

Southern Boundary Partnership meeting: 18:30 at 18 October 2018 at Grizebeck Community Hall

Attendees:

Mike	Cumming	Askam Ireleth
Diana	Rutherford	Blawith and Subberthwaite
Gill	Wardle	Blawith and Subberthwaite
Ged	McGrath	Copeland MP Office
Robert	Williamson	Drigg and Carleton
Graham	Pitts	Duddon
Gary	Albion	Duddon
Jos	Curwen	Duddon
Jay	Sayers	Duddon
Douglas	Chalmers	Friends of the Lake District
Joanna	Greenway	Grange over Sands Town
Mike	Lamb	Lower Allithwaite
Graham	Sanderson	Lowick
Jane	Micklethwaite	Millom Town Council
David	Savage	Millom Without
Ian	Lockwood	Millom Without
Adrienne	Calsy	Millom Without
Angela	Nugent	Millom Without
Pauline	Murray	Millom Without
Brian	Wright	Millom Without
Dan	Hunt	National Park
Maggie	Cumming	Whicham

Apologies:

Steve	Smith	Copeland BC Observer
Bob	Kelly	Millom Town Council
Angela	Dixon	Millom Town Council
Gabrielle	Napoletani	Millom Without
Mike	Harrington	Muncaster
Alastair	McNeill	SLDC observer

1. Introductions

The meeting purpose, format and agenda were agreed.

2. Friends of the Lake District report

Work is ongoing to investigate the suitability of the rough search area for inclusion in the National Park (NP). This includes site visits, review of legislation, history, scheduled monument and buildings listings, areas of common land, nature designations and so on.

One of the country's most respected landscape consultants, Alison Farmer, has been engaged by the Friends of the Lake District (FoLD) to do this work. Her brief is to ensure that the potential area for inclusion meets the criteria for 1) landscape and cultural heritage values and 2) Visitor enjoyment potential for quiet and appropriate relaxation. The resultant report will be submitted to Natural England for consideration.

Separately, a review of all National Parks instigated by Michael Gove is ongoing by Julian Glover to ensure that the designations are still appropriate. Julian Glover was expected to have visited the NP in September but this has been moved back to the end of October although the report is still expected summer 2019. Douglas Chalmers (DC) noted that in conversations with Julian Glover he expressed positive views about the national park designations with the potential for them being 'better' and 'bigger'. The belief is that Michael Gove is genuine in his support for National Parks.

The source of the funding for the Lake District National Park landscape consultation was questioned and DC explained that this was funded by FoLD with the strong support of the trustees. FoLD had been formed over 80 years ago to lobby for the creation of the National Park and had been involved in the recent extension to the East to link with the Yorkshire Dales National Park. David Savage highlighted that the contribution of resource and funding by the FoLD to the investigation of the potential Southern Boundary extension should not be underestimated and he thanked FoLD for their commitment.

3. Terms of reference

A draft of the Terms of Reference for the Southern Boundary Partnership had been circulated in advance of the meeting on the basis that it is important for the group to have a constitution. The Terms of Reference had been based on that document adopted for the Parish Council Coordination Group. It was noted that this had worked well for this group. Several minor changes were proposed and accepted, including changing the 1st purpose of the NP to include agreeing (as well as developing) a case for extension.

It was explained that Parish Councils can withdraw from the partnership if they cannot commit to the Terms of Reference and can later rejoin. It is considered essential for accountability that the Southern Boundary Partnership has an agreed constitution.

The next step is for Parish Council representatives to take the Terms of Reference back to their Parish Councils for agreement and noting in Parish Council minutes.

(A revised copy of the ToR will be circulated with the meeting notes)

4. Appointments

It was proposed by R Williamson and seconded by Diana Rutherford that David Savage serves as the Chair of the Partnership.

There was a broad discussion of the appointment of a Deputy Chair, but it was felt that this can be considered at the next meeting, once attendees had time to consider this post.

Adrienne Calsy had previously volunteered to serve as meeting secretary (post meeting note: and would share this role with Gabby Napoletani).

5. Meeting arrangements

Various arrangements for future meetings were agreed:

- Meetings will be held monthly as a good basis for exchanging information with Parish Councils
- Grizebeck is a convenient venue
- Starting at 18:30 suits those present

Meeting topics should include:

- Tourism
- Housing
- Infrastructure
- Planning Framework
- Transport and additional traffic
- Economic impact (potential for increased prosperity)

The impact of change was also discussed, particularly on the tranquility, quiet and aesthetic qualities of this area can best be considered. One starting point for the boundary change consideration was protection of the landscape for future generations but Douglas Chalmers highlighted that it is important that both criteria – landscape protection *and* public enjoyment – for a National Park are taken into account.

The experience of people in the Eastern National Park extension should be drawn upon to share their views on the realisation of benefits and detriments of boundary changes.

The forward plan is for public consultation on the proposed boundary change, by public road shows, from March/April 2019. By this time the landscape consultant report suggesting an evidence based boundary within the rough area of search should be available. It was emphasized that the boundary must be evidence based (e.g. areas within the proposed new boundary should meet the National Park criteria) but there could be pragmatic use of existing boundaries and features.

6. Farming and agriculture

Dan Hunt presented 4 key points for farming and agriculture related to the National Park Boundary, based on his personal views developed for his experience as an environmental consultant.

1) Farming is the key factor in the management of the National Park landscape

The National Park authority understands this point and this has been reinforced by the granting of the World Heritage Site status. The social fabric that underlies the National Park is seen as critical to its continuation.

Farming represents the predominant land use but tourism represents the largest revenue. The viability of the generations old family farms on which landscape maintenance depends is a concern.

2) Economic challenges and farming support

A map was circulated to show the distribution of the uptake of agri-environment schemes within Cumbria: there is visibly more support within than outwith the National Park. These schemes are particularly important for hill farmers in particular as their income would be very low otherwise.

3) The Common Agriculture Policy (CAP) will disappear upon the UK leaving the EU

Upon Brexit farming money will no longer be ring fenced for agriculture and could be spent on the NHS, education etc instead. There is movement now to provide payment to farmers not for farming only but for public goods – water management, land access, biodiversity etc – that they provide. Farmers within the National Park would be in a stronger position for funding than those outwith. Even if the UK does not leave the EU the move is for government support for farm businesses to be replaced by support for environmental stewardship.

4) Planning

Planning legislation and the planning process related to farming is the same within and outwith the National Park. A planning application can be approved but with more consideration of how the development is achieved sensitively. The policy for development within the National Park may be different than for development outside the National Park and there is a restriction on major development within the National Park.

Douglas Chalmers noted that more than 90% of tourists visit the National Park for the landscape. Farming families are vital to maintaining the communities which underpin the National Park. As funding follows landscape and designations being within a protected landscape should attract more funding than if outwith.

It was explained that the National Park cannot lobby government on its own behalf as it is part of DEFRA. It is important to note that various bodies such as the RSPB and NFU that do have an interest in the National Park must make sure that any potentially conflicting views on land use etc are resolved amongst themselves before they seek funding.

It was suggested that from a farming perspective that more access to agri-environment funding is seen as a positive factor of the National Park but more restrictive planning is seen as a negative factor. Also, there is some ill-feeling amongst farmers about the National Trust rather than the National Park.

Within the National Park there is more support for access upkeep than outwith the Park. Anecdotal information from the Eastern extension to the National Park suggests there is more visitor activity but not at levels which have a detrimental impact. . Within the

National Park there is more access to resources – i. e. rangers – and also to funding routes which National Park can help advice on and access to new funding routes.

Concern was expressed about the loss of farmland for housing in the area of Grange over Sands and there is local concern about 500 new homes on farm land. In the National Park there would be more constraints on the scale of development and the National Park would promote social housing for local people. In the short term, however, existing housing allocations in an area's local plan will apply and only with the next review of the Lake District National Park plan in approximately 5 years' time could be a different development plan in place.

A question was raised on how lone dairy farmers would fare in gaining agri-environment scheme funding? As the land is more intensively managed these farms would not attract as much funding as hill farms, for instance, but it is expected that there will be different tiers for these schemes and so funding will be available. Also, with National Park status diversification opportunities would be expected to increase.

A question was raised about the effect of the boundary change on those farms just outside a new boundary? It was suggested that these farmers would still qualify for funding.

An issue was raised with taking this information back to local communities and it was suggested that fact sheets with pros/cons and anecdotes would be very useful. It was agreed that this would be considered. Dan Hunt indicated that he would be very happy to help with questions from Parish Councils and that he was interested in understanding people's concerns. It was agreed that questions should be directed to the e-mail account infosba70@gmail.com initially.

8. Meeting review

Those present agreed that meeting had been productive and met its purposes. Several improvements were suggested:

- Rearrange the meeting room to allow better view and hearing of those speaking
- Provide to take away on topics to facilitate communication with communities. Visual presentations are usual for this purpose.
- Only 1 farmer was present this evening for the farming and agriculture topic. It was suggested that the partnership can invite others to the meeting and that there should be further engagement or roadshows with the local NFU branch(es).

The meeting concluded at 20:15.

9. Next Meeting

The location, date and next topics are to be confirmed.