DOLPHINHOLME
NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN
First Draft Plan 2016 - 2031

December 2018

Prepared by The Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group on behalf of Ellel Parish Council and Nether Wyresdale Parish Council
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Appendix 1 Neighbourhood Survey Results
WELCOME

Two years ago work commenced on a neighbourhood plan for Dolphinholme on behalf of the Ellel Parish Council and Nether Wyresdale Parish Council in response to the progression of the emerging development plan for Lancaster. Residents formed a steering group who have gathered on a regular basis to formulate this First Draft Plan. You will recall completing a Neighbourhood Survey and attending consultation events regarding development options for the village. This draft Dolphinholme Neighbourhood Plan (DNP) is produced as a result of the efforts of the steering group.

Your views on the future management and growth of the DNP area are sought over an 8 week consultation period commencing on 6th December 2018 to 31st January 2019. A copy of the First Draft Plan can be viewed in The Fleece Inn during this time or you can obtain an electronic copy by contacting dolphinholmeplan@gmail.com
1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 This section explains what neighbourhood planning is, what the benefits are and how the DNP will sit alongside the Lancaster District Local Plan (LDLP) and Wyre Local Plan (WLP) once adopted. It also shows the extent of the defined DNP area and explains what consultation has been undertaken to inform the First Draft Plan.

What is a Neighbourhood Development Plan?

1.2 The Localism Act 2011 introduced Neighbourhood Planning in England. Neighbourhood planning gives communities more of a say in development and growth in their local area. They are able to choose where they want new homes, shops and offices to be located, what those buildings should look like, what infrastructure should be provided and can grant planning permission for new buildings that the community would like to see go ahead.

1.3 Neighbourhood plans have to be subjected to an independent examination and referendum before they can be used and form part of the Lancaster District Local Plan and Wyre Local Plan.

What are the benefits of neighbourhood planning?

1.4 Neighbourhood planning enables communities to play a much stronger role in shaping the areas in which they live and work and in supporting new development proposals. A neighbourhood plan forms part of the development plan sitting alongside the Local Plan prepared by the local planning authority. Decisions on planning applications will be made using both the Local Plan and the neighbourhood plan, and any other material considerations.

How will the DNP fit into the Lancaster District Local Plan and Wyre Local Plan?

1.5 The DNP will allow the community to influence future change in its area. The Localism Act sets out a number of requirements, including that all Neighbourhood Plans must have regard to national policies (National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)) and must be in general conformity with strategic policies of the adopted Local Plan. For us in Dolphinholme and the surrounding area, the most important local policy documents are the emerging Lancaster District Local Plan (LDLP) and the emerging Wyre Local Plan (WLP). Lancaster has presented its Submission Draft to the Secretary of State with an Examination in Public due to commence early 2019. Wyre is slightly more advanced with an Interim Inspector’s Report received following its Examination in Public in Summer 2018.

1.6 The strength of the DNP will be the creation of specific planning policy directly relating to the Dolphinholme Neighbourhood Plan area. This is how the local community will shape the future of the villages they live in over the plan period 2016 – 2031. During this time the DNP will be subject to review and modification as required.

How does the DNP fit into national planning policy?

1.7 National planning policy is set out in the National Planning Policy Framework (2018) (NPPF) and contains a ‘presumption in favour of sustainable development’. When determining
planning applications local planning authorities should approve proposals that accord with the development plan or (with reference to paragraph 11d of the NPPF) where there are no relevant development plan policies, or the policies which are most important for determining the applications are out of date, granting planning permission unless the NPPF states that the area is protected, or there’s a clear reason to refuse the development; or any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits.

1.8 This is particularly relevant to the policy context of the DNP in so far as paragraph 14 states that in situations where the presumption applies to applications involving housing the adverse impact of allowing development that conflicts with the neighbourhood plan is likely to significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits provided all of the following apply:

   a) The neighbourhood plan became part of the development plan two years or less before the date on which the decision is made;
   b) The neighbourhood plan contains policies and allocations to meet its identified housing requirement;
   c) The local planning authority has at least a three year supply of deliverable housing sites (against its five year housing supply requirement, including the appropriate buffer); and the local planning authority’s housing delivery was at least 45% of that required over the previous three years.

1.9 This is relevant because the DNP contains a draft housing allocation.
2. CONTEXT

2.1 The neighbourhood plan area centres upon the village of Dolphinstonme a small rural settlement lying approximately 27km to the north of Preston and approximately 10.4km south of Lancaster, close to Junction 33, M6 motorway.

2.2 Dolphinstonme is a small village situated within the Wyre Valley at the edge of the Forest of Bowland. It is a village of two halves separated by the River Wyre which also forms part of the boundary between the districts of Wyre (eastern bank) and Lancaster (western bank) at this point.

2.3 It lies adjacent to the western boundary of the protected landscape of the Forest of Bowland Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, and forms a gateway to the Bowland Fells which create a dramatic backdrop to the village.

2.4 The village, which is largely designated as a historic conservation settlement, is in two parts: a higher village and Lower Dolphinstonme, situated on the River Wyre which forms the border between the Lancaster and Wyre districts. This has resulted in the village being mainly in Ellel Parish, part of Lancaster District Council and partly in Nether Wyresdale Parish, part of Wyre Borough.

Figure 1: Aerial view of Dolphinstonme

2.5 The area has been farmed for over a 1,000 years and been part of the Royal Hunting Forest of Bowland. The village itself traces its heritage to the 18th century when it played an important part in the growth of Lancaster and Lancashire during the Industrial Revolution. In 1784, Dolphinstonme had the first mechanised worsted mill in England. At its peak, the factory employed 1,400 people who worked shifts, day and night, with many workers accommodated in specially provided houses. Corless Cottages, two rows of terraced houses, still form...
important housing today. As the worsted mill prospered, the lower part of the village was among the first settlements in the UK to have gas lighting.

2.6 Many cottages in Lower Dolphinholme together with Corless Cottages and the Fleece Inn are Grade II-listed buildings, as well as St Mark’s Church which is one of the best works of Lancaster architects Austin and Paley.

2.7 A village shop and post office no longer occupy a central location in the village although there is a shop within the Fleece Inn and the Post Office visits the village hall twice a week.

2.8 The village hall opened in 1971 and is the venue for many public events, such as dances other social events, youth club, fitness classes, fairs, takeaway evenings and meetings as well as being available for private parties.

2.9 There is also a thriving bowling club adjacent to the hall, a surfaced tennis court (multi sports area) and a children’s playground. The Church of St Mark’s is in a beautiful location and holds events indoors and outdoors, and has an active church community working with the Methodist Chapel which, as well as having services, is also the venue for a monthly community lunch, a village breakfast, and a toddler group.

Figure 2: Community event at the village hall

2.10 The village has a Church of England primary school, with approximately 70 children attending at the current time, and it attracts families from outside the village as well as nearby.

2.11 Farming continues to provide employment in the local area supporting a number of family businesses. Many of the farms have diversified and support additional businesses allied to pure farming including tourism and leisure, agricultural construction and machinery maintenance.

2.12 A traditional countryside landscape surrounds Dolphinholme and as a result the village enjoys an attractive setting and an abundance of wildlife, allowing space for nature and the community to thrive.
Based on data from the 2011 Census the population of Dolphinholme is approximately 470 - this figure covers the whole of the DNP area and so is an estimate. There are some 200 households in the area, the majority of which lie in Lancaster as opposed to Wyre.

The population age profile of Dolphinholme tends to be middle age more that the borough as a whole, although there notably less, proportionally, in the 75+ age group. Both population and household levels are relatively static. A high proportion of residents are in employment, whilst there are relatively few retirees.

Almost half (47%) of the housing stock is detached, although terraced properties also make up a sizable proportion (34%). 47% of the stock is of 3-bed construction, with 2 and 4-bed properties making up around 20% each.

There are no employment areas within Dolphinholme. Data available for the Wyre part of the village indicates a number of self-employed residents. Local employment is limited to local farms and service providers, including the primary school. Located outside the settlement, a number of small businesses operate along the A6 corridor that provide commercial/industrial opportunities for employment that typically support the rural catchment.

**Sustainability profile**

As part of the evidence base for the preparation of the emerging Lancaster District Local Plan the Council has undertaken a Sustainable Settlement Review to inform its strategy for development outside of the main urban areas of Lancaster and Morecambe.

![Figure 3: Sustainable Settlements Review Map Book (2018) (LCC)](image)

It can be seen from Figure 3 that the village contains only a handful of local services and facilities comprising a church, primary school, village hall, mobile library and mobile post...
There is also a shop at The Fleece Inn outside of the village. The village has a school bus service but no formal bus provision outside of the school service. Due to a lack of a combination of key services the Council consider that the village can no longer be regarded as a sustainable settlement contrary to its position in the adopted development plan.
3. CONSULTATION

3.1 The neighbourhood plan process began in November 2016. In accordance with Part 2 of the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012, Lancaster City Council and Wyre Council consulted on an application made by Ellel Parish Council and Nether Wyresdale Parish Council for the designation of Dolphinholme Area as a Neighbourhood Area for the purposes of Neighbourhood Planning. Following consultation, Lancaster City Council and Wyre Council resolved on 24 January 2017 to approve the application and designate the area of Dolphinholme as a Neighbourhood Area.

Figure 4: DNP Area

Source: Lancaster City Council

Neighbourhood Survey

3.2 In December 2106 a Neighbourhood Survey comprising 30 questions was distributed to every household in the DNP area comprising a short Local Business Survey and Optional Extra Survey with 4 questions relating to housing need. Reference to this survey is made throughout this First Draft Plan and some of the key findings are noted below.

3.3 The Steering Group received a very high proportion of responses with 113 surveys returned out of approximately 200. The majority of respondents were couples over the age of 50. The vast majority of respondents owned their own home (89%) with 10% of respondents occupying private rental accommodation.
When asked about future housing needs approximately a quarter of those asked said that they expected a change in housing need in the next 10 years and 25 respondents said they would move away from the area in the next 10 years. Question 3 of the Optional Extra Survey asked whether there was a lack of suitable housing for the respondent’s needs. Only 11% said there was a lack of housing to meet their needs. However, it should be borne in mind that the Household Survey was undertaken following a consultation exercise undertaken by the City Council in 2015 for its Draft Land Allocations Document 2011-2031. The consultation exercise comprises a Topic Paper entitled ‘People, Homes & Jobs – How should we plan for our district’s future? As part of this exercise the City Council floated the idea of major village expansion for Dolphinholme to potentially accommodate approximately 500 new homes. At the time of the Neighbourhood Survey the local community were concerned that any identified need for new homes could be seen as a reason for the City Council to allocate land for housing. Within the local community it is known that there are residents and ex residents that cannot find suitable or affordable accommodation in the village. If the village is to sustain its remaining services and facilities it is considered that a handful of new homes would help to future proof the village over the plan period to 2031 and beyond.

In terms of the local economy the community was keen to support craft and agricultural related business and some indicated that a café in the village would be welcomed.

Respondents were asked to choose 3 words that describe Dolphinholme and the majority identified – rural, peaceful and friendly. Notably some 57% said that there was a strong community spirit. For those that disagreed some stated that there should be more sports and youth activities.

Traffic and parking was identified as a key issue for residents, as well as lack of a public bus service.

27 local businesses responded to the Local Business Survey with a significant proportion of respondents working in agriculture (10 of 27). The majority were self-employed or operated a small business of 1 – 5 employees. The majority of respondents said that their location in the DNP area did not constrain their business although 6 did state that poor broadband connection did impact on their business.
Housing workshop

3.9 As part of the preparation of the DNP a Housing Workshop was held on 20th July 2017 to consider the potential development of a number of sites around the village. The event was well attended by the local community and children from the village primary school.

3.10 Nine potential housing sites were identified and attendees and respondents to the consultation were asked to comment on the different options. 98 responses were received over the consultation period to the 31st August. Table 1 summarises the responses.

Table 1: Housing Workshop – response to potential housing sites

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ref.</th>
<th>Site</th>
<th>Support</th>
<th>Object</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>H1</td>
<td>Land adjacent to Dolphinholme C of E Primary School</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>42.9%</td>
<td>57.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H2</td>
<td>Land between Corless Cottages and Corless Farm</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>44.2%</td>
<td>55.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H3</td>
<td>Land adjacent to South View Cottages</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>57.3%</td>
<td>42.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H4</td>
<td>Land adjacent to Village Hall</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>58.9%</td>
<td>41.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H5</td>
<td>Land at Higher Bond Gate Farm (smaller site)</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>18.5%</td>
<td>81.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H6</td>
<td>Land at Higher Bond Gate Farm (larger site)</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>8.7%</td>
<td>91.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H7</td>
<td>Land adjacent to the Fleece Inn</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>21.7%</td>
<td>78.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H8</td>
<td>Land opposite Dolphinholme C of E Primary School</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>33.7%</td>
<td>66.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H9</td>
<td>Former Rogerson’s Garage</td>
<td>94</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>96.9%</td>
<td>3.1%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
3.11 Based on the results of the workshop and consultation exercise the steering group identified 4 sites to explore further – sites H1, H2, H3 and H4 – all of these sites had a level of support between 42% - 59%. Site H9 garnered most support although this is the subject of a planning application for 9 houses so was not taken any further by the DNP group. Further reference to the findings of the Housing Workshop is made within the Policies section of this neighbourhood plan.

**Stakeholder Engagement**

3.12 In addition, to the wider community engagement the steering group has also consulted directly with the local school, youth group, church, local land owners including the Duchy of Lancaster’s advisors, farmers and other local businesses. Residents have also held meetings at the village Lunch Bunch and coffee mornings. The purpose of direct engagement has been two-fold – to keep people informed and to obtain views and opinions as the DNP has progressed. A Consultation Statement will be prepared for the next consultation stage prior to submission of the DNP to the Secretary of State.
4. VISION & OBJECTIVES

4.1 In setting out our aims for the Neighbourhood Plan it is vital to consider how the area should be at the end of the plan period. Our plan needs to be aspirational, but realistic. The following vision and objectives stem from the information gathered as a result of consultation with the local community and direct stakeholder engagement.

VISION STATEMENT 2016- 2031

Our vision is to safeguard the unique character and scale of the village, to protect the beautiful landscape that surrounds us and to ensure that sustainable development meets the needs of local people at different stages in their lives, now and in the future creating a sense of belonging and pride for the community.

OBJECTIVES

In order to achieve our Vision the DNP will work towards the following objectives:

- To protect and enhance Dolphinholme’s character including its heritage assets.
- To protect the intrinsic character and beauty of the setting of the village and wider countryside.
- To secure high quality design in new development and ensure it sits sensitively in and alongside the built environment.
- To support housing development, as identified, to secure the vitality and viability of the village.
- To improve footpath and cycle links within the village and around the DNP area.
5. POLICIES

5.1 The DNP steering group developed the draft policies in this neighbourhood plan by looking at the issues and concerns raised as part of the Neighbourhood Survey, Housing Workshop and stakeholder engagement. Based on the issues raised the policies of the adopted and emerging development plans for Wyre and Lancaster where then assessed so as to consider how far existing policies were able to support the vision and objectives of the DNP. Where gaps or specific issues were identified then the DNP helps to achieve this.

List of policies

Built Environment
- BE1 Design

Natural Environment
- NE1 Landscape
  - NE2 Protected key views
  - NE3 Area of separation
  - NE4 Light pollution

Housing
- H1 Infill development
- H2 Housing development
- H3 Housing allocation

Community and Infrastructure
- CI1 High speed broadband
- CI2 Safe travel to school
- CI3 Pedestrian footways
- CI4 Retention of key Services and facilities
5.1 The Built Environment

5.1.1 The built form of the village is divided into two parts – a lower and higher village - with the lower section concentrated in the valley bottom either side of the River Wyre. However, in terms of character there are 3 distinct parts to the village when including the 20th century houses around Abbeystead Road.

5.1.2 The majority of the village lies in Lancaster with approximately 20 properties within the Wyre part. The village contains two Conservation Areas which together encompass a large part of the village both west and east of the River Wyre (the two halves are linked by the listed Dolphinholme Bridge). The origins of Dolphinholme are mainly based upon the development of a Worsted Spinning Mill (no longer in existence) in the late 1700’s and associated workers and mill managers’ housing – and it is this historic area that is the focus of the conservation interest.

5.1.3 The following comprises the listed heritage assets in and close to the village:

In the village:

- Dolphinholme Bridge – Grade II
- Derham House with Gas Lamp – Grade II
- 4,6,8, & 10 Wagon Road – Grade II
- Woodcock Hall – Grade II
- Old Mill House – Grade II
- Wall on north side of garden at Old Mill House – Grade II
- 13 and 15 Wagon Road – Grade II
- Church of St Mark’s – Grade II
- Corless Cottages and former Post Office – Grade II
- 1,3 and 5 Wagon Road – Grade II

Figure 5 and 6: Gas Lamp and Church of St Mark’s
5.1.4 In the wider area:

- The Fleece Inn – Grade II
- Lower Greenbank – Grade II
- Lower Starbank Farmhouse – Grade II
- Nook House Farmhouse – Grade II
- Bantons Farmhouse – Grade II
- Wyreside Lodge – Grade II
- Bridge over River Wyre in Grounds of Wyreside Hall – Grade II
- Street Bridge – Grade II
- Milestone 10 metres SE of Street Bridge – Grade II
- Belverdere Farmhouse and Belverdere Cottage – Grade II
- Wyreside Hall, Coach House and ice House – Grade II

![Figure 7: The Fleece Inn](image)

**Heritage: Upper Dolphinho.me**

5.1.5 The character of Upper Dolphinho.me Conservation Area relates to the area’s transformation from an isolated farmstead to a small industrial hub of wool production.

5.1.6 The built form of Upper Dolphinho.me relates to four distinctive periods and types of buildings:

- traditional agricultural buildings;
- late 18th and early 19th century industrial buildings and houses;
- mid – late 19th century public and religious buildings; and
- 20th century modern housing
5.1.7 Many of the traditional 18th and early 19th century buildings are attractive and well-known buildings locally. Most notably 19-28 Corless Cottages and 1-5 Wagon Road constructed of sandstone for local mill workers. All are Grade II listed buildings as is St Mark’s a late 19th century church, in a gothic revival style and part of Dolphinholme Bridge.

Figure 8: Corless Cottages in Upper Dolphinholme

5.1.8 Whilst there have been some unsympathetic additions to some buildings overall the special historic interest of Upper Dolphinholme can be readily acknowledged although it is disjointed. This is largely due to modern infill housing development during the 20th century which differs in its form and appearance to the more historic parts of Upper Dolphinholme.
Figure 9: Dolphinholme Conservation Area
Source: Dolphinholme Conservation Area Appraisal (2016) (LCC)

**Built Heritage: Lower Dolphinholme**

5.1.9 Lower Dolphinholme Conservation Area was first designated in 1976. Most properties in Wagon Road are listed buildings, predominate from the 18th Century.

5.1.10 The old industrial section of this part of the village is focused on the listed Dolphinholme Bridge, which sits at the bottom of the valley. Views out of Lower Dolphinholme are limited due to rising topography, although there is a small flat area to the east of the River Wyre.
Figure 10: Dolphinholme Conservation Area – heritage context

Source: Dolphinholme Conservation Area Appraisal (2016) (LCC)

5.1.11 The character of the area relies on the visual effect of the groups of terraces as a whole rather than a few buildings in particular. Three storey terraces building predominate.
5.1.12 There is also a clear distinction between the older parts of the village’s built heritage and the built form of the village heading north along Abbeystead Road. Within the northern part of the village lies modern 20th century housing comprising 1-2 storey dwellings in light coloured render. The colour pallete compliments the village’s heritage but the appearance of this area is very different to the Conservation Area. Robust and definable landscaping, however, ensures that this area portrays an attractive quality through the provision of grassed verges and front boundary hedges.
Policy BE1: Design

All new developments should reflect the distinctive character of the Neighbourhood Plan Area. Proposals for all forms of new development must plan positively for the achievement of high quality design supported by a Design and Access Statement.

In, and adjacent to the Conservation Area, all proposals should demonstrate how the design is appropriate in terms of scale, height, materials and detailing to the character of the Conservation Area, including boundary treatments.

Development proposals elsewhere should:

i) reinforce the distinctive character of the settlement’s form being in several parts;

ii) respect the scale, height, massing and proportions of existing buildings and comprise complementary materials;

iii) retain existing landscaping and boundary treatments where they contribute to the character and quality of the area and incorporate high quality boundary treatments into new developments;

iv) include a Lighting Assessment for applications for major development;

v) positively consider the residential amenity of neighbouring residents;

vi) incorporate energy efficiency measures over and above current building regulation standards where viable; and

vii) provide an electric charging point for new homes.

Proposals for contemporary design will be supported subject to detailed justification set out in a Design and Access Statement.

5.1.13 Good design is an integral part of sustainable development. Bearing in mind that much of the village lies within a Conservation Area and outside of this are other key heritage buildings, the appearance of new buildings and the way they knit into the existing built fabric of the NP area is of upmost importance. As such the approach to scale, mass, form, plot ratio, appearance, landscaping and boundary treatments should be given careful consideration and should be explained in a Design and Access Statement for all applications for new housing.

5.1.14 There is a preference for the use of traditional materials in any new development although it is accepted that the use of render, timber and glazing for example can create variety and interest and can often sit well alongside designated and non-designated heritage assets. Contemporary development will be supported with clear evidence of the design approach set out in a supporting Design and Access Statement for all such development.

5.1.15 Measures to incorporate design and energy efficiency innovation are encouraged and will be supported in new development.
5.2 **The Natural Environment**

5.2.1 Dolphinfolme is set at either side of the steep sided river Wyre valley. The lower village is a series of historic buildings and mills set at the bridge crossing of the river. This is at or around 80m AOD with the buildings arranged either side of Wagon Road in the valley bottom and climbing the slopes either side of the bridge.

5.2.2 The higher village is linear arranged around two junctions of Anyon Lane and Abbeystead Road at approximately 90 and 100m AOD respectively.

5.2.3 The open fields systems that surround the village continue to rise to the north west towards a local high point of 140m. To the south east the land gently falls away to the edge of the settlement before falling steeply into the wooded valley.

*Landscape Character*

5.2.4 Dolphinfolme lies within National Character Area 33, Bowland Fringe and Pendle Hill. The Bowland Fringe and Pendle Hill National Character Area (NCA) is a transitional landscape that wraps around the dramatic upland core of the Bowland Fells. Over half of this NCA, along with the Bowland Fells, makes up the Forest of Bowland Area of Outstanding Natural beauty (AONB). The influence of human habitation and activity, and the area’s long farming history, contribute significantly to its character. In contrast to the predominantly rural feel of the area, this NCA includes several relatively urban areas including Clitheroe, Bentham and Longridge.

5.2.5 At a more local level a landscape character assessment – A Landscape Strategy for Lancashire 2000 – identifies that the river valley and much of Dolphinfolme is within character area Wooded Rural Valley and sub area 10a Wyre Valley.

5.2.6 Within the Wyre Valley Character Area the following features are noted to be of particular relevance:

- Upland semi natural oak woodland which is a rare woodland type and survives in the sheltered cloughs.
- Steep landform of stepped terraces on the harder geology and steep drops where the softer shales have been eroded away.
- Historic mills and their associated lodges and leats which are important examples of local industrial architecture and indicate the past use of the rivers to harness power.
- Tiny settlements, clustered around rivers and streams, often with historic stone bridges, are contained within the steep sided valleys.

5.2.7 Within the Bowland Fringes key features to note for this area include:

5.2.8 Wooded river corridors and gorges provide a sense of enclosure, sheltered habitats and distinctive patterns on the valley sides. Many are also historic sites for early water powered industry.
5.2.9 Historic villages, stone bridges and stone walls reflect the geology; many villages are clustered at river crossing points and there is a dispersed pattern of farms and cottages on the rural roads along the valley sides.

**Forest of Bowland**

5.2.10 The Forest of Bowland AONB lies to the east of Dolphinholme in between which lies two character types – Wooded Rural Valleys and Undulating Lowland Farmland (Landscape Character Assessment 2009).

![Forest of Bowland AONB](image)

**Figure 13: National Character Area**

5.2.11 Key characteristics include:

- Dramatic open views to Clougha Pike within views eastwards;
- Distinctive patterns of low drystone walls cross the patchwork of pastoral fields;
- A patchwork of pastoral fields, interspersed with patches of coniferous and mixed woodland and occasional single deciduous field trees;
- Landscape is crossed by a network of minor roads which are often lined with stone walls and occasional hedgerows.
5.2.12 Key characteristics of the Wooded Rural valley include:

- A very broad wooded valley, where woodland is a dominant feature of the landscape. The original native broadleaved woodland is now largely mixed and extends well beyond the main river valley;
- The east-west flowing corridor of the River Wyre is lined with sinuous belts of deciduous woodland which provide a strong sense of enclosure;
- The area includes Abbeystead (estate-owned) and Dolphinholme villages, the traditional remote hamlet of Tarnbrook and several farmsteads and an associated network of lanes;
- Stone field barns are also occasional features along the valley corridor;
- To the south of the valley, Hawthornthwaite fell provides a sense of enclosure and forms the backdrop to views;
- Varying different styles of bridges (including wooden and stone materials) cross the river corridor;
- A network of gritstone, drystone walls delineate fields and road corridors, built from rough hewn blocks, often with two rows of through stones.

5.2.13 The areas described above are considered to be part of the setting of the AONB.

5.2.14 The landscape setting of Dolphinholme is important to the local community and its protection is regarded as a priority.
Key views

5.2.15 A fundamental characteristic of the village is its countryside setting. As a consequence, there are a number of views that contribute towards the character of the village and its setting. There are two key views that are regarded as being particularly special as identified below and Policy NE2 seeks to protect them within the DNP. Views on other potential key views are welcomed.

Policy NE1: Landscape

Development proposals will be required to demonstrate how they conserve and enhance the landscape and natural beauty of the area. Proposals will not be permitted where they would have an adverse effect on the landscape character or visual amenity of the village and the local community.

Proposals will need to demonstrate how they have taken into consideration relevant landscape character assessments and Dolphinholme Conservation Area Appraisals.

Policy NE2: Protected key views

The key views referred to at Figure 15 make an important contribution towards local visual amenity and the setting of the village. Where a development proposal impacts on these views a Landscape and Visual Assessment should be carried out to ensure that the scheme is designed and sited sensitively and appropriately.
5.2.16 Consultation responses in connection with the Housing Workshop show that there is strong opposition to development of Sites H5 and H6 at Higher Bond Gate Farm with approximately 81% - 91% of respondents objecting to the development of housing in this location. The land here has been subject to a number of planning applications over the past 3 years the largest of which comprised 68 houses (Application ref. 16/00041/OUT). This application was withdrawn prior to determination. There is currently a resolution to grant planning for 18 houses subject to the completion of a s106 agreement (Application ref. 17/00970/OUT).

5.2.17 Lower Green Bank is a small settlement to the north east of the village. Dolphinholme and Lower Green Bank are each washed over by a countryside area designation with only a small open gap between them. To help to maintain the openness of the countryside between them and in order to protect the quality and distinctiveness of the settlements the neighbourhood plan contains a policy to protect the outward expansion of the village in this location. The land on the edge of the settlement contributes to the setting of the Forest of Bowland AONB and moreover, to the sense of separation between Dolphinholme and Lower Green Bank.

**NE3: Area of Separation**

Development will be assessed in terms of its impact upon the Area of Separation including any harm to the effectiveness of the gap between Dolphinholme and Lower Green Bank and, in particular, the degree to which the development proposed would compromise the function of the Area of Separation in protecting the identity and distinctiveness of each settlement.

Figure 16: Area of Separation between Dolphinholme and Lower Green Bank
Light pollution

5.2.18 The DNP area predominantly comprises open countryside, partly within an AONB. Policy NE2 seeks to ensure that the rural nature of the village is maintained, preventing light pollution and increasing urbanisation.

**NE4: Light Pollution**

Proposals for any street and external lighting should comply with the current guidelines established for rural areas by the Institution of Lighting Engineers (1) to protect the dark skies associated with the DNP area.

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(1) Guidance notes for the Reduction of Obtrusive Light GN01:2011
5.3 Housing

5.3.1 The DNP was initiated in response to a consultation exercise undertaken by the City Council in 2015 for its Draft Land Allocations Document 2011-2031. The consultation exercise comprises a Topic Paper entitled ‘People, Homes & Jobs – How should we plan for our district’s future?

5.3.2 It was at this point that the local resident’s, with the support of Ellel Parish Council and Nether Wyresdale Parish Council decided to progress a DNP as a proactive response. Notwithstanding the fact that the DNP was initiated out of concern for the future of the village this has been a positive and open-minded process.

5.3.3 By way of background Policy DM42 of the adopted Development Management DPD identifies Dolphinholme as a sustainable rural settlement where proposals for new housing will be supported. One of the options for the distribution of new housing development as part of the emerging Lancaster Local Plan was ‘village expansion’ for Dolphinholme – accommodation 500 new homes. Inevitably this caused significant concern for local residents and many submitted their objections to the proposal. The proposal then fell away and an alternative approach has been taken by LCC and now the emerging Local Plan does not identify any new homes for Dolphinholme.

5.3.4 Policy SP2 of the New Local Plan Part One: Strategic Policies and Land Allocations (Council’s Suggested Modifications - October 2018) where Dolphinholme is now simply identified within the category ‘rural village’ where any development will be required to meet evidenced local need only. Furthermore, development should only result in infilling and the rounding off of the settlement.

Infill development

5.3.5 No attempt has been made to define a settlement boundary for Dolphinholme due to its fragmented and dispersed form. It is considered that any application for development in, or on the edge of the settlement will be considered on its merits and with regard to DNP Policy H1.

Policy H1: Infill development

Applications for infill housing will be supported subject to proposals being well designed and where such development:

i) fills a small gap in an otherwise built up frontage or on other sites within the built-up area of the village where the site is closely surrounded by buildings; and

ii) will not involve the outward extension of the built-up area of the village.
Approach to housing

5.3.6 There are two sites on the outskirts of the village where the City Council is minded to grant planning permission for residential development - 9 affordable homes at Bayhorse Garage (Application ref. 17/00827/FUL) and 18 dwellings at Higher Bond Gate Farm. Once the s.106 legal agreement is completed for each application this will provide 27 new homes.

H2: Housing development

In addition to the policy requirements of the relevant development plans for Lancaster and Wyre proposals for new homes will be supported providing:

i) the proposal will enhance the vitality of the local community and meet an identified and specific local housing need;

ii) the proposal is led by a Community Land Trust (or equivalent) with the support of the local community;

iii) a mix of house types is provided including housing for older people; and

iv) affordable housing is provided in accordance with the adopted development plan policies.

Proposals will not be supported where it would result in an over concentration of housing in one particular location on the edge of the settlement.

5.3.7 Proposals will not be supported where there would be an over concentration of new housing such that a new ‘estate’ could be created. This is to ensure that the residents of any new housing development integrate into the existing community so as to avoid in essence the creation of a new bolt on community.

Housing allocation

5.3.8 The Neighbourhood Survey identified that the majority of residents would like to see small scale housing that fits in with the village. There was a preference for single storey homes although this could reflect the age profile of the village.

5.3.9 It was also found that over the next 25 years 21% of respondents said that 0-15 homes should be built and 32.4% stated 16-25 new homes with 27% of respondents stating that the total should be 26-50 homes. 27 new homes are close to being granted planning permission on the application sites referred to above.

5.3.10 Approximately 72% of respondents said that a new housing development should include affordable homes with priority given to smaller 1-2 bedroom homes and 3-4 bedroom family homes.

5.3.11 The Neighbourhood Survey also asked respondents how often they used the local services and facilities. The responses were much lower than expected which surprised the steering
group. As a consequence, one of the key objectives of this neighbourhood plan is to ensure that the village remains vital and viable over the plan period and beyond. For this reason, and so as to support those that cannot currently find suitable and affordable accommodation in the village, the DNP contains a small housing allocation.

5.3.12 A Housing Workshop was held in 2017 in order present a number of potential housing options to the local community (see Figure 9). 7 potential sites were identified on the edge of the village and a further 2 were identified at Anyon Lane.

Figure 17: Housing allocation options

5.3.13 There was overwhelming support for the redevelopment of a previously developed site outside of the village at the former Bayhorse Garage (H9). This site is the subject of a current planning application for 9 affordable homes with the development due to commence in early 2019.

5.3.14 There was broad support for the development of two small sites adjacent to Corless Cottages/Corless Farm ((H2) and on land adjacent to South View Cottages (H3) with approximately 40% and 51% of respondents respectively in support of the development of these sites for housing. However, following further work the sites have been discounted due to their location in the Conservation Area and proximity to listed buildings.

5.3.15 There was also broad support (46% of respondents) for the development of land adjacent to the village hall for housing. However, following further work it is noted that the Dolphinholme CAA (Lancaster) identifies the view from the village hall/ Greaves Hill Lane as an important view point with the conservation area. As a consequence, it is a view that is protected within this neighbourhood plan.
5.3.16 Potential housing allocations at Higher Bondgate Farm (H5 and H6) were dismissed by the majority of the local community (79% - 89% of respondents). LCC is minded to grant planning for 18 houses here subject to the completion of a s.106 legal agreement.

5.3.17 A further two sites were presented in close proximity to the village primary school – Dolphinholme C of E School (H1 and H8).

5.3.18 Any proposals to progress a potential housing allocation at H8 would not be supported by the existing tenant farmer. The land is owned by the Duchy of Lancaster and it would not develop any land where the tenant strongly opposed it.

5.3.19 Site H1 lies adjacent to the school, is owned by the Duchy of Lancaster and farmed by the same tenant. The site is greenfield and extends to 1.16ha. The site lies adjacent to the Conservation Area and the Methodist chapel.

Figure 18: Site H1: Land adjacent to Dolphinholme C of E School

5.3.20 Approximately 35% of respondents supported the potential development of the site for housing with some 44% objecting to its development. The tenant farmer does not object to the removal of the site from his business and the Duchy would support its development subject to the support of the village.

5.3.21 In discussions with the Duchy’s representative it is likely that the site could accommodate approximately 13 houses, 40% of which would be affordable in accordance with emerging LCC Policy DM3. With a considered design and layout views across the site to the hills to the east could be maintained. It would also be possible to provide a drop off point for the school within the proposal. The development would be low/medium density comprising high quality design and extensive landscaping to integrate the development into its surroundings. Views
are welcomed from the local community on whether they support the inclusion of a housing allocation adjacent to the school of this scale and nature.

5.3.22 If the allocation is supported then it is intended that its development will be towards the end of the plan period post 2024 so as to stagger new development in the village in light of two recent schemes for housing development which may be granted planning permission imminently. In the event that planning permission is not granted at Bayhorse Garage and Higher Bond Gate then an application is invited before 2024. Similarly, if development does not commence on these sites within 3 years of the grant of planning permission then an early application is welcomed subject to the support of the housing allocation in the first instance.

**Policy H3: Land adjacent to Dolphinholme C of E Primary School, Greaves Hill Lane**

This site is allocated for approximately 13 houses including a proportion of affordable homes and housing for older people in accordance with the adopted development plan. Development should be phased towards the end of the plan period post 2024.

Any proposal for development should:

- retain and enhance existing landscaped boundaries where possible;
- provide vehicular access from Greaves Hill Lane;
- retain a view line across the site towards the hills beyond;
- provide a mix of house types including a proportion of housing for older people;
- provide a pedestrian footpath connecting the site to Wagon Road;
- comprise high quality design and boundary treatments;
- provide 20mph signage along Greaves Hill Lane; and
- respect the setting of the chapel and associated graveyard.

The provision of a school drop-off point within the development should be explored.
5.4 Employment

5.4.1 Having taken into consideration responses received in association with rural employment and tourism the steering group has decided that the policies contained within the emerging development plans for Wyre and Lancaster are sufficient to control and determine applications for the conversion of existing buildings for employment purposes and holiday lets on existing farms as a means of diversification.

5.4.2 In the absence of a specific policy other employment related development will be determined on its merits taking into account the sustainability of the proposal, its impact on the landscape and any other material considerations.

5.4.3 Views are sought from the local community to this approach.
5.5 Community and Infrastructure

5.5.1 There was a total of 27 completed forms for the Local Business Survey undertaken in December 2016. 6 of the respondents stated that inadequate broadband was a constraint to their business. For those in the DNP area who are connected to the local network provided by Broadband for the Rural North (B4RN) the internet connection and speed is excellent.

5.5.2 Other issues identified as a result of consultation relate to traffic congestion and car parking associated with the primary school at peaks times. Pedestrian and cycle movement through the village is also cited as a problem as is the fact that the village does not have any public transport.

High speed broadband

5.5.3 Broadband for the Rural North (B4RN) is a registered non-profit community benefit society run by volunteers and a local team based in Melling. Dolphinholme B4RN Action Group was established in February 2012.

5.5.4 A number of local people made investments in B4RN and negotiated wayleaves with local landowners and the volunteer group began digging ducting in the ground to bring the fibre from Abbeystead to Dolphinholme. The action group was founded because we could see that without an effective broadband provision Dolphinholme would become increasingly isolated and it would become almost impossible to successfully run a business or a farm without it. Furthermore, with much of the village unable to get a reliable mobile phone signal and in the case of Lower Dolphinholme a reliable TV signal either, broadband was increasingly essential.

5.5.5 The volunteers managed to reach Dolphinholme and go live in the Village Hall in May 2014. The main Dolphinholme cabinet is situated at the Village Hall and provides free internet connection to the community in the Village Hall. Since then a second route into Dolphinholme via Catshaw has been built and the third route back to Quernmore along Bay Horse Road is under construction.

5.5.6 The volunteers have now provided the means for all properties in Dolphinholme to connect to B4RN and the vast majority have done so. The volunteer action group continues to provide support to B4RN customers in the village, provide assistance to any new residents or properties who wish to join and provide support to other volunteer groups taking the routes to adjacent villages.

5.5.7 There are now more than 100 connected properties in the wider Dolphinholme area which now includes Greenbank and Over Wyresdale, whilst there are some 5000 connections to the B4RN network as a whole. B4RN has expanded along the Lune Valley and more recently the Eden Valley and now has more than 3000 km of fibre.

5.5.8 The project has enabled a number of internet related businesses in the village and also led to a number of social IT initiatives including two email newsletters the DB4RNAG and the Dolphinholme Residents Association Newsletter and encouraged others such as the Friends of Dolphinholme Facebook page and websites for the bowling club and Village Hall. The
project has been a major social success as well both uniting the village and providing social and volunteering opportunities for residents.

**Policy CI1: High speed broadband**

All new housing and commercial development will be expected to make provision for connection to high-speed broadband (BARN or other communication network) with boxes for technology, services and utilities being carefully sited and masked wherever possible.

All applications for housing and commercial development should be accompanied by a Connectivity Statement.

**Access and movement**

5.5.9 There are no major roads running through the village or the DNP area. Existing footpaths are generally narrow and street lighting is minimal. There are cycle routes through the village and public rights of way through and around the village (see Figure 3). There is no public bus service operating through the village; although there is a school bus service taking children to and from high schools outside of the village.

5.5.10 83% of respondents to the Neighbourhood Survey considered traffic in the village to be of concern. This is largely due to school traffic as the Greaves Hill Lane is congested with parked cars at peak times. 61% of respondents also referred to the lack of a public transport service as an issue.

**Policy CI2: Safe travel to school**

Proposals to improve the safe delivery of pupils to Dolphinholme C of E Primary School on foot, by bicycle, school buses or by car will be supported.

**Policy CI3: Pedestrian footways**

All new housing developments must, when appropriate and practical, provide safe pedestrian access to link up with existing or proposed footpaths, ensuring that residents can walk safely to bus stops, schools and other village facilities.

**Community facilities**

5.5.11 The residents of the DNP area have a very strong community spirit and whilst the village does not contain some of the essential key services and facilities that are typically found within larger villages it nevertheless has a number of buildings and outdoor spaces where the community is able to gather for regular events and special occasions organized by the local community.
5.5.12 The Village Hall is the focus for many regular clubs such as youth club, Women’s Institute, archery and film nights and also annual events such as The Dolphinholme Show, Field Day and Bonfire Night.

5.5.13 There is a committed and active village hall committee which is currently raising funds to make the hall more attractive to those wanting to hire the hall for events for e.g. weddings. The roof also needs to be replaced.

5.5.14 The Fleece Inn has recently been refurbished and extended and comprises a small shop selling essential everyday items. It is not profitable in its own right at present although it is hoped that more local residents will support it to secure its future as this is the only convenience store in the DNP area. The pub has an excellent food and drink offer as well as bed and breakfast facilities. It often holds events for the local community and acts as a meeting point for clubs, walkers and cyclists. Despite its popularity amongst the community and those from further afield 47% of respondents to the Household Survey said they rarely visited the pub.

5.5.15 Notably, there was also a lower than expected usage of the local church, village hall and mobile Post Office. There is concern amongst the steering group that some of the remaining facilities may be lost if they are not used by the local community. This is why a small housing allocation is regarded as a positive step for the village so it can sustain its existing services and facilities.

Policy CI4: Retention of key Services and facilities

Proposals that ensure the retention and improvement of key local facilities will be supported. Any redevelopment will only be supported if the facility affected is replaced by an equivalent or better provision in an equally suitable location.
6. NEXT STEPS

6.1 The consultation exercise in connection with this First Draft Plan will commence on the 6th December 2018 and run for a period of 8 weeks to 31st January 2019 to allow for the Christmas period. Following this the steering group will review the consultation responses and undertake modifications as necessary.

6.2 A Submission DNP will then be consulted upon in Spring 2019. Following any further modifications the DNP will be submitted to the Secretary of State for Examination after which a referendum will be held. Subject to majority support the DNP will be made by Lancaster City Council and Wyre Council and used to determine planning applications.