

INTRODUCTION & IDENTITY: Consultation Draft

Westmorland and Furness Design Code: Introduction & Identity

LUC

Consultation Draft October 2025



Introduction

1. What is a design code?

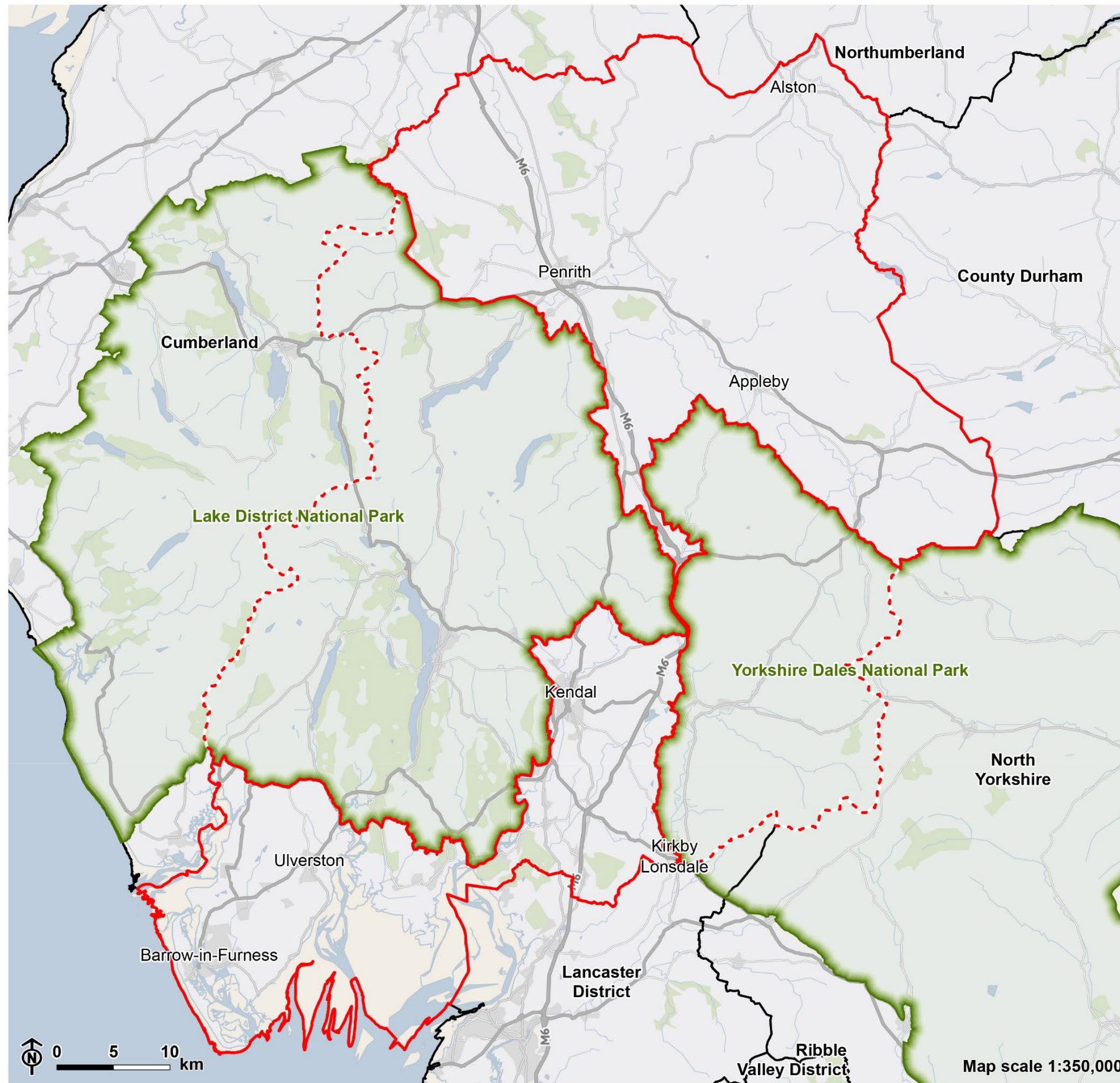
1.1 The design of new development in response to its place is important to everyone. Design is not only how it looks, but a combination of:

- How new development preserves, enhances and interacts with the landscape, nature, climate, hydrology, townscape and the historic environment,
- How well it functions day to day: is it fit for purpose, well connected by different means of transport, safe, attractive and accessible? Does it promote healthy lifestyles? Does it protect and provide suitable residential amenity?
- Its contribution to climate change: will it reduce carbon emissions and adapt to a changing climate, while increasing biodiversity and access to nature?
- Its economic performance: is it viable to build, built to last and capable of adaptation and reuse? Is it convenient and economic to occupy and travel to and from? Will the design support and promote good stewardship and maintenance?

1.2 Design is a complex topic. This makes it hard to understand or measure what good design is. The National Design Guide breaks design down into the ten characteristics of well-designed places as a helpful starting point.

1.3 This design code expands on the National Design Guide by providing a clear set of requirements for new development to meet. This way, it is easier for anyone involved in the planning process to check whether a design meets the local and national design policies.

1.4 Westmorland and Furness includes parts of two National Parks: the Lake District National Park and the Yorkshire Dales National Park. The Lake District and the Yorkshire Dales each have their own planning authorities, which handle all planning functions within the parks' boundaries. This design code and supporting information are therefore applicable to the area within the Westmorland and Furness Council boundary, but outside of the Lake District and Yorkshire Dales National Parks. This is illustrated in Figure 1.



Westmorland and Furness Design Code
Westmorland and Furness Council



Figure 1: Location Plan

- Westmorland and Furness Local Planning Authority Area
- Westmorland and Furness Council Administrative Area
- National park boundary
- Neighbouring local authority

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Design Code Vision and Values

1.5 Design codes have a vision: An overall set of objectives that each section of code and guidance helps to deliver. The core aims of the vision are supported by five values. The Design Code's vision and values are the result of public consultation that took place in the early stages of preparing this code.

1.6 The vision of the Design Code is that new development in Westmorland and Furness will be well-designed to:

- respond to the changing needs of communities;
- respect and reinforce the district's valued and diverse built and natural heritage;
- create accessible and healthy places; and
- help address the impacts of the climate emergency and enhance biodiversity.

Values

Green thinking

1.7 To help achieve the Council's ambition of net-zero carbon emissions by 2037, the design code will require sustainable design, ensuring that developments are resilient to the impacts of climate change and reinforce the area's status as a nationally-recognised leader in clean energy and de-carbonisation. Biodiversity will be enhanced through new development.

Protecting local distinctiveness

1.8 The identity of Westmorland and Furness is distinctive and strong, as expressed in a rich and diverse built, natural, industrial and cultural heritage – to which new development must respond through high quality design.

Well-designed housing for all

1.9 Access to safe, efficient and warm housing is paramount to tackling inequality. Westmorland and Furness as local planning authority will ensure that the design of new homes of all tenures meets the current and future needs of residents, including for accommodation which is accessible and adaptable to meet their changing needs.

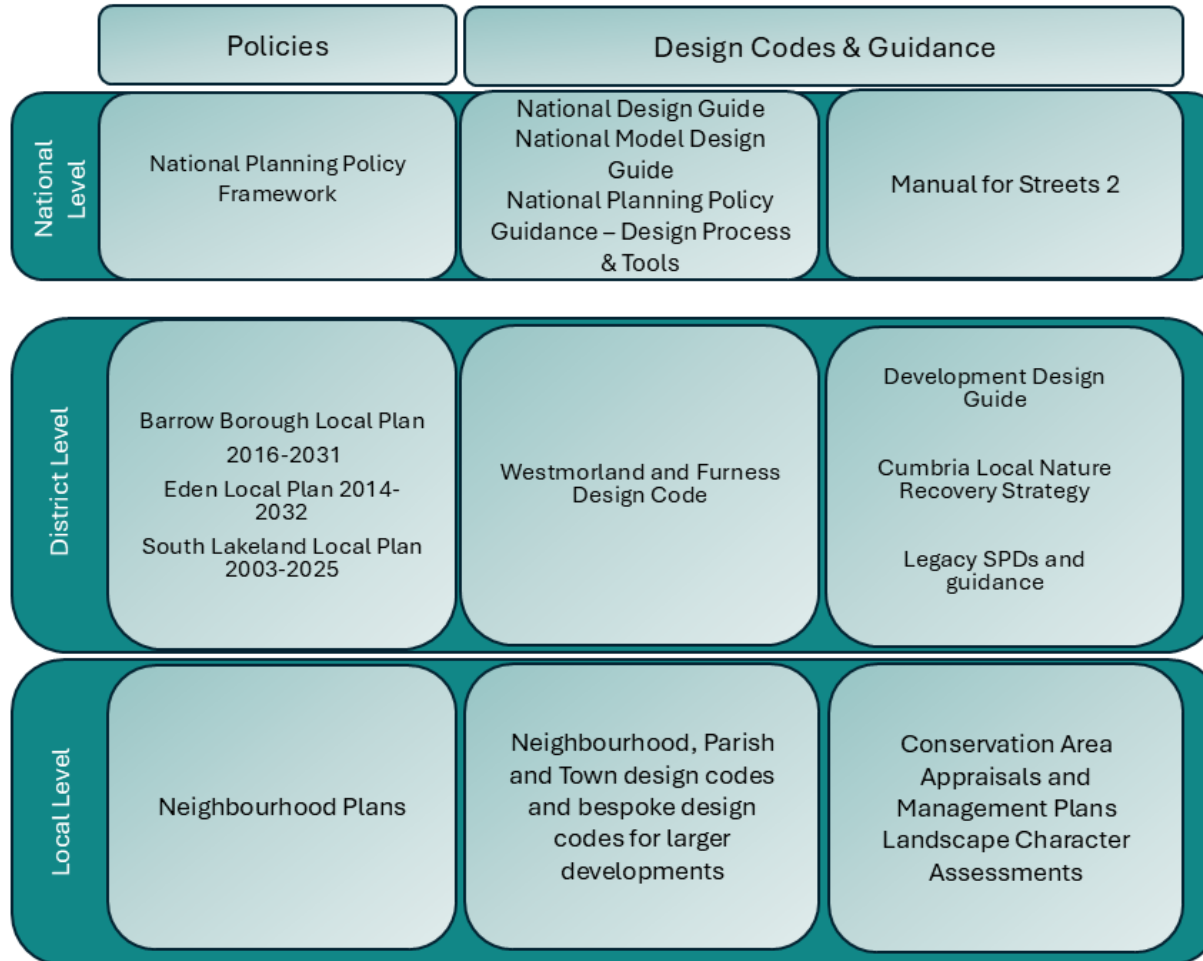
An accessible, healthy environment

1.10 The well-being of residents will be promoted, enhancing active travel opportunities throughout the district, by creating attractive well-designed and well-connected places. Giving priority to walking, cycling and public transport will enhance the accessibility of services and places for everyone.

Inspirational places

1.11 The Design Code will protect and inspire new development to enhance the district's beautiful natural and built environments, industrial heritage, distinctive sense of place and connectivity. The district's cherished and sustainable places will inspire people and businesses to make Westmorland and Furness their home.

Planning Policy Context



The full list of policy documents in use in Westmorland and Furness are listed in the [Westmorland and Furness Planning Policy Framework](#).

District Level

1.12 The Westmorland and Furness Design Code covers the whole of Westmorland and Furness Local Planning Authority, excluding those parts within the Lake District National Park and the Yorkshire Dales National Park. It is to be adopted as a Supplementary Planning Document (SPD), meaning it is a material consideration in the determination of planning applications. It is relevant to all new developments, for all uses, including extensions to existing buildings and land uses.

1.13 Design codes support the Legacy Local Plans by setting a vision for design quality, then how to achieve good design by setting out clear requirements and guidance. The Westmorland and Furness Design Code will be reviewed and updated to align with the design policies of the forthcoming Westmorland and Furness Local Plan. This Design Code will also complement design codes for large development sites and any design codes prepared as part of Neighbourhood Plans.

1.14 The design code supports the implementation of design policies in the three legacy Local Plans, in particular Barrow DS5, Eden DEV5 and South Lakeland CS1.1 & DM2. It also supports all other policies that relate to design in the legacy local plans, made neighbourhood plans (NP/NDP), and other development plan documents including:

- *Allithwaite and Cartmel NDP AC1
- *Grange-over-Sands NP10
- Haversham & Hincaster NP HH1
- **Lazonby NP D2 & D3
- Penrith NP 1
- Upper Eden NDP2 & 4
- Arnside & Silverdale DPD AS08

*Has a supporting Design Code or ** Design Guide.

1.15 The individual codes include references to the legacy local plan policies that the code supports. Summary tables that show the legacy local plan references for each code are located [here](#). A similar summary has been prepared for the made Neighbourhood Plans in Westmorland and Furness, located [here](#).

National Level

1.16 Paragraph 133 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (2024) states that all local planning authorities should prepare design guides or codes consistent with the principles set out in the National Design Guide (NDG) and National Model Design Code (NMDC).

1.17 The NDG (2019) sets out the characteristics of well-designed places and demonstrates what good design means in practice. Whereas it is relatively straightforward to assess good design in a building, judgements on 'places' are more complex and multifaceted. The NDG addresses the question of how to recognise well designed places using ten characteristics:

- Context – enhances the surroundings.
- Identity – attractive and distinctive.
- Built form – a coherent pattern of development.
- Movement – accessible and easy to move around.
- Nature – enhanced and optimised.
- Public spaces – safe, social and inclusive.
- Uses – mixed and integrated.
- Homes and buildings – functional, healthy and sustainable.
- Resources – efficient and resilient.
- Lifespan – made to last.

1.18 A copy of the NDG is available at

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/602cef1d8fa8f5038595091b/National_design_guide.pdf.

1.19 The NMDC (2021) has been produced to help local authorities and communities decide what good design should look like in their area by setting out clear design parameters. The document provides detailed guidance on the production of design codes, guides and policies.

1.20 A copy of the NMDC is available at

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-model-design-code>.

1.21 This Design Code takes into account design considerations set out in the NDG and NMDC.

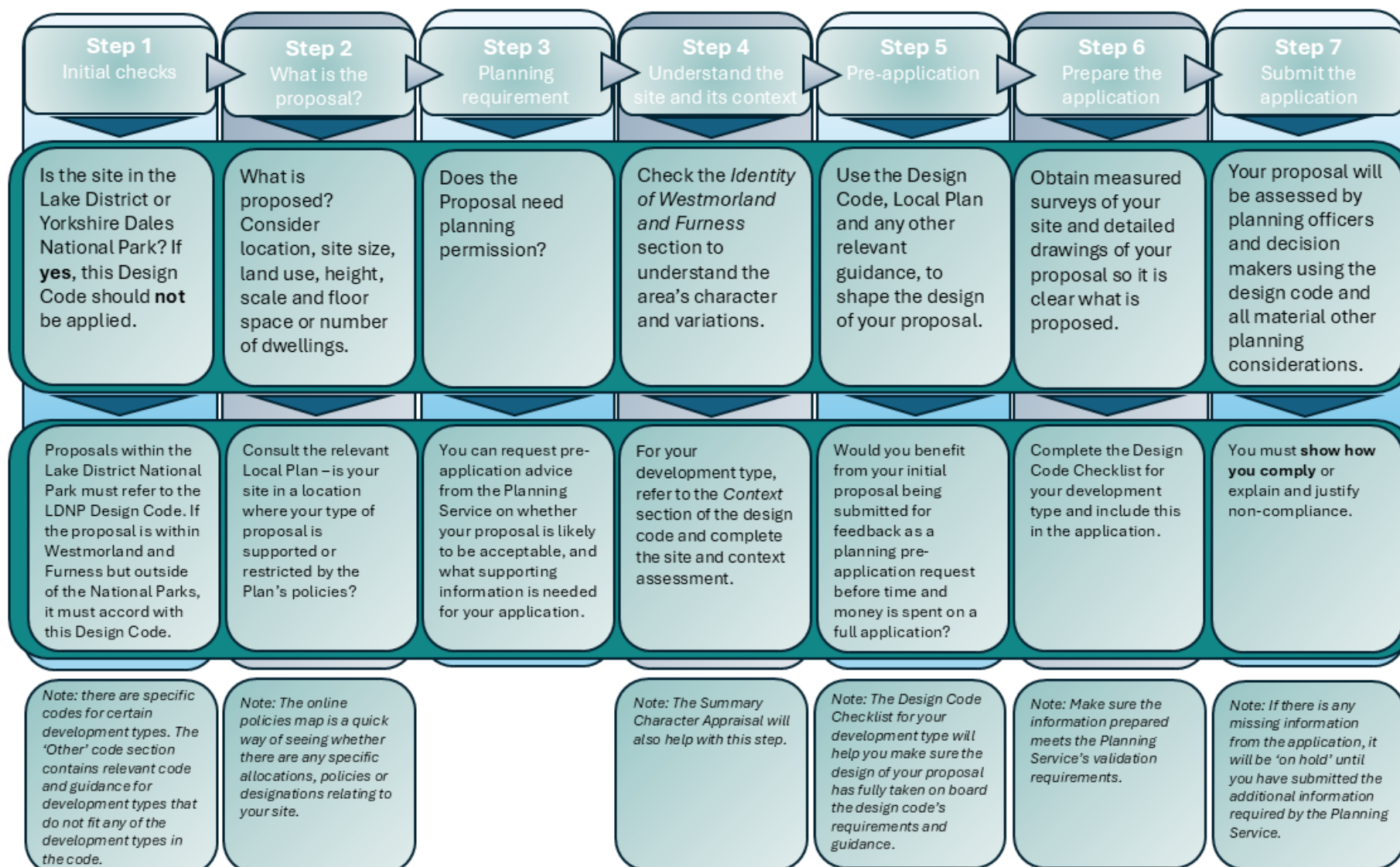
Using this design code

Who should the Design Code be used by?

1.22 The Design Code should be used by:

- Homeowners for replacement dwellings, extensions, conversions and alterations.
- Businesses extending or converting their premises or building new premises.
- Developers or owners who are seeking permission to develop their land or site.
- Designers of new development, including architects, engineers, builders, planners and agents.
- Decision makers who determine planning applications: planning officers and planning committee.
- Organisations and people who wish to comment on a planning application, such as parish councils, neighbours, residents and statutory consultees.

Design Code and the planning application process



2. How to use this Design Code

2.1 The Design Code is a resource that people can refer to quickly and easily. The Design Code provides signposts to more information, including the accompanying checklists, summary character appraisal and baseline.

2.2 Use the design code to identify the code requirements that are applicable to the specific proposal under consideration. Not all code requirements will apply to all proposals.

2.3 Follow the steps below to identify the relevant aspects of the code for your proposal:

Step 1: Choose the Type of Development

2.4 The journey through the code depends on the type of application. The sections of code that a user will access depends on the nature of their proposed development and the level of information they need. The code therefore asks users to specify whether they want to:

- Build one or more new houses
- Build a development for business
- Replace an existing dwelling
- Replace or otherwise change a shopfront
- Extend or alter an existing house
- Convert an existing barn into a dwelling or non-farming use
- Convert a larger building into dwellings

2.5 Development types that do not fall into any of the above categories should refer to the design code for 'other' development types.

Table 1 Journey through the code

New homes →	Greenfield Homes Small (up to 10 homes) →	Site and context →	Code and Guidance →	Checklist
	Greenfield Homes Large (10 or more homes) →	Site and context →	Code and Guidance →	Checklist
	Brownfield Homes Small (up to 10 homes) →	Site and context →	Code and Guidance →	Checklist
	Brownfield Homes Large (10 or more homes) →	Site and context →	Code and Guidance →	Checklist
Business →	Urban/brownfield →	Site and context →	Code and Guidance →	Checklist
	Greenfield →	Site and context →	Code and Guidance →	Checklist
	Holiday Parks and Cabins →	Site and context →	Code and Guidance →	Checklist
Rural replacement dwellings →		Site and context →	Code and Guidance →	Checklist
Shop fronts →		Site and context →	Code and Guidance →	Checklist
House extensions →		Site and context →	Code and Guidance →	Checklist
Barn conversions →		Site and context →	Code and Guidance →	Checklist
Conversion of larger buildings →		Site and context →	Code and Guidance →	Checklist
Other →		Site and context →	Code and Guidance →	Checklist

Step 2: Understand the Context and Local Character

2.6 All forms of development, whether they are new buildings, extensions, conversions or a new shopfront must be informed by a study of the site context and the historic environment, including any heritage assets. The scope and scale of the study is proportionate to the type and scale of the proposed development.

2.7 The content of this section is tailored to the type of development proposed and the validation requirements for that type of planning application.

2.8 To find out more about the context and character the accompanying supporting information document provides background information and guidance that supports the implementation of the design code. The supporting information also signposts the code user to important information, such as other guidance and policy that is outside of the design code.

Step 3: Use the Detailed Design Code

2.9 The Detailed Design Code sets out *what* a design is to achieve and *how*. The code has been kept as brief as possible, so it reads as a clear set of requirements for new development to achieve.

2.10 The Design Code is structured so users are signposted to the sections of the code that apply to their proposed development.

Step 4: Refer to Supporting Information

2.11 The Supporting Information provides background information and guidance that supports the implementation of the Design Code. The baseline sets out *why* the code sets out specific requirements. It also signposts the code user to important information, such as other guidance and policy that is outside of the design code.

Not all users will need to refer to the Supporting Information.

Step 5: Complete the Checklist

2.12 The same checklist will be used by the planning officer who assesses the application. The checklist is therefore a useful tool for applicants to make sure the proposal is fully compliant with all aspects of the code.

2.13 The checklist asks how the different sections of the code have been complied with and if not, why not? There may be valid, site-specific reasons why the code cannot be complied with, these should be explained if they apply.

Links to key documents

2.14 The documents listed below are the principal policy and guidance that are relevant to this design code. The list is not exhaustive and is subject to change as new documents are published or adopted. The full and up-to-date Consolidated Planning Policy Framework for Westmorland and Furness is at:

<https://www.westmorlandandfurness.gov.uk/planning-and-building-control/planning/planning-policy/legacy-local-plans/about-legacy-local-plans>.

- Development Design Guide
<https://www.westmorlandandfurness.gov.uk/planning-and-building-control/environment-and-planning/flooding-management-and-prevention>

- Cumbria Landscape Character Guidance and Toolkit
<https://www.cumberland.gov.uk/planning-and-building-control/conservation/landscape-character-assessments>
- Barrow Borough Local Plan 2016-2031
<https://www.westmorlandandfurness.gov.uk/planning-and-building-control/planning/planning-policy/legacy-local-plans/barrow-borough-local-plan>
- Barrow Port Area Action Plan
<https://www.barrowbc.gov.uk/residents/planning/planning-policy/examination-of-local-plan/examination-library/port>
- Eden Local Plan 2014-2032
<https://www.westmorlandandfurness.gov.uk/planning-and-building-control/planning/planning-policy/legacy-local-plans/eden-local-plan>
- South Lakeland Core Strategy
<https://www.westmorlandandfurness.gov.uk/planning-and-building-control/planning/planning-policy/legacy-local-plans/south-lakeland-local-plan>
- South Lakeland Development
<https://www.westmorlandandfurness.gov.uk/planning-and-building-control/planning/planning-policy/legacy-local-plans/south-lakeland-local-plan>
- South Lakeland Land Allocations DPD
<https://www.westmorlandandfurness.gov.uk/planning-and-building-control/planning/planning-policy/legacy-local-plans/south-lakeland-local-plan>
- Arnsdale and Silverdale AONB DPD
<https://www.lancaster.gov.uk/planning/planning-policy/arnside-and-silverdale-aonb-dpd>
- Cumbria Minerals and Waste Local Plan
<https://www.cumberland.gov.uk/planning-and-building-control/planning-policy/minerals-and-waste-local-plan>
- National Planning Policy Framework
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-planning-policy-framework-2>
- National Design Guide <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-design-guide>
- National Model Design Code
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-model-design-code>
- Planning Data <https://www.planning.data.gov.uk>
- Planning Portal <https://www.planningportal.co.uk/>

List of sundry items

- Glossary
- Design code character template for Neighbourhood Plans.

3. The Identity of Westmorland and Furness – Key Aspects of Place

What makes Westmorland and Furness

3.1 Westmorland and Furness is a large district that stretches to over 100km in a straight line from the shore of Walney Island on the Irish Sea to the summit of Hard Rigg near Alston, on the border with Northumberland. It contains parts of two National Landscapes, borders two National Parks and has coastal, peninsular, valley and upland landscapes. Within these landscapes there is a rich diversity of vegetation, habitats, water bodies, land uses, settlements, places, views, vistas, spaces and buildings.

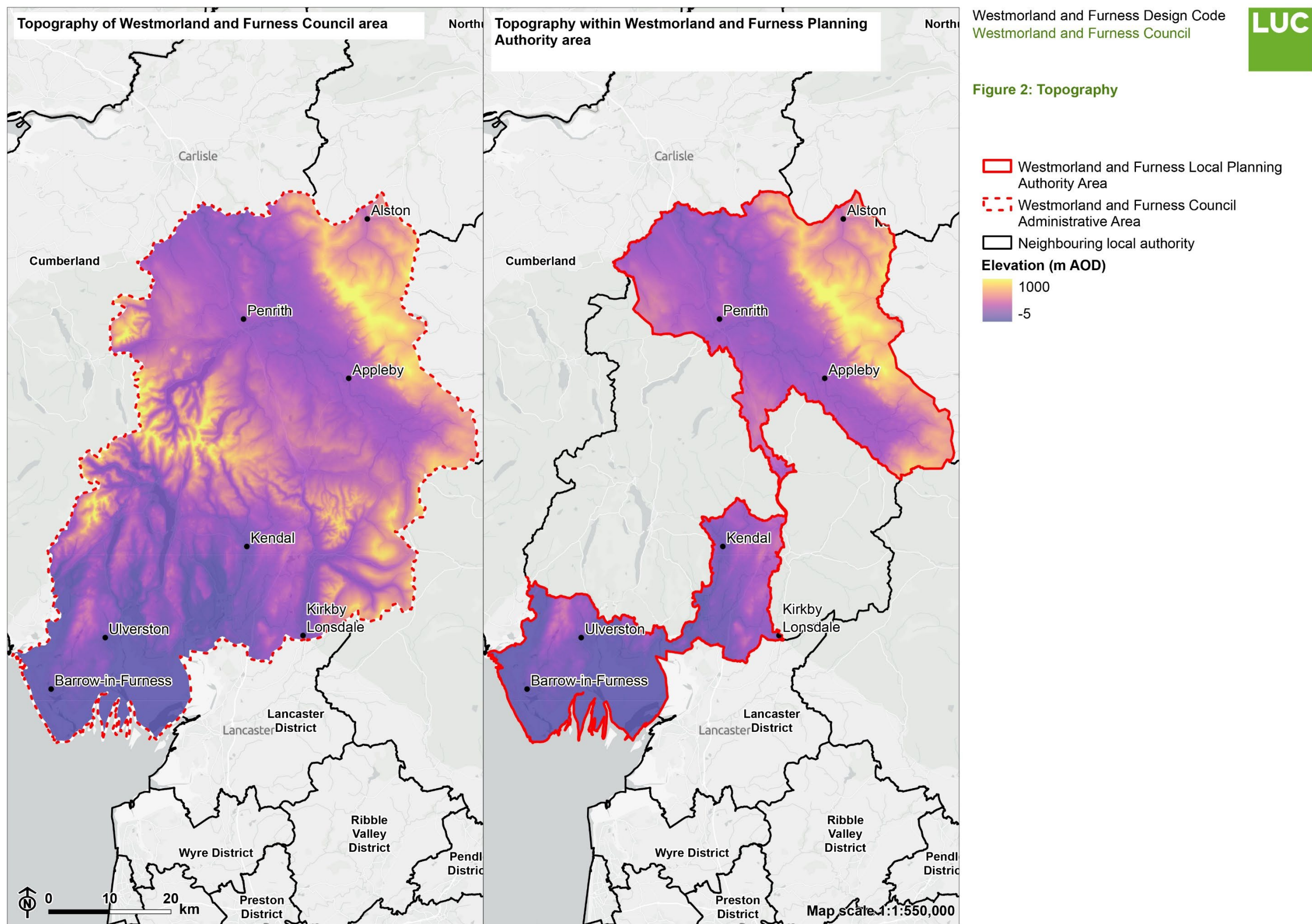
3.2 This district-wide design code places high importance on understanding the site and its context. To help users of the code, this section briefly sets out the characteristics that make Westmorland and Furness distinct from other parts of the country. It is important for the design of new development to take account of these characteristics which we call 'What makes Westmorland and Furness'.

3.3 These characteristics are:

- Places and buildings respond to topography
- Views out to landscape, seascape or the natural environment
- Places experienced at walking pace and providing a range of environments and experiences
- Hierarchies of spaces, buildings and materials
- Distinct public spaces, edges and boundaries
- Distinctive built form and grain of buildings
- Local and traditional materials

3.4 These are each described below.

3.5 The aspects of new design that are diluting the character of Westmorland and Furness and make it look, feel and function like anywhere else in England are also discussed.



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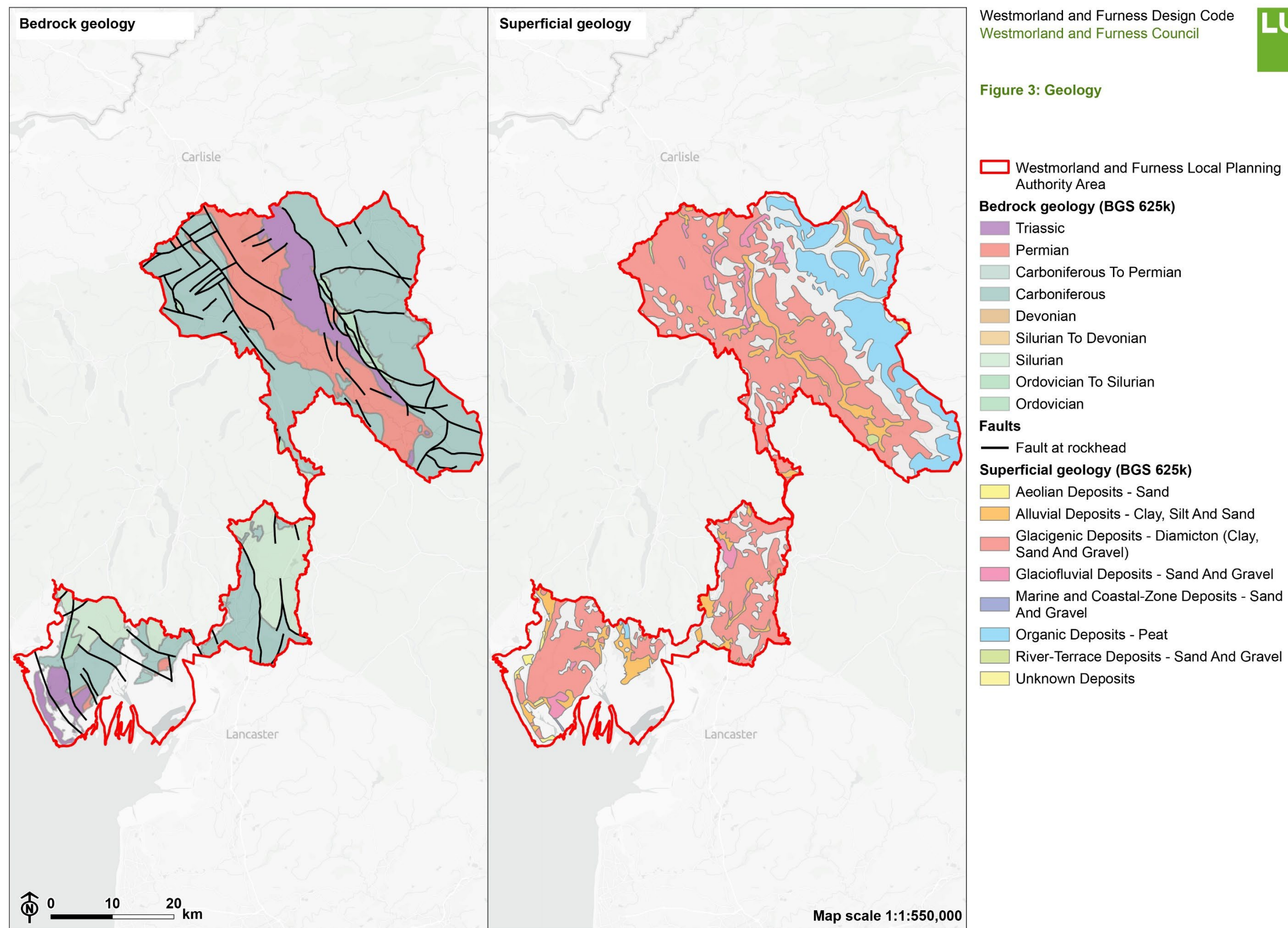
3.6 The uplands of the North Pennines, Yorkshire Dales and Lakeland Fells border much of the design code area, and provide a backdrop to many of its settlements and landscapes. Indeed, the two National Parks almost meet at the River Lune in the heart of Westmorland and Furness District. The National Parks effectively split the geographical extent of the Westmorland and Furness local planning authority area (and therefore the design code area) in two: to the north is the expansive Eden Valley, a vast open valley bounded by the North Pennines to the east, and the Lakeland Fells to the west. The Kent Valley is hillier, but is similarly framed by the uplands of the National Parks before opening and flattening into an estuarine landscape. The Furness and Cartmel Peninsulas are bounded by the south Lakeland Fells to the north and Morecambe Bay to the south.

3.7 The northern portion of Westmorland consists of mostly rural and agricultural land uses which form the foundation of its character. It features gently rolling hills, fertile valleys, and extensive farmland, and is dominated by the Eden valley and its tributaries. By contrast, on the eastern side of the Eden Valley, the North Pennine National Landscape is an abrupt, high and steep landform defined by its open aspect and extensive moorland vegetation and waterways.

3.8 The Furness and Cartmel Peninsulas in the south-west of the district are recognisable by their coastal and rural landscapes. The Furness Peninsula extends into Morecambe Bay, characterised by its vast tidal flats, salt marshes, and low-lying coastline. Inland, the landscape features rolling hills, wooded valleys, and agricultural land. The Furness Fells, a smaller but striking range of hills, adds to the area's diversity of character and the Duddon Estuary and the Leven Estuary are notable natural features, providing habitats for a variety of wildlife and adding to the area's ecological richness. The wide open views provided across Morecambe Bay and from the Eden Valley/Pennines are less intimate and enclosed than the Lake District's deep valleys.

3.9 On the southern edge of the district, Arnside & Silverdale National Landscape is recognised for its outstanding landscape supported by its unique limestone geology and limestone pavements, as well as spectacular views, a sense of tranquillity and a rich sense of history. The South Cumbria Low Fells in the south of the district are characterised by gently rolling hills and fells, and the landscape generally exhibits a mix of semi-improved valley pasture and upland fringe grazing land.

3.10 More detail on the district's character is provided in the Summary Character Appraisal that accompanies this design code plus the [Cumbria Landscape Character Guidance and Toolkit](#).



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3.11 At a very broad scale, the structural geology of Cumbria is dominated by a central dome of volcanic rock which formed the mountain ranges of the Lake District. Surrounding this central dome, in a roughly concentric circle, are sedimentary rocks including mudstones, siltstones, limestones and sandstones. To the south of the district, in a band along the south Cumbria coast are Carboniferous limestones which give rise to the distinctive scenery found around the Kent estuary. These characteristic limestone features include scars, cliffs and exposed areas of limestone pavement.

3.12 The northern and eastern areas of the district can be broadly defined by bands of bedrock trending north-west to south-east. These generally give rise to three main character areas, based on the underlying geology: limestone forming the Westmorland Fells, red sandstone forming the Eden Valley, and millstone grit forming the North Pennines.

3.13 The underlying geology has had great influence on the land use and development throughout the district. This is visibly made evident both through the multitude of land management practices, and the use of local building materials.

Places and buildings respond to topography

From the low-lying south Cumbria coastline, including the vast flat expanse of Morecambe Bay, gradually rising to the South Cumbria Low Fells and eventually the imposing Cumbria High Fells, the response to topography in Westmorland has formed the essence of buildings and settlements.

3.14 In settlements with varying gradients, buildings often step up or down hills, with eaves and roof ridges following the slopes of the land. In these settlements, buildings or groups of buildings can be elevated above the road or set downhill from the level of the road, and gardens can be at different levels to their neighbours or be built into the hillside with terraces or steps to accommodate the gradient changes. In contrast, buildings appear more evenly laid out on areas of flat land. The way settlements respond to the topography gives the district's settlements distinctive relationships with the landscape that can be appreciated from within and outside of settlements. These include views over valley floor settlements, views of settlements occupying raised shoulders of land and upland, and open, panoramic views of waterside and lowland settlements.

3.15 The landscape is also formed by the directional flow of water. The northern half of the district drains to the north and the southern half generally drains to the south towards Morecambe Bay. Rivers and watercourses shape the unique character of different areas within Westmorland and Furness, and many of the settlements have been located and laid out in response to these watercourses.

3.16 Orientation is a key feature of the area - the orientation of the main façades is often positioned in response to the topography of the site and the landscape views. In Westmorland & Furness, south-facing elevations are ideal for capturing sunlight and there are fewer openings facing north, with landforms, tree cover and hedges providing shelter from the prevailing winds.



Eaves levels and roof ridges are stepped up the hill. Dalton.



Low lying development occupying the valley floor. Kendal.



Buildings are elevated and stepping up the slope. Appleby.



Street line follows the brow of a hill. Langwathby.



Terraced houses built at the foot of the hillside. Low Hesket.



Horizontality and verticality on flat land. Barrow.



Irregular street lines following natural topography with views of the fells beyond. Kirkby Lonsdale.

Views out to landscape, seascape or the natural environment

3.17 The district has a wealth of landscapes ranging from the Pennine and Lakeland hills, the broad expanses of Morecambe Bay, the Duddon Estuary and the Eden Valley, the rolling landscapes of Furness, Cartmel and the Kent Valley to the drumlins of Kendal, South Lakeland and Furness. Views and vistas of landscapes and seascapes root spaces and buildings into the wider place and are highly important in Westmorland and Furness. Any time spent in Westmorland and Furness will invariably take in the spectacular natural beauty, and this contributes to the character of the landscape. Often present in views are the rugged mountains of the Lake District to the west, and rolling green hills, rough limestone cliffs, and incised valleys of the Yorkshire Dales to the east. These provide a distinctive setting to Westmorland and Furness and are the characteristic backdrop to many locations within the district.

3.18 These short and long range views out create a connection with the surrounding countryside, be it woodland, coastal expanses, fields or hillsides. In some cases these views create a boundary to a settlement, whereas on flat land there is an almost endless vista along straight streets.

3.19 Even where the landscape is less dramatic or less visible, simply being able to see woodland, fields, greenery or water provides a flourish of character and interest to a development.



Vista of the valley side, greening a tight urban space. Kendal.



Glimpses through groups of buildings to the fields. Ainstable.



Woodland backdrop. Penrith.



Connecting everyone to the landscape with views out from public spaces. Kirkby Lonsdale.



A prominent church tower amidst a rural landscape. Great Salkeld.



'Endless' vista along a straight street. Barrow.



Views of the wider landscape provide context and 'borrowed' greenery for urban streets, such as this Victorian street near Barrow town centre.

Places experienced at walking pace and providing a range of environments and experiences

The layout of the settlements in Westmorland and Furness benefits from a historically pedestrian friendly approach which naturally linked streets through roads and paths and therefore integrated the community.

3.20 Permeability – the extent to which urban layouts permit the movement of people or vehicles – is a positive attribute in urban design as it supports ease of movement and connects and building communities. Connected or 'permeable' networks encourage walking and cycling and make places easier to navigate.

3.21 In Westmorland and Furness, these routes include open footpaths and narrow alleyways in towns and villages, only accessible to pedestrians and cyclists. The arrival of motor vehicles saw roads developed from existing thoroughfares, now experienced as narrow one way streets or two way carriageways. Where buildings face the street, the placement and design of doors often encourages interaction with the street and historically contributed to a lively, pedestrian-friendly environment. Whilst larger purpose built roads exist, these are largely on the outskirts of existing developments. A legacy of the ages of the district's historic towns and villages is that pavements and carriageways can often be narrow and highly enclosed by buildings. This results in some areas of public realm that are

less accessible to all, as well as others where the proximity of buildings and pedestrians to the carriageway has the effect of slowing vehicle traffic.

3.22 The permeability of the district's settlements on foot is complemented by there being a wide variety of public spaces and streets that form a network. A walk through a market town, village or even the grid of streets in Barrow is rewarded by different places, landmarks and spaces coming into view gradually. Historic settlements and the higher quality new developments have a range of spaces, whether market places, squares, shopping streets, river corridors, river crossings, green spaces, side streets, back streets, alleyways, passageways, yards and courts.

3.23 This richness and variety of spaces extends to even the smallest village: the spaces we walk or wheel through as we pass through a settlement have different shapes, levels of enclosure, busyness, greenness, hardness, landmarks and views, vistas and glimpses that provide variety and interest and a sense of place.



Informal residential street with shared surface and simple speed control. Kendal.



Narrowing and sweeping street with interesting building grain creating visual interest. Penrith.



Permeability through a choice of pedestrian routes. Dalton.



Intimate street space. Kirkby Lonsdale.



This simple 90-degree T-junction with narrow carriageways means no one is likely to turn the corner at speed, making a safer and more inviting street. Temple Sowerby.



Transition between open public space to intimate street. Cartmel.

Hierarchies of spaces, buildings and materials

The history and development evolution of Westmorland and Furness has resulted in a spatial hierarchy in its architecture, meaning an engaging and appealing variety in the size, material choices and detailing of buildings within a settlement.

3.24 The hierarchy of a place begins with the hierarchy of spaces, from waterfronts, market places and parks, down to back streets and side streets.

3.25 Hierarchy is also in terms of building location, scale and architecture: In houses there are the country houses and halls at one end, cottages and workers' houses and flats at the other. In farmsteads the importance (and appearance) of each building reflects its function and value to the farm.

3.26 The third level of hierarchy is in the choice and use of materials. Even on the same building the front or best elevation will look the neatest or most expensive compared to the sides and back. A farmhouse will look neater and higher status than a barn or cottage. Within a village street, the higher status dwellings will have neater facing materials and look more orderly in their design than humbler homes and utilitarian buildings.

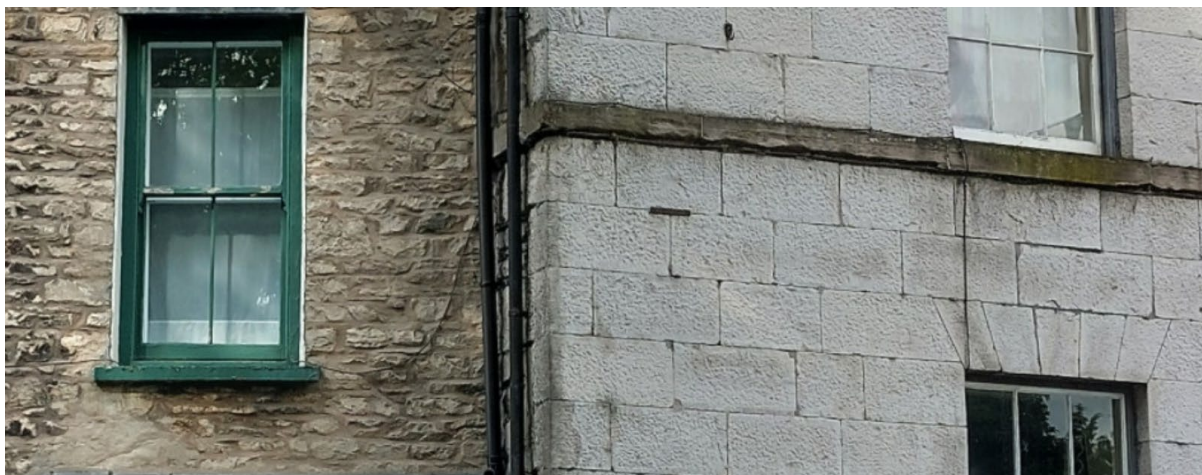
3.27 At every turn and in every place, the design of spaces, the design and scale of buildings and the choice materials each allow a building, place or space to be placed in a hierarchy.



Although cottage-like in appearance these two fairly large houses use a combination of materials (roughcast render, hung tiles and rosemary red clay tile roofs) and detailing to show that they are higher status than cottages. Barrow.



Render for the house, bare stone for the barn. Cartmel.



Stone and details communicate the importance of different buildings. The building on the left has a much more informal appearance due to the use of coursed rubble stone (it may have been rendered or limewashed historically). The regularity and smoothness of the stone on the right suggests a building with higher status. Kendal.



Even on humbler buildings like cottages, the painting of the stonework on the front elevation (left) gives a cleaner and neater appearance than the underlying bare rubble on the side elevation (right). Kendal.



This expansive village green is lined by a range of building types, styles and heights with space for trees to dominate the skyline. This balances out the modest form of the green itself. Melmerby.



A contemporary material hierarchy using stone, timber cladding and roughcast render, with smooth reveals for the openings. Lindal-in-Furness.

Distinct public spaces, edges and boundaries

Spaces, the public realm and settlements have clean cut and defined edges. It's the presence or absence of verges, greenery, trees and hedges and the presence, nature and choice of manmade boundary features (walls, railings and their heights, styles) that can often have a strong bearing on the character of a place, settlement, townscape or landscape.

3.28 Traditional public realm walling and boundary materials offer a reflection of the local geology and demonstrate traditional skills and craftsmanship. These colours, and the occasional sparkling surface of these stones, create the characteristic hues of the towns and villages in the area.

3.29 The buildings and the street are often defined by appropriate setbacks and building lines that contribute to a cohesive and well-structured streetscape. Boundary treatments reflect the local character and contribute positively to the street, using materials and designs that enhance the public realm. Dry stone construction, without mortar, is common for boundary walls in Westmorland and Furness. Limestone is the main source of walling material around Kendal and the

Furness Peninsula. The irregular weathered shapes of limestone blocks are often used as sculptural forms to the top of low boundary walls for residential properties. Sandstone and slatestone are often used as building materials in the parts of Westmorland and Furness bordering the Lake District. Around the Eden Valley, sandstone historically provided a sound and easily worked walling material, in either pink, brown or red. Less frequently, field stone from glacial deposits (boulders and stones found within the finer clays of the surface geology) is used as walling material.

3.30 Particularly in rural settings, dry stone walls and hedgerows are the most common types of boundary treatments. They integrate seamlessly with the landscape and also provide an important contribution to the biodiversity targets, whereas formal walls and railings give a more urban character.



Formal wall and railings giving an urban character. Appleby.



Retaining wall and railing creating a two-tier boundary that assists with creating a level access on sloping land. Kendal.



Diminishing rubble courses and rocky coping reinforcing village character. Burton-in-Kendal.



Taller fences adjoining the public space are softened by planting that is of ecological and amenity value. Greystoke.



Simple, but solid-looking stone walls echo both the building line and the kerbline and provide a decisive break between private land and the public realm. Grange-over-Sands.



These low walls provide a robust yet characterful edge to the highway and gardens and have a sense of permanence compared to fences. Lazonby.



Hedge and treeline providing a soft and green edge to the built up area bordering the countryside. Kendal.

Distinct built form and grain of buildings

The built form and grain - the size and shape of building plots and the size and variety of buildings within them - give streets their rhythm and character. In Westmorland and Furness, the variety in built form and grain is the result of centuries of development in response to the landscape around it and human necessity and has created a varied and attractive built environment.

3.31 Built form is the reflection of the culture of the district and how it developed. The same street or village green could have a vastly different character according to whether plot and building widths are narrow or broad, consistent or varied and whether there is a mix of building uses and house types. It gives different settlements and different parts of settlements (e.g. inner and outer Barrow or Penrith) different characters.

3.32 The landscape of Westmorland and Furness, with its irregular topography and winding roads, has created a compact, irregular built environment, although there are some exceptions to this such the regular formal layout of Barrow. In areas where the local character is defined by regularity and symmetry, such as in traditional Georgian or Victorian settings, designs characteristically echo these patterns through the arrangement of buildings and their features, such as windows and doors.

3.33 In some of the district's settlements and landscapes, the views over the rooftops and roofscape can be important aspects of their character and distinctiveness. Typically, roofs are simple in design, with most being pitched and featuring equal eaves contribute positively to local character, but shallow roofs are uncommon in the region. Large unbroken roofs are a key characteristic of some historic buildings, such as barns or rows of terrace houses, and in these situations, dormers and rooflights are largely uncharacteristic.

3.34 Chimneys are a significant feature in the traditional architecture of Westmorland & Furness, contributing to the area's distinct character. Historically, they served functional purposes, but today, they are important elements that add interest to the roofscape and skyline, reflecting the region's architectural heritage and enhancing the visual appeal of the roofscape and contributing positively to the local skyline.

3.35 Traditionally, windows have a vertical emphasis, with height greater than width. New developments should reflect this proportion, particularly in areas with a strong historical character.



Formal, high density housing. Barrow.



Fine grain street pattern. Kendal.



Regular and symmetrical Georgian housing. Burton-in-Kendal.



Phases of development seen from street level. Burton-in-Kendal.



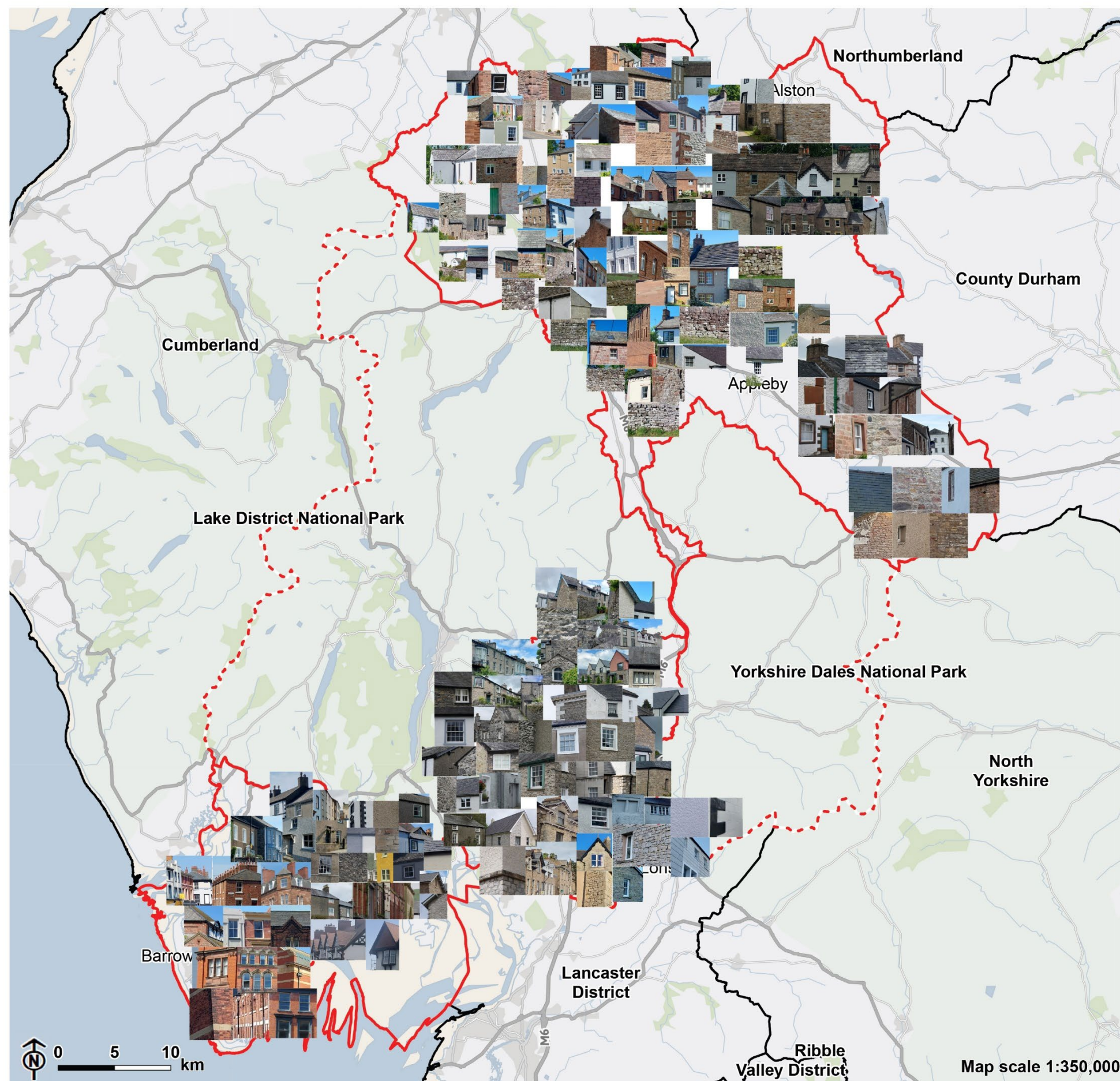
Fine grain, walkable, vibrant settlement with access to shops and services. Grange-over-Sands.



L-shaped terrace with active frontages. It has a range of building heights, set backs and plot widths, but united by the use of gabled forms, traditional proportions and materials. Kirkby Lonsdale.

Local and traditional building materials

The traditional materials used in existing buildings and walls contribute a great deal to the overall character and identity of a place, tying it to the landscape by reflecting the distinctive colours and textures of the natural environment, in particular the geology. Traditional buildings in Westmorland & Furness are shaped by the use of local stone and slate, achieving their character based on the specific geographical area where they were built. Broadly speaking, the colour palette of Westmorland and Furness is relatively varied and largely determined by the use of local building materials such as slate, red and pink sandstone and grey limestone.



Westmorland and Furness Design Code
Westmorland and Furness Council



Figure 4: Materials Map

- Westmorland and Furness Local Planning Authority Area
- Westmorland and Furness Council Administrative Area
- Neighbouring local authority



A small sample of the wide variety of building stone found across the district. Clockwise from top left: Barrow, Alston, Dufton, Ivegill, Appleby, Ulverston and Kirkby Lonsdale.



The six examples above are from different towns and villages in Westmorland and Furness: Ulverston, Kirkby Lonsdale, Langwathby, Grange-over-Sands and two examples in Dalton: painted and natural.

3.36 These materials reflect the area's distinctive geology and have been integral to maintaining architectural harmony with the surrounding environment and reflecting the hierarchy of spaces and groups of buildings through material choices. The choice of materials used in new buildings plays a crucial role in maintaining the district's distinctiveness.

3.37 The type, colour and texture of stone varies widely across Westmorland and Furness. How stone is shaped, finished, applied and pointed also varies across the area and between different types of buildings at the local level. This is why understanding the site and its content is key to choosing the right stone and pointing. If the local stone is no longer quarried alternatives may be sourcing the same stone from elsewhere, or an alternative material of the same colour.

3.38 There is also a temporal aspect: many types of local stone have been hard and expensive to obtain before the industrial revolution, to being quarried and transported on an industrial scale for around 100 years, to being difficult and expensive to obtain once more as commercial quarrying has ceased or has been scaled back.

3.39 The texture of roughcast render is an important detail, whether the natural finish is used or the render is painted over. The degree of roughness depends on the sizes of the stones in the render and the amount of paint over it. The texture can be seen up close, and from a distance.

3.40 Barrow is unusual in the district in that it has the same building materials as southwest Lancashire: a local red sandstone but much more commonly brick. Elsewhere in the district, it is not uncommon that the stone construction of buildings is not visible, due to a coat of roughcast render. The render is often left white, although in some cases, such as in Ulverston, the render is colourfully painted. There is also a tradition of only rendering or limewashing the more important buildings or elevations such as the front of a townhouse, or the principal farmhouse whilst the walls of the working farm buildings, including any attached to the farmhouse, are left as bare stone.

3.41 There is less variation in roofing materials: slate has historically been the main roofing material used throughout Westmorland and Furness. There are two principal types: the Cumbria blue/grey slate and the Westmorland green slate. Towards the east of the district, locally quarried stone slate roofs are often seen, but even in these areas stone slate roofs are a minority among the local slate, especially as stone slates were replaced with local slate when buildings were re-roofed. All types of slate, including stone slate were in different sizes and were laid in diminishing courses: the smallest slates are nearest the ridge of the roof, gradually increasing in size to the largest slates above the eaves.



Bare stone walls with timber door and window frames. Kendal



Red brick is a common material in specific areas, seen on houses, commercial buildings, walls and chimneys. Barrow.



Red sandstone quoins and white render. Appleby.



Traditional white render on external wall. Cartmel.



Colourfully painted render. Ulverston.



Red sandstone used in church construction. Great Salkeld.



Timber shop fronts set within exposed, coursed stone walls. Kirkby Lonsdale.



This newbuild in Kirkby Lonsdale makes excellent use of stone for walling quoins (or cornerstones) and sills and lintels. The thickness of the walls shelters the timber windows and give the building a sturdy and vernacular character.

What we don't want to see

3.42 These are the factors that make new developments in Westmorland and Furness feel, look and function like they might be anywhere in England:

- Lack of understanding and response to landscape and townscape character context and the local vernacular.
- Streets and spaces with no sense of individuality, variety or hierarchy.
- Car centric design.
- Lack of a clear green infrastructure network.
- Materials that are artificial or not rooted in place.
- Generic places rather than distinctive places.
- The use of standard or generic house types, building designs and building components.

Design Code and Guidance

3.43 Understanding context and character applies to all development proposals and is fundamental in ensuring new development is inquired by and contributes to local distinctiveness. It is also a useful reference point for development which falls under [permitted development rights](#).

3.44 Detailed design codes have been developed specifically for the seven most common types of planning application submitted to the Authority. These are:

- *New homes:*
 - Greenfield Homes Small (up to 10 homes)
 - Greenfield Homes Large (10 or more homes)
 - Brownfield Homes Small (up to 10 homes)
 - Brownfield Homes Large (10 or more homes)
- *Business:*
 - Brownfield Business Development
 - Greenfield Business Development
 - Holiday Parks and Cabins
- Rural replacement dwellings
- House extensions
- Barn conversions
- Conversion of larger buildings
- Shopfronts
- Other development



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