enclosed, pastoral valley experience and memorable views to the surrounding fells. The Settle-Carlisle railway runs along the dale, but is not visually significant and does not diminish the quality of the landscape. Indeed, it provides access to the area via Kirkby Stephen and Garsdale stations, and high quality views from trains passing through. Potential recreation opportunities include the approved route for the Pennine Bridleway National Trail which will pass through this area.

7. Evaluation Area 6: MIDDLETON, BARBON AND LECK FELLS

- 7.1. **Recommendation:** All of this area has sufficient natural beauty and opportunities for open air recreation to be recommended as a candidate area for designation as National Park or AONB.
- 7.2. **Natural Beauty:** This area forms the western part of the Yorkshire Dales Character Area although Middleton and Barbon Fells share the Howgills geology. Erosion by glaciers and weathering of the rocks has produced steep-sided fells and crags as well as the dramatic valley of Barbondale. The higher slopes and summits allow wide views over the surrounding area, and provide an experience of relative wildness with a sense of openness and exposure, and tranquillity. There are also attractive contrasts between the imposing, open fell landscape, the irregular pattern of wall- or hedge-enclosed fields of the fringing farmland, and the narrow, wooded gills on the lower slopes of the fells. Casterton and Leck Fells, are characterised by limestone features, including the most extensive cave system in the UK. Ease Gill and Leck Beck run intermittently over and under ground and provide a fascinating feature in this landscape. On the western, lower fringes the open fell extends into farmland with attractive, historic settlements at the foot of the fells contributing to the overall sense of place. Here also are designed parklands and estate landscapes and their associated historic features and archaeological sites. These provide a sense of history and time depth in the landscape as well as a welcome contrast with the wilder landscapes of the higher fells.
- 7.3. **Open-air recreation:** The fells are especially valuable for **recreation**, particularly because all the moorland is open access land, providing excellent opportunities for people to enjoy the natural beauty of the area, including the sense of wildness and tranquillity that it offers. There is also good access by road and on foot for cavers wishing to explore the caverns and the whole area is easily accessible to large numbers of people via the M6 and main trunk roads. Potential recreation opportunities include the possibility of a Lune Valley multi-user trail.

8. Evaluation Area 7: FIRBANK FELL

- 8.1. **Recommendation:** The eastern half of this area has sufficient natural beauty and opportunities for open air recreation to be recommended as a candidate area for designation as National Park or AONB. The weight of evidence is less strong to the west.
- 8.2. **Natural Beauty:** Firbank Fell lies in the north-east corner of the area of low fells that stretches east from Kendal to the Lune Valley. The area falls into two distinct parts, divided roughly by the minor road that runs north to south through its centre. The eastern slopes have a strong sense of place and appealing scenic qualities, arising from their gentle, tranquil valley character and the striking views across the River Lune to the Howgill Fells opposite. There is a series of knobbly, rocky hill tops forming a ridgeline from which the land drops away steeply to the River Lune. It includes Fox's Pulpit, the scene of George Fox's historically important outdoor address (a key moment in the development of the Quaker movement), at a site marked by a plaque on a prominent rock outcrop with extensive views over the Lune Valley to the Howgill Fells and the Yorkshire Dales.
- 8.3. In the western half of the area the higher land is covered by grassy moorland with some heather. Large, rectangular fields of semi-improved grass bounded predominantly by walls and a few hedges cover the slopes to the north, west and south. The condition of landscape features such as hedges and walls is declining. The fell landscape lacks any real sense of wildness, and tranquillity is elusive because of the intrusive effects of the nearby M6 and A684 although these are predominantly felt on the northern and western fringes of the area.
- 8.4. **Open-air recreation:** The area offers some opportunities for recreation, with the valley slopes linked by footpaths to the higher fells, but with little access along the river or across to the Howgill Fells and only a relatively small extent of open access land. Several of the walks are featured in circular and longer-distance routes from Sedbergh and the area is very easy to reach by car as it is so close to the M6. Potential recreation opportunities include the possibility of a Lune Valley multi-user trail.

9. Evaluation Areas 8a and 8b: LOWER LUNE VALLEY AND KILLINGTON TO MANSERGH

- 9.1. **Recommendation:** The eastern half of this area (the Lune Valley and its immediate valley sides) has sufficient natural beauty and opportunities for open air recreation to be recommended as a candidate area for designation as National Park or AONB. The weight of evidence is less strong on the low fells to the west.
- 9.2. **Natural Beauty:** This area comprises the Lune Valley and the low fells to the west.¹ The floodplain of the Lune between Kirkby Lonsdale and Sedbergh is flanked to the west by the low fells which drop steeply towards the river, while to the east it is intimately connected with the fells of the Yorkshire Dales, which rise dramatically above the valley. There are memorable views both to and from these fells that unite them with the valley landscape. In the valley, the meadows and farmland of the floodplain, the estate woodlands and the enclosed pastures on the valley side create a lush and well managed landscape, though there are some issues, such as decline in scattered trees,

¹ These two areas were originally considered separately. It was decided to combine them because the view was taken that the question whether or not the fells to the east should be designated was closely linked to whether the Lune Valley should be designated.

loss of wet meadows, as well as occasional poorly designed, large-scale barns. This is a quiet rural area which is tranquil and domestic rather than wild. It has high scenic value, the lowland valley landscape with its many trees acts as a foil to the rising fells in the east.

- 9.3. Above the valley to the west, the low fells form an undulating plateau with rounded drumlins and occasional tarns. There are small reservoirs and some conifer plantations in the north. Most of the plateau faces away from the Lune valley and the Yorkshire Dales, towards Kendal to the west. Although it is attractive, this landscape does not share the high scenic quality of the eastern part of this evaluation area.
- 9.4. **Open-air recreation:** This area offers opportunities for gentle recreation in a high quality landscape. The main recreational appeal is the contrasting views to the fells and along the river. There is a good mix of footpaths and bridleways, with a number of river crossing points, although access along the river itself is very limited. Overall the area is quiet and relatively undisturbed, though it lacks any real sense of wildness. The sometimes knobbly, rocky, remnant moorland areas of Park Hill, Stone Park and Talebrigg Hill are open access land, but they are relatively small in size. The small country lanes and rights of way offer the chance to enjoy this varied landscape with its views and cultural and natural interest. The lower lying nature of this landscape offers an alternative recreational experience to the nearby fells. Potential recreation opportunities include improved access along the River Lune, interpretation of the river and views of the fells and cycle routes within the valley and between Sedbergh and Kirkby Lonsdale.

10. Evaluation Area 8c: KIRKBY LONSDALE AREA

- 10.1. **Recommendation:** This area has sufficient natural beauty and opportunities for open air recreation to be recommended as a candidate area for designation as National Park or AONB. The weight of evidence is strongest within the Lune valley around and north of Kirkby Lonsdale; it declines to the south and west.
- 10.2. **Natural Beauty:** Centred on the ancient market town and river crossing point of Kirkby Lonsdale, this is a very diverse area at the junction of several different landscapes. The Yorkshire Dales lie nearby and are prominent in views from the area, and the River Lune also adds to the variety. A belt of limestone passes through the area south of the town and is revealed in the rocks that outcrop on the river banks and riverbed under the ancient Devil's Bridge as well as in the stone walls. To the north, the landscape is dominated by well-wooded, designed parklands associated with several halls in the area, including Mansergh, Underley and Casterton which are key to views in the area and to its cultural heritage. To the south, low rounded hills are part of the drumlin field which runs south and east along the edge of the Yorkshire Dales. The area as a whole has a degree of natural beauty in that it is a diverse and largely intact lowland and enclosed valley landscape. The well defined valley sides, open floodplain and parkland make it visually appealing and the celebrated view described by Ruskin from the viewpoint by the church in Kirkby Lonsdale has a foreground of the island in the middle of the Lune, the river and the floodplain farmland and enclosing estate woodlands of Casterton and Underley Halls.
- 10.3. Kirkby Lonsdale is an exceptional, compact historic town with a notable concentration of high quality historic buildings which nestle on the edge of Lunesdale overlooking the valley and are backed by distinctive limestone

ridges to the south and west. From within the town there are memorable views to the surrounding high quality landscape. This is a settled landscape, with a busy town at its centre and the related facilities and development can intrude to some degree on the landscape.

- 10.4. **Open-air recreation:** The area has some valuable opportunities for recreation, with a reasonable rights of way network offering access to a diversity of different landscapes near to the town, and there are facilities for quiet activities including fishing, walking and horse riding. The landscape does not offer any experience of relative wildness, there is no open access land, and tranquillity is limited by the effects of traffic and large numbers of people in and around the town. Devil's Bridge is a key destination for many visitors and the area is easily accessible from the M6 and the A65, while Kirkby Lonsdale itself functions as a service centre. Potential recreation opportunities include improved access to and interpretation of the River Lune.

11. Evaluation Area 9: Cold Cotes area

- 11.1. **Recommendation:** This area has insufficient natural beauty and opportunities for open air recreation to be recommended as a candidate area for designation as National Park or AONB.
- 11.2. **Natural beauty:** This area partly meets the natural beauty criterion, but does not meet it in some important respects. It is of generally good landscape quality. The area is a pleasant agricultural landscape with some interesting and attractive features and the adjacent fells add greatly to its character and quality. There is a change from millstone grit to limestone geology and in some areas drumlin landforms appear but it are not particularly striking. There is some natural heritage interest, and the historic and intact settlements of Newby and Cold Cotes provide cultural heritage interest. The settlements are usually built in either limestone or gritstone and, together with the strong pattern of stone walls, make an important contribution to the character of the landscape.
- 11.3. Although attractive, the area as a whole does not have notable scenic quality in its own right. It is a settled landscape that does not offer a strong sense of relative wildness and has only a moderate level of tranquillity.
- 11.4. **Open-Air Recreation:** In terms of the recreation criterion this area offers an upland fringe recreational experience. As the area does not wholly meet the criteria for natural beauty it does not in itself provide direct access to landscapes of natural beauty. There is a generally good right of way network in the area, which also links to footpaths and open access land on Ingleborough Common. National Cycle Route 68 passes along the northern edge of this area, following the 'Old Road' and also links with these routes.

Annex 4

Desirability to Designate Candidate Areas

1. Assessment of Desirability to Designate

- 1.1. This stage follows the assessment of each Evaluation Area against the technical designation criteria. From this point, those “Evaluation Areas” that have been assessed as meeting the designation criteria for National Park or AONB are treated as “Candidate Areas” for designation.
- 1.2. Evaluation Area 9 (Cold Cotes) is considered not to meet the technical designation criteria sufficiently and so is not being taken further. Evaluation Areas 2b, 7, 8ab and 8c are considered to meet both technical designation criteria sufficiently, although in some parts they do not and this will be taken into account. The remaining areas all meet both technical designation criteria. The areas will be considered as follows:

Candidate Area	Considered for...
CA1 Birkbeck Fells to Whinfell CA3 Orton Fells (considered separately)	Eastern Extension to the Lake District National Park
CA2a Helsington Barrows to Sizergh CA2b River Kent and Levens (in part)	Southern Extension to the Lake District National Park
CA4 northern Howgill Fells CA5 Mallerstang and Wild Boar Fell. CA3 Orton Fells (considered separately)	Northern Extension to the Yorkshire Dales National Park
CA6 Barbon, Middleton and Leck Fells CA7 Firbank Fell (in part) CA8ab Lower Lune Valley (in part) CA8c Kirkby Lonsdale Area (in part)	Western Extension to the Yorkshire Dales National Park
CA3 Orton Fells	Eastern Extension to the Lake District National Park or Northern Extension to the Yorkshire Dales National Park or AONB

- 1.3. Section 5 of the Guidance for Assessing Landscapes for Designation (“the Guidance”) explains how we consider whether an area should be designated National Park or AONB (if at all). Table 5 of the Guidance summarises this:

Are the technical criteria met?
Is the area of such significance that National Park / AONB purposes should apply to it?
What are the issues affecting the area’s special qualities and understanding and enjoyment?
Can National Park / AONB purposes be best pursued through the management mechanisms, powers and duties which come with National

Park or AONB designation?

Are there **other relevant factors** which tend to suggest whether it is or is not desirable to designate the area?

- 1.4. For each proposed extension, this Annex therefore considers:
 - Significance of the candidate areas proposed for inclusion;
 - The issues which affect the area's special qualities;
 - The options for delivering purposes of designation in those areas; and
 - A recommendation as to whether the area should be designated.
- 1.5. We then address key issues relating to boundary determination. A final section outlines in brief the implications for the governance of the two National Parks, and the local authorities affected.
- 1.6. If these recommendations are approved by the Board, the proposed extensions, and their detailed boundaries, will be put forward for public consultation. Following detailed consideration of consultation responses, Natural England may then decide to take the proposals forward. In the case of proposed extensions to the National Parks, variation Orders would be made by Natural England and submitted to the Secretary of State.

2. Lake District National Park: Proposed Eastern Extension

- 2.1. **Candidate Areas considered:** CA1 Birkbeck Fells to Whinfell. Candidate Area 3 Orton Fells is also under consideration as a potential extension for the Lake District National Park but is dealt with separately.
- 2.2. **Significance:** This area is in the Cumbria High Fells Character Area, and shows clear and consistent expression of some of the typical elements of this landscape, especially the marked contrast between the open moorland and the sheltered dales. It occupies a pivotal position between several outstanding upland landscapes and on the main ridges affords panoramic views to the Howgill Fells, the Lune Gorge, the Lake District fells and south to the Bowland Fells. Within a small area, there is an outstanding range of landscape experiences, from upland fell, to enclosed woodlands, to the distinctive dales and shelter of Borrowdale and Bretherdale, all of them offering exceptional tranquillity and wildness. There are substantial opportunities to promote understanding of these special qualities through interpretation and by working with local partners; and to promote enjoyment of the area, without affecting its tranquillity.
- 2.3. Much of the area has been recognised as being worthy of national recognition for over 60 years (e.g. by Dower 1945; Hobhouse 1947) and has been proposed as an extension to the Lake District National Park in the past. The area's landscape value has also been reflected in its designation in the past as part of the Lake District Environmentally Sensitive Area, and its recognition (in common with much of this part of Cumbria) as a Landscape of County Importance.
- 2.4. **Issues affecting its special qualities:** The area's landscape quality, scenic quality, relative wildness and tranquillity are highly vulnerable to inappropriate and large-scale development. Landscape condition is generally good, but locally it is affected by forestry, quarrying, masts and transmission lines, which where possible, would benefit from being addressed in the long term. There is an underlying issue of farm viability which has led to some localised boundary and field barn dereliction. The area is a valuable resource for natural heritage. Access to the area is generally straightforward and there are significant opportunities for unlocking potential for open-air recreation. Parts of Borrowdale are already pro-actively managed for public benefit by Friends of the Lake District.
- 2.5. **Delivering purposes of designation:** Geographically, the area is directly adjacent to the Lake District National Park. There is currently no integrated strategy for the long-term management and enhancement of the area as a whole. The dedicated purpose of the Lake District National Park Management Plan and the assistance the NPA can provide in supporting agri-environment schemes, are likely to lead to conservation and enhancement of natural beauty across the whole of this area, and to greater understanding of the interaction between its natural environment and upland farming, as well as enjoyment of its special qualities. There is also much scope to further enhance activities such as walking and mountain biking.
- 2.6. This extension is partly in Eden District and partly in South Lakeland District, both of which already have land in the Lake District National Park.
- 2.7. **Recommendation:** Natural England considers that it is desirable to include a substantial part of CA1 in the Lake District National Park. Should the Orton Fells also be proposed for inclusion in the Lake District National Park, this area would form part of a wider eastern extension.

- 2.8. **Proposed boundary (Maps 1 & 2):** The boundary includes the upland landscape which seamlessly extends across the A6 and into the Lune Gorge and towards Birk Beck in the east. Birk Beck provides a suitable robust boundary line and edge to the upland area and its immediate fringes. To the south and north of the proposed boundary, character and quality begin gradually to change. The southern boundary is drawn within an area where quality is still high and the northern boundary follows a natural break in the topography defining the edge of Birk Beck Fells Common.
- 2.9. Settlements at the edge: Roundthwaite, Scout Green and Greenholme are included due to being well embedded in the landscape. Grayrigg is excluded as it relates more strongly to the landscape to the south.
- 2.10. An alternative boundary is proposed below should the Orton Fells be included in the Lake District National Park.

3. Lake District National Park: Proposed Southern Extension

- 3.1. **Candidate Areas considered:** Candidate Area 2a Helsington Barrows to Sizergh and part of Candidate Area 2b River Kent and Levens.
- 3.2. **Significance:** Candidate Areas 2a and 2b are part of the Morecambe Bay Limestones Character Area and show typical limestone scenery characteristics. The Helsington to Sizergh ridge is the third in a row of limestone ridges which begins with and forms part of the southern gateway to the Cumbrian Low and High Fells. There is a clear and strong continuity with the Lake District National Park. The area has a great natural heritage resource due to its rich limestone grassland, ancient woodland at Brigsteer Park and the improving wetlands in the Lyth Valley. The River Kent is also of considerable significance for natural heritage. Sizergh Castle (National Trust, in CA2a) and Levens Hall (privately owned, in CA2b) are both exceptional historic landscape features, making strong contributions to the natural beauty of the area. The opportunities for open-air recreation in CA2a, and in part of CA2b, are low-key but of extremely high quality, offering contrasts between tranquil parkland and wild karst scenery within a single walk. There are particular opportunities for improving understanding and enjoyment in the Lyth Valley, whereas the Helsington Barrows to Sizergh ridge is already well promoted, with parts of it managed by the National Trust.
- 3.3. Most of this proposed extension has long been recognised as being worthy of national recognition (e.g. Dower 1945; Hobhouse 1947). The area's landscape value has also been reflected in its inclusion in the Lake District Environmentally Sensitive Area, and (in common with much of this part of Cumbria) past recognition as a Landscape of County Importance by Cumbria County Council. The landscape of parts of the area has been fragmented by major road development since recognition in the 1940's.
- 3.4. Substantial parts of CA2a are clearly of national significance, and while the Lyth Valley in its own right does not sufficiently meet the designation criteria currently, it forms an important part of the landscape between CA2a and the current National Park. It provides a strong visual contrast with the bordering limestone uplands. In CA2b, the area around Levens Park and part of the River Kent are also of national significance, although the remainder of the evaluation area is not considered to merit National Park designation.
- 3.5. **Issues affecting its special qualities:** This area is very sensitive to further urban, road or large-scale development, which would adversely affect its landscape quality and tranquillity. A key issue is the condition of the Lyth Valley, currently managed as intensive grassland and locally affecting landscape quality. A large-scale restoration project is now in place through Wetland Vision, which is likely to deliver substantial improvements to the landscape and the functioning of the valley as a wetland, through the work of conservation organisations and agri-environment schemes.
- 3.6. The limestone grasslands on the main ridge require, (and in places already have) appropriate grazing and management of recreational use to fully benefit nature conservation. In addition, some archaeological features are under pressure, and there are further opportunities for historic landscape interpretation around Helsington and at Levens. The area would benefit from enhanced management, signage and waymarking, particularly for the mountain biking circuit from Kendal.
- 3.7. **Delivering purposes of designation:** Geographically, the area is directly adjacent to the Lake District National Park. The National Park Authority

already carry out management work on Scout Scar with volunteers, and their expertise is directly transferrable to other limestone grasslands on the Helsington to Sizergh ridge. Including this area in the Lake District National Park would ensure more consistent forward planning and decision making around this key gateway to the Park. It would also be highly likely to lead to conservation and enhancement of natural beauty across the area and to greater understanding of its natural environment and cultural heritage. A partnership to improve the landscape of the Lyth Valley for nature conservation is funded until 2012. A National Park Authority would be able to contribute additional expertise and resources to support land managers through the changes that are occurring in part of this area, and considerably improve the opportunities available for understanding the special qualities through interpretation. A substantial area in CA2a is already owned for public benefit by the National Trust, and the significant area around Levens Park is well managed and protected by heritage designations, and for these areas National Park designation would bring limited additional benefits. In addition, Levens Park is somewhat separated from the main part of this proposed extension.

- 3.8. This extension is in South Lakeland District which already has land in the Lake District National Park.
- 3.9. **Recommendation:** Natural England considers that it is desirable to include Candidate Area 2a in the Lake District National Park. The Lyth Valley should also be considered for inclusion, to the extent that it can be said to sit within a wider landscape which meets the designation criteria (i.e. the National Park landscape 'washes over' it). Of Candidate Area 2b, although the area around Levens Park is of great significance, Natural England does not consider that it is desirable to include it in the National Park. In particular, this is because in order to include the relatively small area of Levens Park at the southern extremity of the boundary a larger intervening area of significantly lower quality and fragmented land would have to be included.
- 3.10. **Proposed boundary (Map 3):** The areas surrounding high quality landscapes between Helsington and Sizergh Fell gradually decrease in quality and a boundary has been chosen within these areas of transition. To the south, the boundary has been drawn to include Sizergh Fell. To the west, a part of the Lyth Valley has been included where the landscape is dominated by the two limestone ridges.
- 3.11. Settlements at the edge: Levens and Cotes were excluded as they do not sit fully within the high quality landscapes being designated.

4. Yorkshire Dales National Park: Proposed Western Extension

- 4.1. **Candidate Areas considered:** CA6 Barbon, Middleton and Leck Fells, CA7 Firbank Fell, CA8ab Lower Lune Valley and CA8c Kirkby Lonsdale Area
- 4.2. **Significance:** The characteristic and distinctive landscape elements of CA6, Barbon, Middleton and Leck Fells clearly reflect the limestone moors and the central moorland landscapes of the Yorkshire Dales National Park, with which the area has clear continuity. It has some remarkable natural heritage features, in particular the extensive cave system (the largest in Britain). Pavements, cliffs, screes, potholes and gorges associated with the Carboniferous Limestone underlying the southern part of the area, support a range of rare and uncommon plants. CA7 Firbank Fell and CA8ab Lower Lune Valley and are part of the South Cumbria Low Fells Character Area, and are strongly linked by dramatic views across the valley of the Lune towards to Barbon, Middleton and Leck Fells and to the Howgill Fells. These views (also from Kirkby Lonsdale) have long been recognised and celebrated by writers and artists. The area has some value for natural heritage, particularly mires along the western edge (although these are not included in the proposed boundary) and the River Lune itself. In CA8c Kirkby Lonsdale Area, four Character Areas meet, and it is no coincidence that the town and its environs have considerable historical and cultural interest.
- 4.3. Much of the area has been recognised as being worthy of national recognition for over 60 years (e.g. by Dower 1945; Hobhouse 1947) and, in common with much of this part of Cumbria, the area was recognised in the past as a Landscape of County Importance. There have been frequent proposals to designate the area as both National Park and AONB.
- 4.4. These areas, taken as a whole, are clearly of national significance and National Park purposes should be pursued within them. The level of significance is less clearly apparent in the southern and western part of CA8c, and the western parts of CA8ab, where they do not benefit from the impact of views across the Lune.
- 4.5. **Issues affecting its special qualities:** Due to its high scenic and landscape quality, and its tranquillity, this area is sensitive to major or inappropriate development. Important views need to be considered when making decisions on development or woodland planting. In CA6, there is potential for restoration of heather moorland to create greater wildlife diversity, if heavy grazing pressure can be addressed. The area also includes one of the richest and least studied archaeological landscapes in Cumbria, with scheduled monuments, but also large areas of undesignated archaeology which are potentially of national importance.
- 4.6. Leck Fell is particularly important for caving and potholing, and it has extensive areas of access land. Pro-active management and high quality interpretation would benefit these activities, and encourage recreational users to take account of the area's special qualities, land management and sporting interests' needs. The area could provide opportunities for road cycling both at local level and as part of longer distance circuits. There could be more interpretation of natural heritage in the area, particularly of the River Lune, and access to the river is currently limited.
- 4.7. This landscape has strong cultural links with the 19th Century picturesque movement, and there is scope to promote understanding and enjoyment of this special cultural quality. Although landscape quality is high generally, there is pressure on the existing well-preserved historic field patterns and

boundaries, hedgerows and designed landscape features. Improved management of river banks and reduced diffuse pollution of the river from agricultural sources would be beneficial, and the series of small raised bogs on the ridge top would benefit from protection.

- 4.8. **Delivering purposes of designation:** Geographically, the area is directly adjacent to the Yorkshire Dales National Park. Including this area in the Yorkshire Dales National Park would allow many of the issues highlighted above to be fully addressed. It would enable the dedicated pursuit of conservation and enhancement of the area's acknowledged natural beauty, wildlife and cultural heritage. More significantly, there would be a dedicated purpose and additional resources, to manage the open-air recreation in the area, and to provide more substantial interpretation of its special qualities. The Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority has significant experience in similar landscapes including limestone landscapes, caves and major river valleys. They are in a good position to work constructively with the potentially conflicting sporting and other recreation interests.
- 4.9. This extension is largely in South Lakeland District which already has land in the Yorkshire Dales National Park. However, Leck Fell is within the boundaries of Lancaster City and in the county of Lancashire, neither of which currently have land in the Yorkshire Dales National Park. The inclusion of this area would mean that the membership of the National Park Authority would have to be adjusted.
- 4.10. **Recommendation:** Natural England considers that it is desirable that CA6, Barbon, Middleton and Leck Fells, and parts of CA7 Firbank Fell, CA8ab Lower Lune Valley and CA8c Kirkby Lonsdale Area, are included in the Yorkshire Dales National Park.
- 4.11. **Proposed boundary (Maps 4, 5 & 6):** The boundary includes the very high quality landscapes from the existing National Park boundary to, and including Lunesdale. Where views across the Lune are lost towards the west, the boundary is drawn within this transition area to follow a road across Firbank Fell. Further south it follows field boundaries and in places is convoluted – more straightforward boundaries would have excluded high quality areas.
- 4.12. To the south, the boundary is drawn along the settlement edge of Kirkby Lonsdale and the A65 road to the existing National Park boundary (skirting around Cowan Bridge).
- 4.13. Settlements at the edge: Kirkby Lonsdale is excluded despite the fact that it is an exceptional, compact historic town. Although it is in a high quality setting, the town would be very near the edge of the National Park. Given the town's size, this is not considered desirable in the context of this proposed National Park extension. Cowan Bridge was excluded on the basis that it is split by the A65 and has some areas of modern development that undermine its historic character.

5. Yorkshire Dales National Park: Proposed Northern Extension

- 5.1. **Candidate Areas considered:** Candidate Area 4 Howgill Fells (northern) and Candidate Area 5 Mallerstang and Wild Boar Fell. Candidate Area 3 Orton Fells is also under consideration as a potential extension for the Yorkshire Dales National Park but is dealt with separately.
- 5.2. **Significance:** The Howgill Fells are a unique landscape in England and stand out due to their striking landform, even among the many other striking upland landscapes in this area. The Northern Howgill Fells show a clear expression of the typical landscape features of the Howgill Fells Character Area, half of which is already within the YDNP. The Howgill Fells also provide magnificent views of all the surrounding upland landscapes in the area. Mallerstang and Wild Boar Fell have stunning limestone and glacial landforms and other characteristic landscape elements typically representative of the northern gritstone moors and central moorland landscapes of the Yorkshire Dales Character Area. The whole proposed northern extension has considerable tranquillity and relative wildness, with the Howgill Fells in particular offering a degree of remoteness and solitude rarely found in England. The area is rich in natural habitats, rare geological features, multi-period archaeology and significant built heritage. The area has exceptional opportunities for promoting the understanding and enjoyment of the landscape since it has excellent opportunities for open-air recreation and a rich landscape resource.
- 5.3. Much of the area has been recognised as being worthy of national recognition for over 60 years (e.g. by Dower 1945; Hobhouse 1947) and (in common with much of this part of Cumbria) it has been recognised as a Landscape of County Importance in the past. There have been frequent proposals to designate the area as both National Park and AONB.
- 5.4. The area is clearly of national significance for these reasons and in view of the significance of the recreational opportunity, National Park purposes should be pursued within it.
- 5.5. **Issues affecting its special qualities:** The entire area is highly vulnerable to major development due to its high scenic quality, tranquillity and relative wildness. Parts of the Howgill Fells in particular are vulnerable, due to their prominence and focal position. The landscape is intact and generally in good condition. The area would benefit from improved management of herb-rich meadows, pastures, gill woodland, scrub, river banks and boundaries for nature conservation and landscape purposes. There is considerable grazing pressure in places, especially on the Howgill Fells, with loss of heather and species diversity. Cultural heritage features such as settlement earthworks, ancient hedgerow patterns and traditional farmed landscape features are at risk in some parts from neglect and the impacts of more intensive agriculture. There is considerable unrealised scope to improve access to, and accessibility and interpretation of, the area's special qualities.
- 5.6. **Delivering purposes of designation:** Geographically, the area is directly adjacent to the Yorkshire Dales National Park. This area includes the only parts of the Yorkshire Dales and Howgill Fells Character Areas which are not covered by an integrated management plan. Including them in the Yorkshire Dales National Park would ensure more consistent forward planning and decision-making in this very special landscape. The dedicated purpose of the Yorkshire Dales National Park Management Plan, and the assistance the National Park Authority can provide in supporting land managers, is likely to

bring great improvements in landscape condition. It would also assist in managing access and promoting the area's special qualities.

- 5.7. This extension is entirely in Eden District which does not currently have land in the Yorkshire Dales National Park.
- 5.8. **Recommendation:** Natural England considers that it is desirable to include Candidate Area 4, Howgill Fells Northern and Candidate Area, 5 Mallerstang and Wild Boar Fell in the Yorkshire Dales National Park. Should the Orton Fells also be proposed for inclusion in the Yorkshire Dales National Park, this area would form part of a wider northern extension.
- 5.9. **Proposed boundary (Maps 7, 8 & 9):** To the west the boundary follows clear features near the communications corridor in the bottom of the Lune Gorge (mainly the railway embankment). Around Tebay there is a considerable amount of transport infrastructure, a motorway junction and industrial development, which all affect the quality of the landscape in the Lune Valley at its confluence with Birk Beck. The boundary has been drawn to exclude this area, the village of Tebay in its entirety, and sites allocated for development which would extend the size of the village.
- 5.10. To the north, if the Orton Fells are not included in the Yorkshire Dales National Park, the boundary follows the A685 road and then lanes and field boundaries around to the south of Newbiggin and Ravenstonedale and finally the A683 to the North Pennines AONB boundary and then the existing National Park boundary. This boundary broadly follows the transition in character from the Howgill Fells, Wild Boar Fell and Mallerstang into the upper Lune Valley and the Orton Fells. Quality remains very high throughout this transition.
- 5.11. Settlements at the edge: Newbiggin and Ravenstonedale have been included in the Orton Fells area due to their strong cultural and landscape association with the Orton Fells.

6. The Orton Fells

- 6.1. **Candidate Areas considered:** Candidate Area 3 The Orton Fells
- 6.2. **Significance:** CA3 is the core of the Orton Fells Character Area and is strongly representative of limestone landscapes including rare and valued karst. It is part of a band of carboniferous limestone which is also represented in the north of the Lake District National Park and the Yorkshire Dales National Park. The area has many exceptional panoramic viewpoints, occupying a focal point between Whinell, Whinash and the High Street fells of the Lake District, the Howgill Fells, the Lune Gorge, Mallerstang, Wild Boar Fell and the North Pennines. There is a profound sense of tranquillity and wildness throughout much of the area. The area's natural heritage is extremely valuable and varied, with many protected sites. It includes the largest area of limestone pavement in the UK, with attendant rare species, one of the last remaining areas of upland heath in Cumbria, rich hay meadows with characteristic northern composition, and a rare marl lake on limestone.
- 6.3. The cultural heritage of the Orton Fells is significant, much of it visible in the landscape and clearly reflecting the underlying limestone geology. This is particularly evident in the intact limestone villages and historic field boundaries. The Fellside above Smardale is one of the most remarkable set of archaeological remains in Britain. A number of regionally significant recreation routes coincide in the Orton Fells, and they provide an extremely high quality open-air recreation experience.
- 6.4. The area has been recognised as being worthy of national recognition for over 60 years, having initially been put forward as a conservation area by Hobhouse (1947) and re-considered on many occasions since.
- 6.5. **Issues affecting its special qualities:** The scenic quality, natural and cultural heritage features of the upland core of this area and its western edge are very sensitive to inappropriate development. Locally, condition of landscape features would benefit from being addressed. Much of the area is common land. This would benefit from pro-active management of the grazing regime to benefit nature conservation, though the needs of commoners, the impact on the landscape and for open access would have to be considered too. The historic fabric of the landscape would benefit from greater resources and a strategic overview (archaeological earthworks, walls, lime kilns, buildings).
- 6.6. The recreation resource draws on the large areas of access land on extensive commons, the natural heritage of the area, and on long distance routes. There is great potential for more concerted promotion and interpretation of the area's special qualities, with special regard required to manage recreation in order to avoid adversely affect these qualities. The closure of the East Cumbria Countryside Project in March 2009 leaves the area with no strategic management, although Friends of the Lake District and the Cumbria Wildlife Trust manage some key sites in the Orton Fells.
- 6.7. **Delivering purposes of designation:** As part of the remit of this project the Orton Fells are being considered for its desirability to be designated as National Park or as an AONB.
- 6.8. There are clear needs for conservation and enhancement of its landscape, a particular need in relation to cultural heritage and some challenges for nature conservation. If the area is designated as either National Park or AONB,

there are likely to be substantial benefits for conservation and enhancement across the whole of this area and greater prominence would be given to the Orton Fells' special qualities. Due to its greater financial and staff resources, and ability to call on a range of specialist staff, and because it is a local authority in its own right, a National Park is better placed to address the wide range of issues arising in the Orton Fells.

- 6.9. The opportunities for promoting understanding and enjoyment of the area's special qualities could be addressed to a limited extent by an AONB through increased focus on the area that AONB designation would bring. However, National Park designation would ensure that 'understanding and enjoyment' is embedded as a core purpose in the area, which is not the case in AONBs, and that strategic planning, dedicated staff and additional resources are available to pursue this.
- 6.10. In view of the significance of the area and because it raises such a wide range of issues that would benefit from strategic planning and management, designation as National Park is considered the more appropriate designation.
- 6.11. Geographically, the Orton Fells are located between the Lake District and Yorkshire Dales National Parks. National Park purposes could be delivered equally effectively by either of the two National Parks and both are capable of adding considerable value to the area. Purely in terms of drawing an appropriate boundary, it is easier to demonstrate the area's contiguity with the Yorkshire Dales than is the case with the Lake District, although in each case when considering the National Parks as a whole, we consider that they form an extensive tract. More importantly, this fairly technical concern would not in practice affect the ability of either National Park Authority to manage this area.
- 6.12. We have given careful consideration to this issue and are of the view that it is currently not possible to say with confidence which National Park is the most appropriate management authority for the area. We are of the view that public consultation will assist greatly in highlighting further factors Natural England should take into account when making this decision.
- 6.13. The Orton Fells are entirely in Eden District. The Lake District National Park already includes land from Eden District; and the Yorkshire Dales National Park would in any event include land from Eden District if the proposed Northern Extension of the Yorkshire Dales incorporates the northern Howgills, Mallerstang and Wild Boar Fell.
- 6.14. **Recommendation:** Natural England considers that it is desirable to designate the Orton Fells as National Park. However, the decision as to whether this should be the Yorkshire Dales or Lake District National Park is finely balanced and the Board of Natural England is asked whether to recommend for public consultation:
 - a) That the Orton Fells be designated as a National Park, but that the decision as to which National Park is most appropriate should be further considered following detailed consideration of responses to the public consultation; or
 - b) That the Orton Fells be included in a proposed extension to the Lake District National Park; or
 - c) That the Orton Fells be included in a proposed extension to the Yorkshire Dales National Park.

- 6.15. **Proposed alternative boundaries (Maps 8, 9, 10, 11 & 12):** There are two proposed boundary alternatives for the Orton Fells – an extension to the Lake District National Park and an extension to the Yorkshire Dales National Park. Two parts of this boundary would be the same regardless of which option is chosen.
- The first part begins where the Yorkshire Dales National Park and North Pennine AONB boundaries meet. It follows the AONB boundary, excludes Kirkby Stephen and follows disused railway lines and roads north west through an area of transition between the central Orton Fells and dry valleys on the one hand, and the settled Eden Valley on the other. To the north the area is also affected by forestry plantations, and the boundary is drawn to exclude much of these, towards Hardendale Quarry.
 - The second part is between Orton and Tebay and takes account of the considerable amount of transport infrastructure, a motorway junction and industrial development which all affect the quality of the landscape around Tebay.
- 6.16. If the Orton Fells were included in the Yorkshire Dales National Park, the proposed alternative western boundary takes account of the topography and the impact of the transport corridor on the landscape. It follows a Roman Road for much of the way.
- 6.17. If the Orton Fells were included in the Lake District National Park, it would be necessary to identify a connection to the proposed western extension that can be justified for designation. The proposed alternative boundaries include a substantial area of land that has been assessed as not meeting the designation criteria and to be included, the designation must be capable of 'washing over' this landscape. Whether this landscape can in fact be included in the designation is not clear-cut: on the one hand, the topography of Crosby Ravensworth Fell slopes gently across the M6 corridor as a single continuous slope westwards; on the other hand, it is affected by the M6 carriageways, development and railway line all of which undermine scenic quality, intactness of the landscape and recreation experience. Further consideration of these issues could be given during the consultation.

7. Implications for National Parks, Local Authorities and Public Bodies

7.1. The most significant implication for extending either National Park will be that a number of statutory functions would transfer from the relevant County and District Councils to the National Park Authority. In addition, there would be an impact on National Park Authority membership.

7.2. The affected local authorities are:

County	District / City	Affected by:
Cumbria County Council	Eden District Council	Northern Extension to the Yorkshire Dales National Park
		Orton Fells
	South Lakeland District Council	Eastern Extension to the Lake District National Park
		Southern Extension to the Lake District National Park
Lancashire County Council	Lancaster City Council	Western Extension to the Yorkshire Dales National Park

7.3. **Structure and purposes:** National Park Authorities (“NPAs”) are local authorities in their own right having forward planning, development control functions and other executive powers. They are established under the Environment Act 1995. Their statutory purposes are:

- a) to conserve and enhance the natural beauty, wildlife and cultural heritage of the National Park; and
- b) to promote opportunities for the understanding and enjoyment of the special qualities of the Parks by the public.

7.4. If there is a conflict between these two purposes greater weight is given to conservation than to recreation, this is known as the 'Sandford Principle'. In pursuing these purposes, NPAs also have a duty to foster the social and economic well-being of their local communities.

7.5. **Duties on all public bodies:** There is a general statutory duty on all public bodies, statutory undertakers and holders of public office to have regard to the purposes of National Parks when carrying out functions in relation to or affecting land within National Parks. Defra has published guidance on how public bodies should exercise this duty, which highlights that the duty applies to all decisions (not just those that might narrowly be seen as ‘countryside’ issues), that the duty can apply outside National Parks in certain cases and that compliance with the duty should be capable of being demonstrated.

7.6. **National Park Management Plan:** Each NPA is required to produce a National Park Management Plan, which sets out the vision for the management of the National Park and guides the allocation of its resources (see below). Working in partnership is an important aspect of ensuring successful policies are developed in National Parks and the management plans ensure this happens and that benefits are delivered to the park's environment, residents and visitors in a balanced and sustainable way.

- 7.7. If an area of land is included in an existing National Park, the National Park Management Plan will apply to that land. It is expected that the National Park Authority would review its Management Plan as soon as practicable to take the revised area into account.
- 7.8. **Transfer of key functions:** When land is designated National Park, certain powers are transferred (by statutory Order) to the National Park Authority. In particular, the National Park Authority becomes:
- the **local planning authority** with responsibility for determining applications for planning permission and listed buildings consent, and preparing the Local Development Scheme (i.e. the development plan)²;
 - the **minerals and waste planning authority** with responsibility for preparing the local minerals and waste plans;
 - the **relevant, access and appointing authority** with duties regarding open access land and to support a **Local Access Forum** for the National Park.
- 7.9. The local authorities remain responsible for their area in respect of all functions that are not transferred, and include basic services such as education, health, policing, roads, waste collection and disposal etc.. In some areas, responsibility is shared or formally delegated, for instance:
- **Rights of way** functions are formally delegated to the National Park Authorities by Cumbria County Council, and the three authorities have worked together to produce a county-wide Rights of Way Improvement Plan and Access Strategy (there are currently no National Parks in Lancashire, so no similar arrangements exists, however the YDNPA has worked closely with Lancashire County Council on access issues).
 - National Park Authorities have statutory **traffic regulation** powers over unsealed routes (green lanes).
- 7.10. A wide range of other functions are transferred to the National Park Authority, including in relation to ancient monuments, nature reserves, tree preservation orders, recreation facilities, camping and caravan parks, country parks, common land, footpath creation, acquisition of land for recreation and various bylaw making powers. A small number of functions are specific to National Parks, including the duty to prepare maps of moor and heath and to determine applications for agricultural operations on this, if that provision is applied by the Minister.
- 7.11. **Regional Planning:** Regional Spatial Strategies set out government planning and transport policy for each region for a 15 to 20 year period. The Regional Spatial Strategies which affect the proposed National Park extensions are the North West Plan and the Yorkshire and Humberside Plan, both published in 2008. The North West Plan makes specific reference in Policy EM1, to protecting, maintaining and enhancing “the special qualities of the environment” specifically including that associated with both the Lake District and Yorkshire Dales National Parks. The Yorkshire and Humberside Plan includes policy ENV10 which requires plans, strategies and investment decisions and programmes to safeguard and enhance specific areas including

² During a period of transition (i.e. immediately after the designation of additional land) it is likely that the existing development plan that is specific to an area would continue to apply until it is expressly replaced by a new policy adopted by the National Park Authority. It is likely that generic policies of the National Park will apply immediately.

the Yorkshire Dales National Park.

- 7.12. Government is currently considering the arrangements for new Regional Strategies, following Royal Assent of the Local Democracy, Economic Development and Construction Bill. A consultation was recently undertaken on a “Policy Statement on Regional Strategies and Guidance on the Establishment of Leaders’ Boards” . Paragraph 3.8 states that National Parks will each be covered by a single Regional Strategy, even where they cross regional boundaries (as is currently the case for the Yorkshire Dales National Park). The document also states that in circumstances where subregions cross regional boundaries then there would be a clear requirement for relevant authorities to jointly identify shared priorities as well as for there to be coordinated cross-boundary action.
- 7.13. Our proposed national park extensions, if put into effect, will increase the extent that the Yorkshire Dales National Park extends into the North West Region and that those additional areas would therefore fall under the ambit of the Yorkshire and Humberside Regional Strategy.
- 7.14. **Funding:** Whereas local authorities are funded from a combination of council tax and Government grant and any income they generate, National Park Authorities are funded entirely by central government grant. They can also raise income from fees and other activities and can raise money from grants.
- 7.15. The main National Park Grant is determined under a three year funding settlement until the end of f/y 2010/11. In 2008/09, central government funding for National Parks in England totalled £47.5 million (via Defra) specifically for the purposes of designation. This includes a Sustainable Development Fund component of £200,000 per National Park, which National Park Authorities administer by giving direct grants to projects in their area.
- 7.16. The Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority received a Defra grant of £5.372m in 2008/09 which will rise to £5.672m by 2010/11. The Lake District National Park Authority received a grant of £6.691m in 2008/09 which will rise to £7.275m by 2010/11. Funding beyond 2011 will be the subject of the next round of grant negotiations. While the outcome is impossible to predict, the prevailing economic climate at the time will clearly play an important role. It is reasonable to assume that in determining the level of grant, the Government will take account of any increase in size of a National Park and an increase in administrative complexity arising from the addition of local authority areas.
- 7.17. In addition to direct grant funding, National Parks are also able to use their grants to ‘match’ against other grants. They are also able to raise money from trading activities. For instance, the Lake District National Park Authority raises about a third of its total income from trading activities.
- 7.18. **Membership of National Park Authorities:** National Park Authorities are governed by a board (22 members in the case of the Yorkshire Dales) whose membership is split into three sections:
- a half plus one of the seats are taken by county and district councillors;
 - a quarter plus one by parish council nominations; and
 - the remainder filled by the Secretary of State to represent the national interest.
- 7.19. Currently, Lancashire County Council, Lancaster City Council and Eden District Council do not have land in the Yorkshire Dales National Park. Since each local authority is entitled to at least one member on the Authority, the membership of the National Park Authority would have to be re-distributed.

This is done by way of a Statutory Order made by the Secretary of State following confirmation of any boundary variations, and normally following consultation with the local authorities concerned and Natural England.

- 7.20. The Lake District National Park Authority would not gain any additional authorities since Cumbria County Council, Eden District Council and South Lakeland District Council are all already represented on the Lake District National Park Authority. A matter for consideration may be whether a substantial increase in the area of one authority (e.g. Eden District, should the Orton Fells be included in that National Park) should result in a rebalancing of seats.