



Natural Economy Northwest

North West Coastal Trail: Strategic positioning and business case

Commissioned from Peter Scott Planning Services Ltd
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contributions from 4NW and Natural Economy Northwest

Funded by



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Preface

This is one in a series of reports produced between 2007 and 2009 within the Natural Economy Northwest (NENW) programme. NENW is a regional partnership programme led by Natural England, the North West Development Agency and the SITA Trust on behalf of a wide range of economic and environmental partners. The main focus is to deliver priority action 113 in the Regional Economic Strategy, to optimise the natural environment's contribution to the regional economy and quality of life.

The programme also includes the Enriching Nature SITA Trust biodiversity programme and the aspirations of Natural England and other environmental and economic partners to mainstream the natural environment within sustainable economic development. Key work areas within the programme are to:

- increase awareness of the value of the natural economy,
- commission and disseminate research to promote and facilitate delivery,
- provide direction to promote effective use of limited financial resources,
- contribute to the development and delivery of regional and sub-regional strategies,
- facilitate natural economy project development and encourage project delivery,
- promote and facilitate Green Infrastructure and Natural Tourism especially through the Sub-Regional Economic Partnerships and the Tourist Boards,
- encourage strategic investment in natural economy projects, and
- to facilitate training, skills innovation and advice to business.

This particular report was commissioned by the North West Coastal Forum, with support funding from 4NW and NENW, from 'Peter Scott Planning Services' to summarise the evidence for the strategic positioning of the NW Coastal Trail, as well as providing the basis for the Business Case. The support and cooperation of many organisations within the Coastal Forum is very much appreciated

This work along with other NENW information and publications is on our website – www.naturaleconomynorthwest.co.uk. You can contact us through our website. We are interested in the ways that this report has been of use to you so that we can take into account in the further development of the programme.

This report has been commissioned by Natural Economy Northwest in the delivery of its aims, outputs and outcomes and it should not be assumed that it represents the policy of the funders – Northwest Development Agency, Natural England and the SITA Trust.

Dr Will Williams

Programme Director
Natural Economy Northwest

NORTH WEST COASTAL TRAIL : STRATEGIC POSITIONING AND BUSINESS CASE

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NORTH WEST COASTAL TRAIL : STRATEGIC POSITIONING AND BUSINESS CASE

SUMMARY

The North West Coastal Trail

The agreed vision for the North West Coastal Trail is –

A continuous, multi-use trail running along the coast from Chester to Carlisle and encouraging residents and visitors to explore, appreciate and enjoy some of the North West's greatest assets: its coastal landscapes, heritage and settlements.

At one level, the Coastal Trail will comprise, promote and add value to existing coastal paths, cycleways and other routes along sections of the coast (e.g. Mersey Way, Cumbria Coastal Way) - at another level, it will comprise parts of the English Coastal Route and could provide a powerful brand for promoting the North West coast – regionally, nationally and internationally.

The proposed North West Coastal Trail is an ambitious project, which will -

- provide for, and encourage growth of, walking, cycling and, where practical, horse riding and all-abilities user markets, including regional residents and visitors
- cater for trips of all lengths – from end-to-end walks and cycle rides, to day walks and short strolls or rides, including linear, out-and-back and circular trips
- provide for recreational, tourism and utilitarian trips, and heritage and educational visits
- attract new, repeat and longer visits, with visitors' expenditures generating income and employment
- deliver significant economic, environmental and social benefits for the North West.

Report on the Strategic Positioning and Business Case for the Coastal Trail

The report on the *North West Coastal Trail: Strategic Positioning and Business Case*^a –

- demonstrates the complementarity and strong 'strategic fit' between proposals for the North West Coastal Trail and relevant national, regional and sub-regional policies
- emphasises opportunities for Coastal Trail programmes to deliver, or support the delivery of, partner organisations' programmes and projects in an integrated and cost-effective manner
- presents a robust business case for developing the Coastal Trail and related programmes, by showing how these can maximise economic, environmental and social benefits and contribute to the region's sustainable development
- indicates potential sources of funding to support Coastal Trail development
- provides recommendation on the initial focus for Trail marketing and communications.

Potential Growth in Trail User Markets

There is strong potential for growth in a wide range of Trail user markets (see above). In addition to marketing, drivers of market growth will include demographics and increasing numbers of active elderly people, affluence and the 'experience economy', enhanced visitor products and information, growth in domestic breaks, interest in wildlife, and the promotion of active lifestyles and social inclusion.

^a This Summary and the full report draw on information from the *North West Coastal Trail: Strategic Positioning Research*, prepared by Bowles Green Ltd. for the North West Coastal Forum in 2007 (unpublished).

Strategic Positioning of the Coastal Trail

The review of national, regional and sub-regional policy frameworks highlights the synergy between the Trail proposals and the following key policy areas -

- *Draft Marine Bill* and intended creation of the English Coastal Route and 'spreading room' – this will support the development of the Coastal Trail. In turn, the Coastal Trail will comprise sections of the English Coastal Route and, where feasible, will extend its provisions to enable use by cyclists, horse riders, etc.
- *Regional Spatial Strategy* and *Regional Economic Strategy* – these present a range of relevant policies, including policies for regional parks. The Coastal Trail will be the region's most extensive regional park resource and will connect the coastal regional parks. Also, it will provide links to/from coastal resorts, attractions and national and regional trails
- NWDA's economic objectives and funding roles – NWDA's and its delivery partners' programmes, projects and funding will support Coastal Trail programmes, which contribute to regional economic growth and associated objectives
- Natural Economy Northwest – the Coastal Trail will contribute to NENW's objectives for embedding the natural environment and its enjoyment within activities to promote sustainable economic development and growth; thereby, delivering economic, social and environmental benefits
- natural tourism – the Coastal Trail will provide a valuable natural tourism asset
- green infrastructure – the Trail will be a significant component of the region's green infrastructure
- active and healthy lifestyles – Trail-related programmes will provide for, and promote, physical activity and may gain funding from health authorities, charities, etc.
- integration of rights of way improvement plans and local transport plans – integration of these plans should result in higher priorities for developing and maintaining public rights of way, cycle paths and other routes and promoting walking and cycling
- coastal management and flood defences – sections of Trail may be developed or enhanced as part of such programmes.

Importantly, Coastal Trail programmes will provide a focus for the 'joined-up' delivery of the above policy areas and programmes - especially, programmes relating to the regeneration of coastal resorts, towns and rural areas, sustainable travel, recreation, sport and tourism, natural and cultural heritage, culture, community development and social cohesion.

Business Case for Coastal Trail Development

There is a strong business case for investment in the Coastal Trail and related programmes. While the proposals are at an early stage of development and detailed costs, etc. are not available, examples from similar projects show that Trail development, management, marketing and related programmes can –

- a. achieve a wide range of economic, environmental and social benefits, including -
 - economic benefits
 - enhanced visitor offer
 - visitor market growth and increased visitor expenditures
 - business growth, diversification and viability
 - employment opportunities
 - training and skills development for employees and volunteers
 - economic regeneration
 - positive image and identity for the North West
 - increases in property values.

- environmental and sustainability benefits
 - English Coastal Route and green infrastructure development and enhancement
 - biodiversity and habitat enhancement and coastal management
 - sustainable travel opportunities and promotion
 - enhanced air quality and mitigation of impacts of climate change
 - natural and cultural heritage interpretation and life-long learning.
 - social benefits
 - new and improved provision for recreation and sport
 - more active lifestyles, with benefits for health and well-being
 - enhanced social cohesion and community capacity.
- b. contribute towards achieving regional economic growth objectives - in particular, NWDA's regional priorities for *competitive business*, *competitive people* and *competitive places*
- c. provide good overall returns from public investment and benefits to users – as shown by examples of cost-benefit and willingness-to-pay evaluations from other routes.

Implementation of the Coastal Trail

While implementation of the North West Coastal Trail will be supported by the national programme to create the English Coastal Route, development of the Coastal Trail will comprise, primarily, a 'bottom-up' process, taking advantage of –

- existing coastal routes, national and regional cycleways and public rights of way – including strategic routes such as Hadrian's Wall Path National Trail, Cumbria Coastal Way, Lancashire Coastal Way, Sefton Coast Path, Trans Pennine Trail and the Mersey Way
- proposed new routes (e.g. Mersey Way extension) and other strategic routes linking to national and regional networks, cities, etc. (e.g. National Cycle Network routes, C2C cycle route, Lancaster Canal Towpath, Trans Pennine Way, Sandstone Way)
- regional park projects – especially the Mersey Waterfront and Ribble Coast and Wetlands Regional Parks. Also, proposals for similar projects at Morecambe Bay and West Cumbria
- urban and rural regeneration programmes (e.g. Chester Renaissance, Britain's Energy Coast), infrastructure projects (e.g. River Douglas Crossing) and tourism development and marketing programmes
- involvement of a wide range of delivery partners – including national and regional agencies (e.g. Natural England, Environment Agency, 4NW, NWDA), sub-regional partnerships, tourist boards and other partnerships, local authorities, user and community groups, and volunteers.

Funding of the Coastal Trail

The principal sources of funding of Coastal Trail programmes are likely to comprise –

- NWDA – Single Budget, Rural Development Programme for England and North West European Regional Development Programme funding, managed by the NWDA and delivered through the sub-regional partnerships, tourist boards and other partners
- Natural England – subject to resources, funding the creation and maintenance of new sections of the English Coastal Route over the 10-year implementation programme and funding for other programmes
- Environment Agency and/or Defra – funds for flood prevention and coastal management
- Lottery funds – especially HLF and BIG Lottery funding
- local authorities – including funding for local transport plan programmes, including rights of way and cycle route improvements and maintenance and promoting sustainable travel.

Initial Marketing of the Coastal Trail

Effective marketing will be a key to the success of the Coastal Trail. At this early stage in its development, the focus for marketing, brand development and communications will be on promoting awareness and support for the Coastal Trail concept and its development, amongst potential partner organisations, funders, communities, user groups and other key stakeholders.

Conclusion

This report –

- a. **identifies a valuable ‘window of opportunity’ to capitalise on the strategic fit between proposals for developing the North West Coastal Trail and partner organisations’ policy intentions, funding regimes and implementation programmes** – thereby, offering scope to achieve effective and expeditious progress towards the implementation of the Coastal Trail and related programmes
- b. **presents a strong business case for developing and promoting the North West Coastal Trail and related programmes, based on the potentially significant economic, environmental and social benefits which these may achieve and favourable economic assessments of investments in similar projects.** The business case draws on a examples from coastal trails and other projects throughout the UK.

NORTH WEST COASTAL TRAIL

STRATEGIC POSITIONING AND BUSINESS CASE

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

The development of the North West Coastal Trail presents an exciting and challenging prospect. When complete, the Trail will provide a multi-use coastal trail from Chester to Carlisle linking the natural, cultural and historical assets of the North West coast. It will provide opportunities for walking, cycling and, where practical, riding and all-abilities travel for the region's residents, day visitors and tourists.

The Coastal Trail project is being led by the North West Coastal Forum – a public, private and voluntary sector partnership working to promote and deliver integrated management of the North West's coastal areas to ensure their long-term sustainability.

Implementation of the Trail 'on the ground' will largely be a 'bottom up' process, involving a wide range of national, regional, sub-regional and local partners, funders, businesses, communities, user groups, volunteers and other stakeholders. However, there is a strong synergy with Government's intentions to create the English Coastal Route^a and implementation of this national route will support completion of the North West Coastal Trail and *vice versa*.

1.2 Report on the Strategic Positioning and Business Case for the Coastal Trail

The concept and proposals for the North West Coastal Trail have been developed and refined over the past decade. Over this period, there have been substantial changes in institutional frameworks, policy contexts and funding opportunities, and progress on regional park, recreational route and coastal regeneration initiatives. Taking cognisance of these changes, this report –

- up-dates the Trail concept and objectives
- demonstrates the strategic fit between the proposed Trail and national, regional and sub-regional policy agendas
- presents a clear business case for developing the Trail and associated facilities and attractions, linked to the delivery of regional and sub-regional priority outcomes
- illustrates the strong relationships between the Trail proposals and key projects of partner organisations in the North West
- indicates potential sources of funding to support the development of the Trail.

In particular, this report demonstrates the business case for the North West Coastal Trail, by showing how the development, management and promotion of the Coastal Trail and related programmes can –

- build on existing infrastructure, economic regeneration and development programmes and related projects to facilitate the creation of the English Coastal Route in the North West and develop an outstanding natural tourism product, regional park resource and key component of the region's green infrastructure
- add value to the proposed English Coastal Route, by providing for cyclists, horse riders and other users, where conditions allow

^a The Draft Marine Bill (2008) sets out legislative provisions for creating the English Coastal Route and associated 'spreading room' along England's coastline, as outlined in section 4.1a.

- fit strategically with, and help to deliver, the policies and programmes of key partner and funding organisations
- maximise economic, environmental and social benefits for the North West and contribute to the region's sustainable development.

Consequently, this report can be used to promote the engagement and support of potential partner organisations to the concept, implementation of, and investment in, the North West Coastal Trail and related economic, environmental and community development initiatives.

The report has been jointly funded by 4NW (formerly the NWRA) and Natural Economy Northwest – a partnership for optimising the economic benefits of the region's natural environment.

A. Principal Reports on the North West Coastal Trail

This report draws primarily on information from –

- *North West Coastal Trail: Strategic Positioning Research* (unpublished draft, 2007)¹.

Other reports of direct relevance to the development of the Trail include –

- *North West Coastal Trail: Summary of the Missing Links in the Golden Thread and Estimated Costs to Complete* (2002)²
- *North West Coastal Trail: Concept Feasibility Study* (2003)³
- *North West Coastal Trail: Implementation Framework* (2004)⁴
- *North West Coastal Trail: Business Plan 2008/09* (2008)⁵
- *North West Coastal Trail: Brand Strategy* (2008)⁶
- *North West Coastal Trail: Progress Review* (2008)⁷.

Note: References for these reports and other documents mentioned in this report are provided in Appendix A.

2. NORTH WEST COASTAL TRAIL

2.1 Coastal Trail Intentions

Concept and vision for the Coastal Trail

The concept of the North West Coastal Trail is clearly illustrated by reference to the vision and objectives for the Trail. The **vision** for the Coastal Trail is -

A continuous, multi-use trail running along the coast from Chester to Carlisle encouraging residents and visitors to explore, appreciate and enjoy some of the North West's greatest assets - its coastal landscapes, heritage and settlements.

Objectives for the Trail

The **objectives** for the Coastal Trail are -

- *to create a continuous coastal route, from Chester and the Dee Estuary to Carlisle and the Solway Estuary, for tourist, recreational and utilitarian trips*
- *to link existing paths, cycle routes and other recreational routes along the coast and provide enhanced access to the coast and between coastal settlements*
- *to provide opportunities for walking and cycling along the whole route and, wherever practical, for all-abilities access and horse riding - on shared-use, braided or separate routes*
- *to enable longer distance, multiple-day visits and increase local day/part-day trips by providing links to circular routes of varying distances*
- *to enable and encourage exploration, appreciation and enjoyment of the coast's landscapes, settlements, natural and cultural heritage and visitor attractions, by residents, day visitors and tourists*
- *to enhance the landscape and biodiversity values of the Trail corridor, thereby contributing to the green infrastructure of the North West*
- *to achieve a wide range of benefits for the North West, by contributing to leisure, tourism and economic growth, urban and rural regeneration, and community health and well-being - all in sustainable ways.*

2.2 Initial Outline of Potential Benefits of the Trail

The Trail proposals are of particular significance in respect of their potential contributions to –

- achieving national policies for enhancing **coastal access** and, in particular, the creation of the **English Coastal Route**
- growing the region's **economy** – especially its **natural economy** and **natural tourism**
- implementing regional policies for **regional parks** – with the North West Coastal Trail providing a regional park resource and linking regional parks on the North West coast
- developing the region's **green infrastructure** and enhancing its **biodiversity**
- contributing to the **regeneration of the region's coastal resorts and communities**
- promoting a **positive image of the North West**
- encouraging **sustainable travel**
- contributing to the **quality of life** and **connecting communities** in the North West
- promoting **active communities** and **community health and well-being**
- promoting the **interpretation, education and appreciation of the natural and cultural heritage** of the North West's coast.

These and related policy intentions and outcomes are discussed in more detail in subsequent sections of this report.

3. COASTAL TRAIL USER MARKETS

3.1 Potential Coastal Trail User Markets

While providing a continuous, mostly off-road, multi-use route(s) along the North West coast, the Coastal Trail will have many access points and links to coastal resorts, settlements, attractions, car parks, public transport networks and other paths and greenspace. Thus, it will offer opportunities for linear, out-and-return and circular walking, cycling, riding and all-abilities trips of varying lengths and characteristics and attract a diverse range of users for -

- a. recreational and tourism trips
- b. utilitarian and special purpose trips (e.g. walking/cycling to work or school, health walks)
- c. natural and cultural heritage visits
- d. educational and life-long learning visits.

A survey of selected representatives of regional and sub-regional walking, cycling and riding organisations for the *North West Coast – Concept Feasibility Study*, indicated that –

- walking is likely to comprise the main activity of part-day, day and multi-day Trail users
- the Trail will provide an important new regional recreational amenity (agreed by 79% of respondents), attract more activity tourists to the North West (75%) and provide a useful route for trips to work, school, etc. (42%)
- around 40% of respondents (mostly committed walkers and cyclists) may travel from end-to-end on the Trail, in a single journey or several trips.

a. recreational and tourism trips

Recreational trips are likely to be the principal use of the Coastal Trail, including –

- walking, cycling and horse riding trips
- trips by people of all-abilities, including those with restricted mobility (e.g. wheelchair users) or sensory impairments
- short- and medium-distance day trips, and longer multi-day trips
- gentler activities (e.g. landscape viewing, strolling), through to more energetic pursuits (e.g. long distance walking, challenge events).

Leisure day trip data (Box B) show the popularity of visits to the North West's seaside and coast. Walking and cycling trips are amongst the more popular activities and these visitors' expenditures contribute substantially to the local and regional economies.

B. Seaside and Coastal Leisure Trips in the North West

The *2005 England Leisure Visits Survey*⁸ estimates that around 10.9m leisure visits were taken to/at the North West's seaside/coast in 2005 (excluding trips to seaside/coastal towns/cities) – representing 12% of all rural leisure visits in the North West. 0.8m of these trips lasted 3 hours or more, with many of these visitors coming from outside the North West.

If average England-wide expenditures during a seaside/coastal trip (i.e. £19.79 in 2005) are applied to all such trips in the North West, then seaside/coastal visitors would have spent around £216m in 2005. Additionally, many visitors to the North West's seaside/coastal towns and cities will have walked or cycled, and spent money, during their visits.

Walking/rambling was a main activity of 43% of the North West's visitors and was the most popular activity during all rural leisure trips (no data are available solely for seaside/coast trips). Cycling or mountain biking was a main activity of 4% of rural visitors.

The North West Coastal Trail will have many of the characteristics of a national trail and the English Coastal Route - of which the Coastal Trail will be part - is likely to be equivalent to, or recognised as, a national trail.

C. Users of National Trails in England and Wales

The *National Trail Users Survey 2007*⁹ illustrates the predominant characteristics of users of national trails in England and Wales -

- around 93% of users were walkers, almost 5% were cyclists, 2% were horse riders (national trails are primarily walking trails, except the Pennine Bridleway). 1% used a wheelchair
- 6% were 'amblers' – using the trail for under 1 hour, 44% were 'ramblers' – on the trail for 1 to 4 hours, and 50% were 'scramblers' – on the trail for a full day (or longer)
- 33% were attempting to complete the whole trail, in one or more visits
- the principal motivating factors in trail use were – nature and landscape (38%), exercise (12%), convenience/familiarity (11%), or the national trail's identity/status (11%).

While the diversity of the North West Coastal Trail's user markets will generally be similar to those of national trails (Box C) –

- the Trail's accessibility from cities, towns, coastal resorts and road and public transport networks will result in it gaining higher proportions of use by 'amblers', 'ramblers' and other casual users (e.g. landscape viewers, bird watchers), than most national trails
- its multi-use provision will attract higher proportions of cyclists, riders and all-abilities users than national trails, which are mostly walking routes, except the Pennine Bridleway.

There are very limited up-to-date data on the scales of use of national trails and other longer-distance routes; however, the examples in Box D illustrate the levels of use that some trails have achieved.

D. Levels of Use of Selected Longer Distance Routes in England

Estimates of the levels of use of longer distance walking and multi-purpose routes include -

- 1.17m day/part-day walks per year at hotspots on Hadrian's Wall Path National Trail and 27,350 end-to-end walks¹⁰
- 70,000 walking, cycling and other visits per year on the Trans Pennine Trail, which has attracted over 3.5m visits since it opened in mid-2001¹¹
- 69,000 user days were recorded on the Peddars Way & Norfolk Coast Path National Trail in summer 2006 – 87% comprised day/part-day walks and 13% were multi-day walks¹²
- 159,000 walks were made on the Cleveland Way in 1998¹³
- 12,-15,000 cyclists complete the Sea-to-Sea (C2C) cycle route each year¹⁴.

Overall, the National Cycle Network in England, which comprises on-/off-road cycle routes and multi-use routes, attracted 270m trips in 2007¹⁵. Use of the UK Network grew by 4.7% from 2006 to 2007, with 50% of trips being made on foot and 50% by bike.

Activity tourism, including walking, cycling and riding main activity holidays, is a growing market sector. UK residents took around 4.3m main activity walking, rambling and hiking holidays and 0.6m main activity cycling holidays in the UK in 2001¹⁶ (possibly a lower than average year due to Foot and Mouth Disease). The drivers of market growth (section 3.7), along with continuing development of walking- and cycling-friendly destinations, services and routes, are likely to contribute to further growth in tourist use of routes such as the Coastal Trail.

These data suggest that there is strong potential for recreational and tourism use of the Coastal Trail by a diverse range of visitors.

b. utilitarian and special purpose trips

Of the respondents to the *National Travel Survey: 2007*¹⁷ –

- 58% of people, who sometimes walk, walked for at least 20 minutes once a week, including 37% who walked at least 3 times each week
- 14% of respondents cycled at least once a week (including 45% of children) and a further 7% at least once a month.

Many of these walking and cycling trips will be utilitarian trips to work, school, shops, etc. and will include trips by people without access to private transport.

There is evident scope to increase levels of walking and cycling – especially as 23% of all car trips are under 2 miles distance. The Government and other public and voluntary organisations (e.g. local authorities, Ramblers Association, Sustrans) are promoting modal shift to walking and cycling as sustainable and healthy forms of transport, through, for example – walking to school schemes, work travel plans and Bike-ability training schemes.

c. natural and cultural heritage visits

Over 80% of North West's coast is protected through European designations for its wildlife and habitats and it has extensive areas of high landscape value, including the Solway Coast and Arnside and Silverdale AONBs, part of the Lake District National Park and St. Bees Head Heritage Coast. Also, it has a rich and varied cultural heritage, including prehistoric artefacts (Formby Point), parts of two World Heritage Sites (Hadrian's Wall, Liverpool's Maritime Mercantile City) and contemporary features (e.g. sculptures, renewable energy projects).

The Trail will enhance visitors awareness and understanding of, and respect for, the coast's natural and cultural heritage, through providing access to, and the further development of, -

- visitor centres and viewpoints
- interpretive displays, publication and Websites
- public art installations, sculptures and poetry
- guided walks/cycle rides, events, festivals and performances.

In particular, the planning and development of the Trail will offer scope to adopt strategic approaches to 'showcasing' the coast's heritage and coordinating its interpretation; thereby, encouraging 'discovery' of the region's coast by its residents and visitors. Also, it will assist the sustainable management of the coast, by leading visitors away from sensitive sites.

d. educational and lifelong learning visits

The Coast's natural and cultural heritage contributes to its values for formal education and lifelong learning visits by local and visiting schools, further education groups, etc.. Development of the Coastal Trail offers scope to increase educational visits, by further developing and promoting informal and formal educational opportunities associated with the coast and coordinating and enhancing the resources to support such visits (e.g. specialist expertise, learning packs, outdoor classrooms), including those currently provided by the education authorities, RSPB, National Trust and similar organisations.

3.2 Providing for Market Requirements and Aspirations

Experience from other coastal trails, cycleways and similar routes indicates the types of routes and associated facilities and services, which users desire and which encourage growth in recreational, tourist and other user markets. These include –

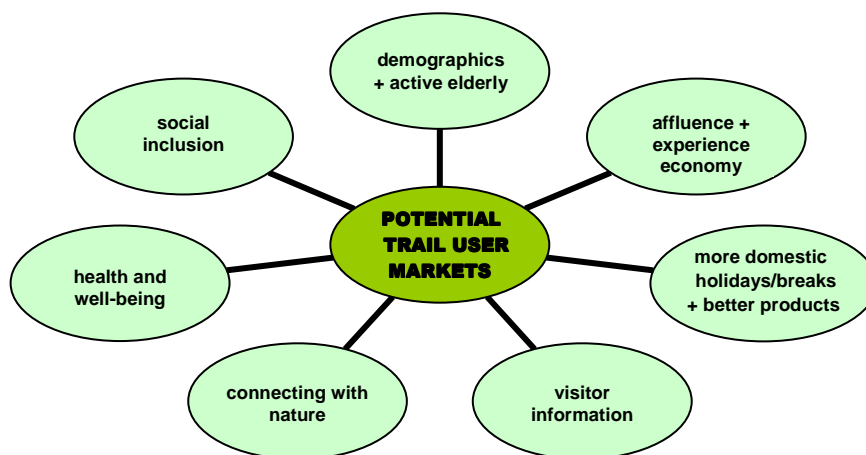
- safe, mostly off-road routes, with well-maintained surfaces and good signing
- attractive environments, including green corridors and public art
- easy access to visitor services – including quality accommodation, pubs and restaurants

- good quality and readily accessible information, including Websites, leaflets and signing, and interpretation of aspects of natural and cultural heritage interest
- convenient public transport services – enabling access to the Trail and linear and out-and-return trips on the Trail (cf. Pembrokeshire’s Coastal Cruiser bus services)
- secure and convenient car, cycle and horse box parking
- Trail-related events and activities – such as walking festivals and guided cycle tours.

3.3 Drivers of Growth in Trail User Markets

‘Drivers’ of potential growth in the use of the Coastal Trail by the North West’s residents and visitors are illustrated in Figure 3.1 and described below -

Figure 3.1 Drivers of Growth in Potential Trail User Markets



- **demographics and increasing numbers of the active elderly** – England’s population is growing, as is the proportion of over-55s – many of whom have moderate or high levels of wealth and leisure time (e.g. early-retirees) and enjoy, or wish to enjoy, active lifestyles
- **affluence and the experience economy** – despite the ‘credit crunch’, many people - especially the ABC1s - are prepared to spend money on leisure and experience-based activities (cf. growth in mountain biking)
- **better visitor products and more domestic holiday breaks** – people are increasingly staying at home for holidays and short-breaks, including natural tourism visits and activity breaks, for reasons of convenience, enhanced visitor products, travel costs and environmental impacts, and recognition of our attractive coasts, countryside and heritage
- **visitor information** – the marketing of trails, activity breaks, outdoor equipment, etc., and increased availability of walking and cycling guidebooks, maps and Internet information, are increasing awareness of opportunities for outdoor activity
- **connecting with nature** – media programmes (e.g. Springwatch) and enhanced opportunities for wildlife viewing, etc. are resulting in people wishing to reconnect with, experience and enjoy nature and landscapes
- **health and well-being** – people are increasing aware of the contributions of active lifestyles and leisure activities to their personal fitness, health and well-being
- **social inclusion** – public agencies and other policy makers recognise that various groups are under-represented in coast and countryside visits, participation in sport, etc. and are seeking to redress this through, for example, events, formation of social groups, and provision of travel opportunities to enable minority and disadvantaged groups to experience and enjoy the outdoors and associated leisure activities.

4. STRATEGIC FIT OF COASTAL TRAIL WITH KEY POLICY AGENDAS

4.1 The Policy and Institutional Context

The policy and institutional context is extensive and complex, as the Coastal Trail will stretch the entire length of the North West coast, involve many partner organisations (including 23 local authorities) and has potential to make significant contributions to the infrastructure, communities, economy and environment of the North West. The *North West Coastal Trail: Strategic Positioning Research* (unpublished) provides a wide-ranging review of the policy framework - key aspects of which are summarised below and in Appendix B. In particular, this summary illustrates –

- a. strong complementarity between the Coastal Trail intentions and relevant national, regional and sub-regional policy agendas
- b. potential for the Trail to deliver a wide range of policies in an integrated way.

The context is dynamic and there has been progress in several policy areas and changes in institutional arrangements, since preparation of the initial *North West Coastal Trail: Concept Feasibility Study*. Amongst the most significant of these are –

- a. Marine Bill and commitments to securing coastal access
- b. Regional Spatial and Economic Strategies and regional parks policies
- c. NWDA's economic objectives and funding roles
- d. Natural Economy Northwest
- e. natural tourism
- f. green infrastructure
- g. active and healthy lifestyles
- h. integrating rights of way improvement plans within local transport plans
- i. coastal management and flood defences.

These aspects are discussed below, as a prelude to the wider review of the national, regional, sub-regional and local policy framework (section 4.2).

a. Marine Bill and commitments to securing coastal access

The Draft Marine Bill (April 2008)¹⁸ takes forward the Government's commitments to securing enhanced coastal access, through proposals to place a duty on the Secretary of State and Natural England and to amend legislation to –

- provide a coastal margin, within which people can walk on a long-distance route (**English Coastal Route**) along the length of England's coast
- provide access (**spreading room**) to coastal land (e.g. beaches, cliffs, dunes) for open-air recreation on foot
- exclude certain lands (e.g. parks, gardens, MoD land) from the above provisions.

Preliminary research on costs of securing the new coastal access included a South Cumbria-Morecambe Bay pilot area. Within this pilot area, it was estimated that 117 sections of new access on foot, extending over 174 km, would be required at a cost of £2.2m to £2.9m¹⁹. However, this pilot area is not typical of the North West coast, as coastal paths are available along much of the Cheshire, Merseyside, Lancashire and Cumbria coasts.

Significant sections of the North West Coastal Trail will comprise part of the English Coastal Route and the legislation will contribute to the mechanisms available for completing the Coastal Trail, paths linking to it, and access to beaches and other 'spreading room'. Also, the Coastal Trail has potential to add value to the English Coastal Route by extending its provisions to cater for cyclists and horse riders, insofar as conditions permit.

b. Regional Spatial and Economic Strategies and regional park policies

The *Regional Spatial Strategy* (RSS)²⁰ and *Regional Economic Strategy* (RES)²¹ for the North West are to be combined in a Single Regional Strategy to be produced by the NWDA and agreed by 4NW – the Regional Leaders' Forum. Key themes within the RSS and/or RES and of relevance to the Coastal Trail include planning, environment, economy and transport.

Regional park policies are presented in the RSS and RES and the Mersey Waterfront and Ribble Coast and Wetlands Regional Parks are being progressed, along with the North West Coastal Trail. Proposals for Morecambe Bay and Duddon and West Cumbria Regional Parks are under consideration. Overall objectives for the regional parks are ... *to deliver:*

- *major improvement in the provision of high quality, easily accessible recreation, leisure and sporting opportunities, sustainable tourism, appropriate to the character and environmental sensitivity of the area*
- *major environmental quality improvement to aid regeneration and image and contribute towards mitigating the impacts of climate change*
- *significant increases in employment and business activity in leisure, sport and recreation*
- *a mechanism for the conservation of the landscape close to where people live, its character, biodiversity and heritage assets.*²¹

The North West Coastal Trail will –

- comprise the most extensive Regional Park resource – stretching the length of the coast
- provide a strategic access route through the coastal regional parks and linking them
- connect the coastal regional parks to other national and regional routes (e.g. NCN routes, Hadrian's Wall Path, Trans Pennine Trail), coastal resorts, and other towns and cities.

c. NWDA's economic objectives and funding roles

Following the *Review of sub-national economic development and regeneration*²², the NWDA is moving from a delivery role to primarily a leadership role, and from a focus on project delivery to programme delivery. More responsibilities will be given to delivery partners and partnerships (e.g. local authorities, Mersey Partnership, Cumbria Vision) working to sub-regional action plans, area agreements, etc., within the overall framework of the RES and, subsequently, the Single Regional Strategy. These changes reflect the NWDA's role in leading regional tourism development and marketing since the early-2000s and the sub-regional destination management organisations' delivery roles.

The NWDA is working towards the over-arching, national objective for regional growth of increasing GVA/head and to achieve the 11 corporate objectives in its *Corporate Plan 2008-2011*²³. These objectives, and the key themes they relate to, are –

a. Competitive Business

1. *support the development of internationally competitive sectors*
2. *improve the formation, survival and growth rates of enterprises*
3. *develop higher added value activity through innovation*
4. *realise opportunities from globalisation.*

b. Competitive People

5. *develop leadership and management skills in the current workforce*
6. *stimulate demand for higher level skills in the current workforce*
7. *grow the size of the workforce.*

c. Competitive Places

8. *support the development of major employment sites and premises*
9. *improve the physical conditions for private sector investment*
10. *adapting to climate change and increasing sustainable resource use*
11. *improve the image of the region to businesses and visitors.*

The NWDA will be a primary source of funding for economic development, environmental regeneration and tourism development programmes - potentially including the North West Coastal Trail, through –

- NWDA's Single Budget – the principal source of the NWDA's funding support, which will be delivered through the sub-regional partnerships, tourist boards and other partners
- Rural Development Programme for England funding - which is managed by the NWDA
- ERDF funding – in accordance with the North West Operational Programme.

These and other funding streams are discussed in more detail in section 7.

d. Natural Economy Northwest

Natural Economy Northwest (NENW) is a 3-year, £3m, regional partnership led by Natural England and supported by the NWDA, Natural England and SITA Trust to develop the economic benefits of the region's natural environment through the better alignment of environmental activities and economic gain (RES Action 113). NENW is providing leadership, facilitating action - through project planning, training, development and joined-up funding, and disseminating research on the economic benefits, best practice and value of healthy ecosystems (see www.naturaleconomynorthwest.co.uk). NENW programmes of particular relevance to the Coastal Trail are -

- natural tourism
- green infrastructure
- biodiversity, coastal, woodland and other projects
- training, skills innovation and good practice
- engaging with business associations and advisers.

e. natural tourism

Natural tourism is a core tourism product in the North West and its development is being facilitated by NENW, the tourist boards and other partners. Various reports have highlighted the economic importance of natural tourism and how the development and marketing of the region's natural tourism opportunities may best be progressed^{24, 25}; for example, through -

- infrastructure improvements (e.g. paths, toilets) and visitor management
- collaborative product packages and marketing
- developing a marketing toolkit and PR resource
- monitoring, evaluation and promoting best practice.

www.naturalnorthwest.co.uk exemplifies good practice in promoting awareness and information on natural tourism opportunities in the North West. The North West Coastal Trail will provide a valuable natural tourism resource for the region and it will be essential that the Coastal Trail is promoted through this website, the tourist boards' websites and similar media.

f. green infrastructure

Green infrastructure has been defined as ... *the Region's life support system – the network of natural environment components and green and blue spaces that lies within and between the North West's cities, towns and villages and which provides multiple social, economic and environmental benefits*²⁶. Green infrastructure is central to the environmental economy of the North West, which, including the land based and environmental tourism sectors, is estimated to support up to £2.6bn GVA and 109,300 jobs²⁷.

The report on the *Economic Benefits of Green Infrastructure*²⁶ sets out 11 economic benefits and the ways in which green infrastructure not only underpins the economy and contributes to GVA, but helps to create the conditions for economic growth, increase economic security and provide essential ecosystem services, improved environments, social benefits and cost savings (e.g. reduced healthcare costs, better employee productivity, less damage from the impacts of climate change). Also, the North West's green infrastructure is an essential component of the region's tourism, recreation and leisure resources.

Quality is vital, if green infrastructure is to provide such wide ranging benefits. It must be planned for, invested in, and managed, on scales ranging from the local to the regional, in settings from urban centres to open countryside, and across political and administrative boundaries.

The North West Coastal Trail corridor will comprise an important element of the region's green infrastructure – especially where it has been the focus of greening and biodiversity enhancement schemes. Strategies, such as the *Lancashire Green Infrastructure Strategy*²⁸, and regeneration programmes (e.g. Newlands regeneration schemes) will contribute towards enhancing the green infrastructure values of the Trail and surrounding areas.

g. active and healthy lifestyles

Increasing attention is being given to promoting physical activity and healthy lifestyles, in response to growing levels of obesity, coronary disease, mental health problems, etc.. The Coastal Trail and Trail-related programmes (e.g. Walking the Way to Health projects) will provide opportunities and promote healthy exercise. Accordingly, support may be available from the NHS North West, NHS trusts, businesses and charities (e.g. British Heart Foundation).

h. integrating rights of way improvement plans within local transport plans

Highway authorities are required to fully integrate RoWIPs within LTPs by 2010. This process should strengthen the priority given by highway authorities to policies, programmes and budgets for rights of way and other path networks, including multi-use trails such as the North West Coastal Trail. Also, walking and cycling are likely to feature more strongly within LTPs as sustainable modes of travel.

i. coastal management and flood defences

The further development of shoreline management plans, integrated coastal management plans and similar plans (e.g. Wyre B.C.'s *Flood and Coastal Defence Strategy*), and progress on managed coastal retreat and flood defence projects (e.g. Hesketh Out Marsh West coastal realignment scheme) offer scope to incorporate access improvements, including new/enhanced sections of the Coastal Trail, within coastal management works.

4.2 Review of the National, Regional and Sub-Regional Policy Framework

In addition to identifying key 'policy drivers', as outlined above, a wide range of policy documents was reviewed to identify policy areas and programmes of relevance to the development, management and marketing of the North West Coastal Trail. These included -

- national policies – legislation, planning policy statements and national rural development, walking, cycling, tourism and sports strategies
- regional policies – Draft RSS, RES and regional rural development, natural environment, tourism, natural tourism, green infrastructure, health and sports strategies
- sub-regional policies – sub-regional economic, destination management, local transport, cultural and community development plans/strategies.

The principal national and regional policy areas and policies and programmes of relevance to the Coastal Trail are summarised in **Table B1. National and Regional Policies** (Appendix B). The principal policy areas identified in this summary are –

- countryside recreation and access
- sustainable economic and community development
- active and healthy communities and social cohesion
- sustainable travel
- sustainable tourism
- natural heritage, green infrastructure and cultural heritage
- regional park development
- image and profile of the North West.

Table B2. Sub-Regional Policies (Appendix B) identifies key sub-regional policies and programmes of relevance to the Trail. In particular, this review demonstrates how Coastal Trail programmes will fit with, and contribute to/be delivered by, policies and programmes relating to –

- regeneration programmes – such as Chester Renaissance, ReBlackpool and Britain's Energy Coast
- development of the Mersey Waterfront and Ribble Coast and Wetlands Regional Parks, and regional park-type projects at Morecambe Bay and on the West Cumbria Coast
- enhancement of rights of way networks, new multi-use routes - such as the Mersey Way and enhancement of existing routes, including the Wirral Way and the Sefton, Lancashire and Cumbria coastal paths
- links to strategic routes, such as the Trans Pennine Trail, C2C Cycle Route and Hadrian's Wall Path National Trail
- promotion of activity and natural tourism products, such as cycling and bird watching
- biodiversity enhancement and green infrastructure programmes
- community-based cultural, arts, interpretation, volunteering and activity programmes.

Additionally, local policies, programmes and projects, within, for example, local development frameworks, community plans, walking and cycling strategies, and area-specific regeneration, tourism or access plans, will have relevance to the development and/or on-going management and marketing of the Coastal Trail. Due to the plethora of such documents, these were excluded from the scope of this review.

4.3 Strategic Positioning of the Coastal Trail – Key Findings

This review of relevant policy frameworks clearly demonstrates –

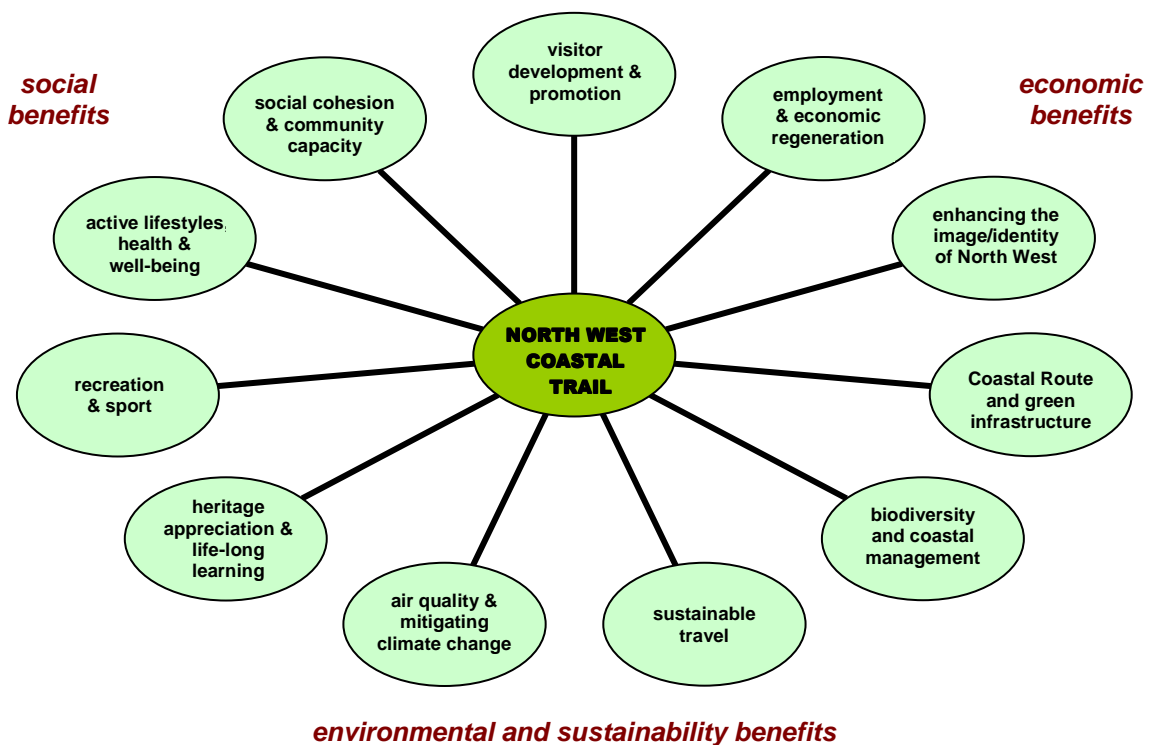
- **the complementarity and strong strategic fit between the North West Coastal Trail and a wide range of strategic policies and programmes at the national, regional and sub-regional scales**
- **opportunities for the development of the Coastal Trail to deliver, or support the delivery of, many of these policies and programmes in an integrated and cost effective manner** – for example, policies and programmes relating to coastal access, economic development, green infrastructure, natural tourism and community health.

5. BENEFITS ASSOCIATED WITH THE COASTAL TRAIL

5.1 Potential Benefits of Developing the Coastal Trail

The proposed Coastal Trail offers opportunities to deliver a wide range of economic, environmental and sustainability, and social benefits, as illustrated in Figure 5.1 and outlined below -

Figure 5.1 North West Coastal Trail - Potential Benefits



a. economic benefits

- **enhanced visitor offer** - Trail development, management and marketing will:
 - create and promote a world-class day visitor and activity tourism product
 - provide a continuous, safe, attractive and well-managed walking, cycling and, where feasible, riding and all-abilities route(s) along the North West coast
 - link coastal resorts, cycling demonstration towns and attractions
 - provide and promote linear, out-and-return, circular and themed routes of varying lengths to cater for diverse users
 - enhance access to, and appreciation of, the coast, including its beaches and natural and cultural heritage.
- **visitor market growth** - the enhanced visitor offer and effective marketing will:
 - attracting and sustaining visits by walkers, cyclists, riders and disabled visitors
 - attract landscape viewers, photographers, birdwatchers and other visitors, who will benefit from enhanced access and Trail-related facilities and services
 - encourage repeat and longer stays by activity and other visitors.
- **increased visitor expenditures** – there are insufficient data to enable estimates of potential growth in visitor numbers or expenditures, but evidence from other trails suggests these will be significant.

New and increased spending may result from:

- expenditures on travel to, from and along the Trail
- spending on accommodation, food and drink, other services (e.g. cycle hires/repairs), outdoor equipment, souvenirs, etc. and at attractions and events
- the multiplier effects of such expenditures – locally, regionally and nationally.
- **business growth, diversification and enhanced viability** – growth in visits and visitors' expenditures will offer opportunities for:
 - new or expanded Trail-related businesses, such as accommodation providers (e.g. bunkhouses), baggage-carrying services and walking holiday operators
 - business diversification – such as farmhouse B&Bs and taxi services for walkers
 - sustaining local businesses – including out-of-season custom for shops and pubs.
- **employment opportunities** – Trail-related programmes and use will generate and sustain employment in:
 - Trail development, maintenance and marketing
 - visitor services – including employment in accommodation, catering, information and ranger services, transport and activity holidays
 - indirect employment - through the multiplier effects of visitors' expenditures
- **employment training and skills development** – the Trail and associated businesses can provide opportunities for:
 - employment training and experience in visitor services businesses
 - skills development amongst employees and volunteers - in pathwork, ranger services and other aspects of coast and countryside management.
- **economic regeneration** – Trail development will act as a focus and stimulus for, or a component of, regional and local regeneration projects, such as:
 - Mersey Waterfront, Ribble Coast and Wetlands and West Cumbria Regional Parks
 - urban, coastal resort and brownfield regeneration schemes – for example, Chester Renaissance and The Waterfront Barrow-in-Furness
 - rural regeneration strategies – such as *The Lancashire Rural Recovery Action Plan*.

E. Economic and Employment Values of Trail Users

The following estimates illustrate the market strength and economic benefits of existing trails –

- in 2003, 527m walking trips in England generated £1.47-2.76bn income, which supported 180,559 to 245,560 fte jobs at £25,-34,000 per fte job²⁹
- in 1998, there were over 119m UK leisure cycling trips with expenditures of £635m, including 16.7m cycling day and holiday trips which generated £285m³⁰
- 5.5m UK visitors are estimated to have walked while on holiday in the North West in 2001 and to have spent £270m. Additionally, 64,000 overseas visitors, who walked, spent £20m²⁹
- from 2003 to the end of 2007, Hadrian's Wall Path National Trail attracted 27,350 end-to-end walkers, who spent some £6.5m, and 1.17m day walkers to hotspots, who spent £12.7m¹⁰
- the North East's 4 NCN routes – C2C, Coast and Castles, Hadrian's Wall and Pennine (part) Cycleways – attracted over 0.5m trips in 2006, which directly contributing £9.6m to the regional economy, generated a wider value of £13.4m, and supported 216 fte jobs³¹
- the Trans Pennine Trail attracts 0.7m trips/year, generates £1.36m and supports 34 fte jobs¹¹
- users of Wales' 3 National Trails accounted for 36% of the turnover of local accommodation businesses – supporting an average of 3 fte jobs per business³²
- from 2002 to 2004, 22 new businesses started on the Pennine Bridleway, including accommodation, catering and package tour businesses³³
- North Devon's multi-use Tarka Trail has resulted in the establishment of 10 cycle hirers³⁰.

- **enhanced image and identity of the North West** – creation of the Trail, greening its corridor, enhanced opportunities for coastal access, visits and appreciation, and Trail marketing will promote a positive image of the North West and its coast; thereby:
 - changing perceptions of the region – generally, and as a place to live, work and visit
 - enhancing residents' quality of life and pride in their localities and the region
 - attracting new, repeat and longer stay day and tourist visits and expenditures
 - stimulating inward investment and attracting/retaining businesses and employees.
- **enhanced property values** – improvements to the image, environmental qualities and recreational opportunities associated with the Trail are likely to:
 - increase demand for, and the values of, residential properties and visitor-oriented businesses in the vicinity of the Trail
 - encourage improvements to housing stock and neighbourhoods in/near the Trail.

F. Influences of Greenspace on Locational Choice and Property Values

Greenspace influences locational choice and parks and greening increase property values -

- 82% of people believe that quality greenspaces encourage people and businesses to locate in a town³⁴
- restoration of the Cotswold Canal and its towpath, and greening of the Canal corridor, have contributed to increases of 12% in local property values³⁵
- 8 urban areas in England showed price premiums of between 3% and 34% for properties adjacent to parks.³⁶

b. environmental and sustainability benefits

- **English Coastal Route and green infrastructure** – the Coastal Trail will:
 - contribute to the creation of the English Coastal Route and *vice versa*
 - gain added value to its image, identity and marketing through its association with the England-wide Coastal Route
 - contribute an important north-south element to the region's green infrastructure and, in turn, benefit from its links to the North West's wider networks of access and sustainable travel routes, greenspaces, habitat corridors, etc..
- **biodiversity, habitat enhancement and coastal management** - nature conservation, habitat enhancement, coastal management and related schemes in the Trail's vicinity will:
 - protect and enhance biodiversity, especially where the Trail links habitats
 - create new habitats - for example, where Trail development is part of a wider brownfield regeneration scheme or coastal realignment project
 - stimulate local and wider conservation, visitor and access management, interpretation and other coastal management activity, often involving volunteers.

G. Wildlife and Scenery as Visitor Attractions and the Associated Benefits

The Coastal Trail will provide extensive opportunities for wildlife and scenic viewing; thereby, attracting visitors and associated spending, and offering scope for interpretation and education -

- visitors to 6 sites on the Norfolk Coast in 1999 spent £21m/year in the local economy, of which £6m could be attributed to birds and wildlife and supported 135 fte jobs, and £2.7m could be attributed to scenery/landscape, which supported a further 59 fte jobs³⁷
- RSPB's Leighton Moss Reserve in Lancashire attracts over 90,000 visitors/year, including 4,000 schoolchildren. Its wildlife attracted local spending of over £0.95m in 1999 - supporting 27 fte jobs. Spending by visitors attracted by the scenery supported a further 20 fte jobs³⁸.

- **sustainable travel** – provision of a safe, off-road multi-use route(s) in the vicinity of the coast and linking coastal cities, resorts and other destinations will:
 - encourage environmentally-friendly travel on foot and by bicycle for journeys to work, school, shops and leisure facilities and support local Walking to School, work walking/cycle plans and similar schemes promoting sustainable travel
 - encourage walking, cycling and riding as leisure activities and for travel while on holiday
- **air quality and mitigating impacts of climate change** – the Trail will:
 - contribute to improvements in air quality and carbon emissions, through encouraging non-motorised travel for local and other journeys
 - enable natural species to adapt to climate change, through the greening of its corridor and linking of habitats in its vicinity, which will enable the trans-migration of species under threat from climate change
 - be ‘future-proofed’, by realigning it away from coastal areas vulnerable to flooding or dune/cliff erosion, as part of flood defence works or managed coastal retreat.

H. Potential for, and Benefits of, Promoting Sustainable Travel

- there is significant potential for modal shift, as nearly a quarter of all car trips are under two miles – a distance that could be cycled in under 15 minutes, or walked³⁹
- Cycling Demonstration Town schemes in Aylesbury have helped to increase the proportion of residents using bikes as one of their main transport modes from 3% in 2005 to 14% in 2007³⁹
- SQW has estimated for Cycle England that a 20% increase in cycling would deliver congestion savings of £207m and pollution benefits of £71m⁴⁰
- potential carbon dioxide savings of all National Cycle Network trips in 2006 are estimated as over 450,000 tonnes of CO₂ – equivalent to taking almost 200,000 cars off the road⁴⁰

- **heritage interpretation and life-long learning** - interpretation and educational programmes, events and facilities associated with the Trail will:
 - increase awareness and understanding of, learning about, and support for, the natural and cultural heritage of the coast and its communities
 - encourage responsible behaviour and care for the coast and its heritage
 - raise awareness of climate change and promote more sustainable lifestyles.

c. social benefits

- **recreation and sport** – by enhancing access to coastal beaches, estuaries, greenspaces, etc., the Trail will -
 - encourage growth in informal and formal recreation and sport – including walking, cycling, riding and other activities on the Trail, insofar as are practical and safe, and access to adjacent areas for activities ranging from scenic viewing and bird watching, to kite-sports, cliff climbing and sea angling
 - provide safe, off-road locations for learning to cycle, wheelchair access, charity walks, marathons, challenge events, etc.
- **active lifestyles, health and well-being** – the Trail and related programmes will provide a focus and opportunities for:
 - helping to reduce health inequalities, including through targeted programmes of Health Walks and physical activity amongst elderly and ethnic groups
 - reducing obesity, stress and ill-health and promoting mental and physical well-being, through encouraging walking, cycling and other physical activities
 - reducing costs to health and personal care budgets and costs of absences from work, which result from physical inactivity and ill-health.

- **social cohesion and community capacity** – experience from other Trails and countryside programmes illustrates the potential for:
 - community engagement – through involving individuals and community and interest groups in the planning, development and maintenance of the Trail and participation in Trail-based activity programmes (e.g. community cycle rides)
 - community capacity building - through volunteering opportunities (e.g. voluntary path wardens, local workdays) and skills training (e.g. training in pathwork, communicating with/assisting path users and organising events)
 - encouraging community cohesion – by involving people from mixed social, economic and cultural backgrounds in Trail-related programmes (e.g. walking festivals), or arranging programmes for target groups, which are under-represented amongst Trail users.

I. Social Benefits of Trails and Trail-related Programmes

The following examples (estimates) illustrate some of the community benefits of promoting walking, cycling and other physical activity and developing routes, such as the Coast Trail -

- walking, cycling and other physical activity can help to reduce obesity and poor health. Over 63% of men and 76% of women in England are not meeting physical activity targets and over 1-in-5 adults are clinically obese, resulting in costs of £11b/year⁴²
- Scottish estimates suggest that 1-in-100 persons walking regularly for exercise could save the NHS in Scotland around £85m each year⁴³
- estimates for the RSPB indicate that a 3 km footpath on the edge of Liverpool could save the economy over £1m/year, including NHS savings of £210,000, through increased activity and health. A similar path on the edge of Lancaster could save the economy £60,000⁴³
- over three-quarters of users say that the National Cycle Network is enabling an increase in their physical activity. 35% plan to walk/cycle more in the future and 9% are new cyclists or are returning to the activity¹⁵
- the Walking the Way to Health Initiative has helped to create over 525 local health walk schemes, encouraged over 1m people to walk more, and trained over 33,000 volunteer leaders. 64% of current and past members of health walk schemes say that their transport habits have changed and 27% now walk rather than drive short distances⁴⁴
- a survey found that 86% of cyclists and 81% of pedestrians on West Yorkshire's 11 km Spen Valley Greenway said that the Greenway had helped to increase their levels of fitness. Personal fitness was their reason for 56% of users using the route⁴⁵
- research in East Lancashire shows that traffic-free routes and programmes to introduce the Asian community to cycling have increased cycling – especially amongst young Asians⁴⁶
- Hadrian's Wall Path National Trail managers have developed a team of over 65 volunteers, who meet walkers, monitor the path conditions and archaeology, and help to resolve any problems⁴⁷.

5.2 Benefit to Cost Ratios and Willingness to Pay

While the previous text focuses on the potential benefits of Coastal Trail programmes, it is important that these are viewed also in relation to the costs of such programmes. As Box J. demonstrates high ratios of benefits to costs can be achieved from investments in programmes to manage coastal trails and other non-vehicular routes.

Willingness to pay is a means of measuring personal benefits of public investments. Sustrans' surveys of users of four longer distance cycle routes in the North East have shown that users would have been prepared to pay an average of £5.59 per trip³¹. In Bedfordshire respondents indicated a willingness to pay £6/household/year for the upkeep of the public rights of way network and to pay additional taxes if the network was significantly improved⁴⁸.

J. Cost and Benefit Relationships for Coastal Trails and Other Routes

The following examples illustrate favourable cost to benefit ratios that can be achieved by investments in coastal trail and other access route management -

- for every £1 spent on managing the Pembrokeshire Coast Path National Trail, £57 was spent locally and 1 fte job was created for £433 of public expenditure^{49, 50}
- estimates for restoring all of England's public rights of way network to acceptable standards are £69.2m and a further £18.55m/year to maintain the network. In comparison users of the network are estimated to generate income of between £1.47bn to £2.76bn²⁹
- public funding of local walking and cycling routes are estimated to produce a benefit to cost ratio of 20:1, as compared with typical ratios of 3:1 for road and rail schemes⁵¹
- the benefit to cost ratios of three sample walking and cycling routes developed under Sustrans' Links to School programme in 2004 ranged from 14.9:1 to 32.5:1⁵².

5.3 Benefits of Trail Programmes – Key Findings

Table 5.1 illustrates the types of programmes that are likely to be developed in association with the implementation, management and marketing of the Coastal Trail and the potential outputs and outcomes that these may achieve. This Table and the preceding text demonstrate that **the Coastal Trail and Trail-related programmes have potential to deliver, directly and indirectly, a wide range of economic, environmental and community benefits – many of which relate directly to regional growth objectives**, as outlined in the *NWDA: Corporate Plan 2008-2011*²³. The Coastal Trail programmes will contribute to achieving the NWDA's three priority areas: *competitive business, competitive people, competitive places* and its 11 regional growth objectives.

Examples of local and regional expenditures and incomes, employment generation and similar output measures (s. 5.1), and benefit to cost ratios and willingness to pay assessments (s. 5.2), show that **coastal trail development, management and associated programmes can provide good overall returns from public investment and are highly valued by the public.**

Table 5.1 Potential Trail-Related Programmes, Outputs and Outcomes (illustrative examples, not comprehensive lists)

| Trail-related Programmes and Actions | Potential Outputs | Intended Outcomes |
|---|--|---|
| <p>Trail and Trail-related Product Development Development and management of Coastal Trail and related link/circular walking, cycling and multi-use route(s) Promotion of new/expanded/diversified facilities, services and attractions serving Trail users Natural and cultural heritage access and interpretation programmes Climate change awareness and interpretation programmes</p> <p>Trail-related Marketing and Market Development Trail branding strategy and promotion of Trail-related brands Development and delivery of Trail-related marketing programmes Development and working with partners to provide quality publications, Websites, on-site and other user information</p> <p>Economic Development Programmes Trail-related business development and diversification programmes Business and trail/coastal management skills training programmes Use Trail to promote image of North West and attract inward investment and in-migration by skilled employees, etc.</p> <p>Environmental and Sustainability Programmes Environmental reclamation and greening schemes Biodiversity and habitat enhancement and conservation Promotion of interpretation and life-long learning Walking to School, work travel plans and related schemes Trail development/management as part of climate change mitigation schemes and <i>vice versa</i></p> <p>Community-oriented Programmes Communities'/interest groups' involvement in Trail planning, management (e.g. volunteer programmes) Community skill training programmes (e.g. pathwork training, cycle skills training) Trail-related events programmes (e.g. community cycle rides) Activity and health promotion schemes (e.g. Health Walks)</p> | <p>Product-related Outputs New/enhanced sections of Coastal Trail New/enhanced linear/link/circular walking, cycling, riding and all-abilities routes associated with Coastal Trail New/enhanced Trail-related visitor facilities, services and attractions New/enhanced natural heritage access and interpretation New/enhanced cultural heritage access and interpretation New/enhanced climate change related interpretation</p> <p>Visitor Marketing and Market Outputs Agreed Trail brand and delivery of branding programmes Buy-in to marketing programmes by Trail-related businesses High quality, readily accessible Trail-related publications High quality, readily accessible Internet information High quality, readily accessible on-site information</p> <p>Economic Outputs New/additional expenditures by Trail users New/expanded/diversified Trail-related businesses New jobs created and existing jobs supported Participation in skills training programme Enhanced perceptions of North West and coast by residents, visitors and potential investors Increase in demand for/values of properties in vicinity of Trail</p> <p>Environmental and Sustainability Outputs Environmental improvements to/greening of Trail corridor Increase in biodiversity and new/improved habitats Increases in audiences for/interest in natural and cultural heritage and climate change interpretation New/enhanced walking/cycling to work/school schemes, etc. Increase in walking and cycling trips instead of car travel Improvements to air quality in vicinity of Trail Trail-related flood defence, coastal retreat and other schemes</p> <p>Social and Community Outcomes Volunteering in Trail-management, conservation projects, etc. Participation in Trail related events Participation in cycle skills training and reduction in accidents Increase in pride and respect of local environment Higher levels of participation in physical activities Lower incidences in illness related to inactivity, etc. Improved perceptions of personal well-being Reduction in absences from work due to ill health</p> | <p>Product-related Outcomes North West Coastal Trail – Chester to Carlisle English Coastal Trail – North West component New/enhanced national, regional and local access resource Trail as spine and key element in region's green infrastructure Trail as new regional park resource and key route within/linking coastal regional parks and equivalent areas (e.g. Morecambe Bay) NW Coast as focus for activity visits and natural tourism NW Coastal Trail as exemplar for coastal trail management</p> <p>Visitor Market Outcomes North West Coastal Trail brand recognition and support High level of awareness of Trail amongst residents and visitors Growth in Trail-related visitor markets Growth in Trail-related activities – especially walking, cycling, riding and all-abilities use</p> <p>Economic Outcomes Growth in local and regional income (direct + induced income) Growth in/retention of local and regional employment Enhanced employment skills and experience Growth and enhanced viability of Trail-related businesses Positive image of North West and coast as place to live, work, visit and invest in Up-lift in property prices in vicinity of Trail</p> <p>Environmental and Sustainability Outcomes Enhanced environmental quality in vicinity of Trail corridor Enhanced biodiversity in vicinity of Trail corridor Greater awareness of/care for natural and cultural heritage Greater awareness of climate change issues Growth in walking/cycling for work, school and other trips Modal shift from car travel for short trips Enhanced air quality and reduction in CO₂ emissions Increased capacity of coast to withstand climate change impacts</p> <p>Social and Community Outcomes Enhanced quality life for local residents Community engagement in Trail management, events, etc. Enhanced cycling skills and safety Greater community pride in/care for Trail and local environments Communities are more physically active Enhanced community health and personal well-being Reduction in long-term illnesses and absences from work Reduction in health and personal care costs</p> |

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6. IMPLEMENTATION OF THE COASTAL TRAIL

6.1 Implementing the Coastal Trail

Implementation of the North West Coastal Trail is benefitting from –

- the many, often extensive, existing coastal paths and cycleways along sections of the North West's coast, or in its vicinity (section 6.2)
- regeneration, regional park, green infrastructure, natural tourism and other projects, which include coastal access and visitor provision and will contribute to the development of the Trail (s. 6.3)
- the availability of substantial funding for major projects in the North West (see s. 7).

At one level, implementation of the Coastal Trail will comprise a 'top-down' process, where –

- the Government's proposals for an English Coastal Route – to be coordinated and funded by Natural England – will provide a stimulus and support for implementing sections of the North West Coastal Trail, which will comprise part of the national Coastal Route.

At other levels, it will comprise a 'bottom-up' process, which will –

- require the coordination and integration of existing routes and improvement programmes (e.g. path development, signage and marketing programmes) with potential to fill gaps in the Trail, provide enhanced visitor facilities, or promote use of the Trail
- bring together a wide range of organisations to achieve Trail development – including national and regional agencies (e.g. Natural England, Environment Agency, NWDA, 4NW), economic partnerships, tourist boards, coastal partnerships, local authorities and other public, private and voluntary sector stakeholders - especially community and user groups.

Since 2002, the North West Coastal Forum has coordinated and helped to facilitate the initial planning, implementation and promotion of Coastal Trail, with support from a wide range of organisations - especially GONW (initially), NWRA (now 4NW) and NWDA. In 2007, a Project Officer was appointed to promote support for the Coastal Trail concept and to progress strategies and programmes for its implementation. This post is funded by 4NW and Natural Economy Northwest.

6.2 Existing Strategic Routes Associated with the Coastal Trail

As indicated above, a large number of existing paths and recreational routes have potential to comprise sections of the North West Coastal Trail; whether –

- following current alignments and with adequate standards of surfaces, signage, etc.; or,
- requiring realignment, up-grading or minor improvements to meet desired standards for the Coastal Trail and provide a safe and attractive multi-use route.

Table 6.1 illustrates the principal existing routes with potential to comprise strategic sections of the Coastal Trail. Strategic routes of particular significance are –

- | | |
|---|---|
| • Hadrian's Wall Path National Trail (part) | • Sefton Coastal Path |
| • Cumbria Coastal Way | • Leeds-Liverpool Canal (part) |
| • Lancashire Coastal Way | • Mersey Way and its proposed extension.. |

In addition, local paths, bridleways and cycle routes may comprise sections of the Trail.

Importantly, many national and regional routes will link into the Coastal Trail, provide 'feeder' routes and enable circular or longer-distance walking, cycling or riding trips; e.g. –

- | | |
|------------------------------------|---|
| • Hadrian's Wall Path and Cycleway | • Ribble Way |
| • Sea-to-Sea (C2C) cycle route | • Trans Pennine Trail |
| • Walney-to-Wear Cycle Route | • Sandstone Trail (Cheshire) |
| • Lancaster Canal towpath | • National/Regional Cycle Network routes. |

Table 6.1 Strategic Routes with Potential for Inclusion in North West Coastal Trail

| Strategic Routes | Brief Descriptions |
|---|--|
| Cumbria | |
| Cumbria Coastal Way | 240 km walking route: Gretna to Silverdale. Carlisle to Silverdale section partly on the indicative route of the NWCT; gaps + requires improvements |
| Hadrian's Wall Path National Trail | 134 km national trail (walking): Wallsend (Tyneside) to Bowness-on-Solway. Carlisle to Bowness section on NWCT route |
| Hadrian's Cycleway (NCN 72) | 278 km NCN on-/off road cycle route: South Shields to Ravenglass. Carlisle to Ravenglass section partly on NWCT route. Sections incomplete, distant from coast and unsuitable for NWCT |
| Walney to Wear (W2W) cycle route (RCN 20) | 241 km Walney Island (Barrow) to Wearmouth or Whitby on-off road cycle route. Walney Island to R. Kent vicinity on NWCT route for short sections. Mostly distant from coast and often on-road. |
| Lancashire | |
| Lancashire Coastal Way | 220 km Silverdale to Freckleton. Mostly footpath (some shared-use) path along Lancs. Gaps in vicinity of Ribble Estuary |
| Lancaster, Morecambe and Lune Valley cycle routes | Lancaster Canal, Lune Valley Millennium Cycleway and other routes providing links between Glasson Dock, Lancaster, Morecambe and Carnforth, including potential multi-use sections of NWCT |
| Merseyside | |
| Sefton Coast Path | 34 km Crossens to Crosby walking/cycling (part) path. |
| Trans Pennine Trail | 346 km Hull to Liverpool, with extension to Southport. European path (E8), NCN 62 and multi-use route |
| Mersey Way | Existing and proposed extension to the walking and cycle route(s) along the Mersey Waterfront, incorporating promenades, coastal paths, etc. |
| Cheshire | |
| Mersey Way | as above |
| Wirral Shore Way | 33 km path from Chester to Hoylake + promenade extensions |

6.3 Recent, Current and Proposed Trail-related Initiatives

Table 6.3 illustrates the extent and diversity of recently-competed, on-going or proposed projects with potential to contribute to the implementation or marketing of the Coastal Trail, provide Trail-related visitor attractions, facilities or services, or enhance or conserve the environmental quality of the Trail corridor. A more detailed database of such projects was compiled as part of the *North West Coastal Trail: Strategic Positioning Research*.

Many such projects are being progressed through partnership-based regeneration, economic or green infrastructure programmes, for example –

- **Britain's Energy Coast** – being progressed by West Lakes Renaissance and including the **West Cumbria regional park resource**
- **Ribble Coast and Wetlands Regional Park** – being led by a Regional Park Steering Group. This project will seek to fill gaps in access around the Ribble Estuary
- **Mersey Waterfront Regional Park** – a Mersey Partnership project, with the core themes of *Regenerating the Waterfront, Recreation and the Regional Park* and *Preserving and promoting the environment*. The **Mersey Way** will be a key part of the Regional Park.

Table 6.2 Strategic and Other Projects with Coastal Trail-related Components

| Location and Project | Trail-related Components of Projects, etc. | Status |
|--|--|----------------------|
| Cumbria | | |
| Cumbria Coastal Way | much of Coastal Way may become part of English Coastal Route (initial survey by Natural England). Improvements being considered | future |
| Solway Coast Signage Strategy | new/improved visitor signage to/along Solway Coast | future |
| Hadrian's Cycleway (NCN 72) | on-/off-road cycle route, Carlisle to Ravenglass sections | on-going |
| Hadrian's Wall Country | marketing, interpretation, events, training, community engagement, etc. | on-going/future |
| West Lakes Renaissance; Britain's Energy Coast | Whitehaven Coast and Workington regeneration schemes, Destination Maryport, Sellafield and other visitor projects. RSS identifies Cumbria & Furness Coastal Beacons regional park area of search | on-going/ future |
| Roman Maryport | archaeological excavations and Roman heritage visitor attraction | on-going/future |
| Furness Greenways | greenways demonstration project | on-going |
| The Waterfront Barrow-in-Furness | regeneration project, incl. iconic footbridge, marina and leisure facilities | on-going/future |
| Ravenglass high-tide walking route | safe high-tide walking route and possible cross-estuary ferry | on-going/future |
| Walney to Wear cycle route | coastal sections of cycle route: Barrow, Ulverston, Grange-over-Sands | on-going |
| Morecambe Bay & Duddon Estuary | Morecambe Bay Coastal Trail, access, interpretation and visitor provision, conservation and regeneration | future |
| Lancashire | | |
| Morecambe Bay & Duddon Estuary | <i>see Cumbria</i> | on-going/future |
| Lancaster + Morecambe: Cycling Demonstration Town | cycling infrastructure, activity and skills development, including Morecambe Promenade cycle route | on-going |
| River Lune Millennium Cycleway, Bridge and Park | Iconic bridge, Lancaster-Glasson Dock cycleway and extension along St. George's Quay | completed/ future |
| Wyre Peninsula Cycling Study | Wyre Estuary, promenade and other off-/on road cycle routes | future |
| ReBlackpool: Seafront; Southern Gateway | Promenade public realm regeneration/improvement and attraction projects | on-going |
| Blackpool Cycling Demo. Town | cycling infrastructure, activity and skills development | on-going |
| Ribble Coast & Wetlands Regional Park | proposed Southport to Preston Coastal Route, access, interpretation, wildlife and coastal conservation, etc. | future |
| River Douglas Crossing and Southport to Preston Greenway | A REMADE reclamation project | on-going/ future |
| Merseyside | | |
| Sefton Coast Path, Access Strategy, etc. | Coast Path improvements. Other access, signage, information/interpretation improvements | on-going |
| Southport Cycling Demo. Town | cycling infrastructure, activity and skills development | on-going |
| Mersey Waterfront Regional Park and Mersey Way | Mersey Way, Leeds Liverpool Canal, Pride in Our Promenades, and Coastal Places and Open Spaces projects, other public realm improvements, interpretive signage, art, 'Waterfront Windows', Liverpool 'International Waterfront' and 'Riverlands', The Sail, etc. | on-going/ future |
| Speke & Garston Coastal Reserve | nature reserve with section of Mersey Way | on-going |
| Wirral Peninsula branding | Wirral coast and countryside brand and marketing campaign | future |
| Wirral Maritime Heritage Trail | Interpretive plaques at sites of maritime heritage interest | completed |
| Cheshire | | |
| Silver Jubilee Bridge | Walking/cycling improvements, when Mersey Gateway completed | future |
| Mouth of the Weaver Masterplan | access and environmental improvements, conservation, leisure, etc. | on-going/future |
| Chester Cycling Demo. Town | cycling infrastructure, activity and skills development | on-going |
| Chester Renaissance/EU Water in Historic City Centres: Riverside Promenade Trail | River Dee promenade extension, public realm improvements and interpretation | completed |
| Chester Culture Park | waterfront route, green network, interpretation, marketing, events, etc. | on-going/future |

Three further region-wide programmes are influencing and helping to support major projects, such as the North West Coastal Trail, -

- **Natural Economy Northwest** – a region-wide partnership supported by Natural England, NWDA and SITA Trust, which is promoting the natural economy through helping to deliver biodiversity, green infrastructure, coastal, natural tourism and other project, training and marketing initiatives
- **Green Infrastructure North West** – a multi-partner initiative to promote, plan and develop green infrastructure networks throughout the North West
- **Newlands** – a funding scheme for derelict land regeneration projects, often with access components. **REMADE** is a similar scheme in Lancashire.

7. FUNDING THE COASTAL TRAIL

7.1 Potential Capital Funding of the Coastal Trail

Funding will be required to support and sustain the development, maintenance, management and marketing of the Coastal Trail and related information, education, training, events and other programmes. The funding mix is likely to include EU, national, regional and local scale funding and draw on public, private and charitable sector sources (Table 7.1).

Table 7.1 North West Coastal Trail - Potential Funding Sources

| Key Funders | Principal Funding Sources (<i>examples of funding programmes</i>) | Lead Bodies |
|--|---|---|
| European Union | ERDF (2007-2013): <i>infrastructure, environmental protection, sustainable tourism</i> (Northwest Operational Programme) ESF: <i>employment growth and skills development – incl. visitor and environmental sectors</i> (ESF Regional Framework) Life+: <i>biodiversity, environmental awareness</i> Interreg (2007-2013): <i>trans-national programmes for sustainable tourism, cultural heritage, etc.</i> (Atlantic Area and North West Europe Area programmes) | NWDA Learning & Skills Council + DWP/ Job Centre+ Defra (Beta Technology) EU Interreg co-ordinating offices |
| Lottery | Heritage Lottery Fund - Your Heritage, Heritage Grants, Parks for People, Landscape Partnerships, etc. BIG Lottery Fund - BASIS, Reaching Communities, Changing Spaces (incl. Community Spaces, Access to Nature, Ecominds), Parks for People, etc. Awards for All England – <i>community-based projects</i> Community Investment Fund – <i>sports development</i> | Heritage Lottery Fund BIG Lottery Fund (+ partners) HLF, BIG Lottery, Arts Council, Sport England Sport England (NW) |
| U.K. Government & Public Bodies | English Coastal Route (+ 'spreading room') – <i>trail development, signing, etc.</i> Rural Development Programme England (incl. Leader+) Environmental Stewardship – <i>access, biodiversity, interpretation, etc.</i> Aggregates Levy Sustainability Fund: <i>environmental improvement, access (areas impacted by extraction)</i> Countdown 2010 Biodiversity Action Fund: <i>biodiversity conservation/enhancement</i> (voluntary sector only) Access to Nature – <i>enjoying outdoors, understanding nature</i> Land Purchase Grants Scheme: <i>purchases for conservation</i> Sport England 'single pot' – <i>developing sports facilities and bodies</i> Environment Agency – <i>flood management schemes</i> Landfill Communities Fund (e.g. Biffaward, SITA Trust) | Defra/Natural England NWDA Natural England Natural England Natural England Nat. England/BIG Lottery Natural England Sport England Environment Agency ENTRUST + operators |
| Regional & Sub-regional Organisations | Single Budget and other funding – e.g. Urban Regeneration Companies, Resorts Regeneration Fund, regional park, Visitor Attraction Fund, Business Support programmes, Green Tourism Business scheme, destination marketing Health promotion and prevention funding – e.g. <i>health walks</i> | NWDA, sub-regional partnerships, tourist boards, etc. Health Authorities/Trusts |
| Local Government | Local transport funds – <i>multi-use routes, cycleways, quiet lanes, footpaths, public rights of way</i> (LTPs, RoWIPs) Programme and project funding – e.g. <i>recreation, sports, coastal management, sustainable tourism programmes</i> | local transport authorities local authorities |
| Charities | Sustrans – Connect 2, Bike IT and Safe Routes to School schemes Foundation for Sports and the Arts Esmee Fairbairn Foundation – <i>education, biodiversity</i> Tubney Charitable Trust – <i>nature conservation (charities only)</i> | Sustrans/Lottery trust managers/ trustees trust managers/ trustees trust managers/ trustees |
| Private Sector | Trail-related enterprises - e.g. <i>accommodation, cycle hire</i> sponsorship - e.g. <i>leaflets, signs</i> section 106 agreements – e.g. <i>path provision</i> tourism pay-back schemes – e.g. <i>path maintenance, leaflets</i> joint programmes - e.g. <i>marketing, events</i> | individual enterprises individual enterprises developers tourism/business groups tourism/business groups |

Principal sources of capital funding for developing/improving the Trail, Trail-related facilities and services, and other programmes (e.g. greening, marketing) are likely to be –

- NWDA – see below
- Natural England – especially in support of the English Coastal Route and related access
- Lottery funds – especially HLF and BIG Lottery funds
- local authorities – particularly through transport plan programmes and projects.

Along with local authorities, the NWDA may support Coastal Trail programmes, through the sub-regional partnerships, tourist boards and other partners, with funding from -

- NWDA's Single Budget – government funds allocated through 'Single Pot' arrangements
- Rural Development Programme for England from 2008-2013 - which will be managed by the NWDA and deliver programmes based on the themes –
 - making farming and forestry more competitive and sustainable
 - enhancing the environment and countryside
 - enhancing opportunities in rural areas
 - skills, knowledge transfer and capacity building
- North West European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) Programme 2007-2013⁵³ - which is being managed by the NWDA and is based on the four priority areas in the North West Operational Programme –
 1. stimulating enterprise and supporting growth in target sectors and markets
 2. exploiting innovation and knowledge
 3. creating the conditions for sustainable growth
 4. growing and accessing employment.

Action areas of particular relevance to Coastal Trail programmes include –

- 1-2. developing higher added-value activity in target regional sectors
- 3-3. supporting the improvement of the region's visitor offer and image.

7.2 Revenue Funding

Sustained revenue funding will be required to maintain, manage and market the Trail and related infrastructure and services (e.g. path surfaces, signs, interpretation boards, websites). Most revenue funding will need to be met by the local authorities, including through local transport plan funds. Subject to Defra funding, Natural England will support the maintenance of new sections of the English Coastal Route over its 10-year implementation phase.

7.3 Funding Considerations and Requirements for a Funding Strategy

The status of the lead organisation charged with developing and managing the Coastal Trail may have critical implications for access to various funding sources – especially from Lottery, charitable trust and private sector sources. Experience shows that the establishment of a not-for-profit company, with/without charitable status and operating at 'arms-length' from its principal public sector partners, can often attract capital and/or revenue support from sources which may not be readily accessible to a public sector led organisation.

An early requirement will be for a 3- or 5-year funding strategy, which clearly sets out -

- principal funding objectives, funding requirements and options for delivering the investment programme (e.g. public sector led, partnership company/trust, contractors)
- funding sources – prioritised against objectives, eligibility criteria and available funds
- a funding action plan – including targets, timescales, responsibilities for applications, and budget administration, monitoring and accounting arrangements
- funding gaps and risks and potential means of overcoming/managing these.

8. MARKETING AND COMMUNICATIONS

8.1 Coastal Trail Marketing and Communications

Marketing and communications will play vital and distinctive roles at –

- a. pre-development and development stages** of the Trail – when the principal audiences will include current and potential:
- i. Trail development partners
 - ii. funders of Trail development, management and marketing programmes
 - iii. stakeholder groups – e.g. walking, cycling and riding groups, tourism and other business associations, community groups.

At these stages, the primary roles of marketing and communications will include promoting awareness and understanding of, and support and commitment for, –

- the Trail concept, vision, objectives and development intentions
- the business case for developing the Trail, visitor markets and related initiatives
- policy, funding and other elements of the Trail programme - e.g. implementation programmes, budget commitments, volunteer involvement.

Initial brand guidance has been developed for the Coastal Trail, as described below.

- b. operational stage** of the Trail – when key audiences will include current and potential:
- i. Trail users
 - ii. visitor service providers, other businesses, and community and user groups
 - iii. Trail management partners and funders.

Once operational, the primary roles of marketing and communications will be to -

- promote the Trail as a ‘must visit’ destination for activity- and discovery-oriented visits by the region’s residents, day visitors and tourists
- create, increase and sustain awareness of the Trail and associated attractions and activity opportunities
- promote the development of Trail-related enterprises and community initiatives - e.g. walking tourism businesses, pathwork training, health walks
- promote and sustain partner organisations’ practical, funding, management and marketing support for the Trail.

At the operational stage, it will be vital that there is complementarity between agreed Coastal Trail marketing, branding and communications programmes and those of partner organisations, especially in relation to the English Coastal Trail and established coastal paths, other recreational routes, regional parks and similar products in the North West – the marketing of which should be mutually supportive.

The marketing strategy for the North West Coastal Trail is likely to comprise the following principal components -

- market research and identification of target audiences
- product identification and positioning
- marketing vision and objective setting
- brand development
- marketing and communications action plan
- identification of funding requirements and potential sources
- monitoring and evaluation framework
- marketing management structures and responsibilities.

8.2 Developing and Promoting the Coastal Trail Brand

The Trail brand will comprise a core component of marketing and communications programmes. To be successful the brand will require to –

- be developed within an overall framework (i.e. ‘brand architecture’) that encompasses, supports and strengthens existing regional and local brands (e.g. Lancashire Coastal Way, Sefton Coast Path) and marketing programmes
- communicate the image, identity and special values and benefits associated with the Coastal Trail
- reflect the brand ‘personality’ – the essential features associated with the Trail, such as its locational characteristics, natural heritage interests and opportunities for healthy exercise
- differentiate the Coastal Trail from other regional and national trails
- reach, appeal to, and be remembered by, as wide an audience as possible – especially the target audiences identified in the marketing strategy
- be based on thorough research, including market testing of the title, logo, ‘straplines’, etc.
- be subscribed to, and adopted by, key partner organisations and wider stakeholders.

First stages in a brand development process for the Coastal Trail were undertaken in the first half of 2008. These sought to develop an initial brand for dialogue with partner organisations and other key stakeholders throughout the Coastal Trail’s pre-development and development stages. Further development of the Coastal Trail brand will depend on ‘buy-in’ by partner organisations and the availability of resources to develop and market the Trail.

Key stages in this initial brand development process comprised –

- a. a marketing audit of existing coastal brands in the North West** – which identified the coast as a recognised tourism asset, the largely similar markets of individual coastal brands, the ‘localisation’ of current destination brands, concerns over ‘logo overload’ and varied levels of support for the Coastal Trail concept, but positive overall reactions
- b. two stakeholder workshops** – at which it was agreed that, at this early stage, the brand strategy and identity should be inwardly focussed at funders, partners and stakeholders, the brand name should remain *The North West Coastal Trail* and Coastal Trail projects should demonstrate integration with the activities of the tourist boards and regional parks
- c. development of an interim brand strategy**⁶ - which identifies the ‘product’ as the development of the Coastal Trail project, confirms the above target audiences, proposes brand values for the North West Coastal Trail as –
 - i. An economic and environmental asset for the region*
 - ii. ... a valuable and saleable tourism offer*
 - iii. Project and united partnership to make it happen;*and outlines how the brand identity and messages may be used and further developed
- d. preparation of brand guidelines**⁵⁴ – which set out the rules: *the project is the product, highlight the benefits and be consistent* and provides design guidelines for the brand identity and how this should be applied.

8.3 Trail-Related Communications

At the pre-development and development stages, key messages for communications to policy influencers (e.g. elected members, user group representatives), policy makers, potential funders, delivery partners, other stakeholder groups and the wider public will include the potential for the Coastal Trail to –

- deliver a wide range of social, economic and environmental benefits

- help to achieve national, regional and local policy agendas - including implementation of the English Coastal Route in the North West and key policies in the RSS, RES, rural economy, natural economy, transport, sport and tourism strategies, local transport plans and rights of way improvement plans
- enhance and promote the image and identity of the North West and 'showcase' its coastal environments, resorts and heritage
- contribute to the 'greening' of the North West and coastal and visitor management
- engage and benefit communities, user groups and other stakeholders (e.g. businesses).

Principal means of communicating the above messages will include –

- media releases and features
- Trail website(s)
- information leaflets, newsletters and/or e-bulletins
- exhibitions, presentations, meetings and workshops
- familiarisation visits.

A communications strategy will be required, to guide the communications programmes and processes and this should be supported with adequate funding and technical support.

9. CONCLUSIONS

9.1 Key Findings

This review of the strategic positioning and business case for the development and marketing of the North West Coastal Trail demonstrates –

- a. **the breadth of the Coastal Trail product**, which will cater for –
 - a range of user markets – including regional residents, day visitors and tourists
 - a diversity of activities – such as walking, cycling, all-abilities use and birdwatching
 - trips of different lengths – from end-to-end trips, to day walks and short strolls
 - a variety of trip purposes – including leisure, coastal exploration, fitness and travel to work or school.
- b. **Coastal Trail development and marketing and related programmes will contribute to the delivery of a wide range of national, regional, sub-regional and local policy agendas and programmes** - conversely, many such programmes and projects will contribute to the development and success of the Coastal Trail. In particular, the Coastal Trail will contribute to economic and environmental regeneration, enterprise and skills development, activity and natural tourism, regional park, green infrastructure, rights of way, sustainable travel, health and social cohesion programmes
- c. **examples from other trails and related programmes and projects demonstrate a strong business case for investments in the Coastal Trail** – with investments in the Trail and Trail-related programmes bringing extensive economic, environmental and social benefits and providing good rates of return for capital invested
- d. **Coastal Trail development will be largely a ‘bottom-up’ process** - incorporating existing coastal paths, cycleways and other routes, route improvement schemes and current and proposed projects (e.g. regeneration schemes, regional park projects) with access components. Importantly, Trail development, management and visitor services will involve a range of regional, sub-regional and local partners, including businesses, communities and user groups
- e. **there are important national dimensions to the Coastal Trail** - as sections of the Trail will comprise parts of the English Coastal Route (see *Draft Marine Bill*) and the creation of the English Coastal Route will support the development of the Coastal Trail. Also, the Coastal Trail will add value to sections of the English Coastal Route by extending its provision to cater for cyclists and horse riders and it will provide links to other national and regional walking, cycling and multi-use route networks
- f. **a range of funding sources are potentially available to support the development of the Coastal Trail** – for example, NWDA’s Single Budget, ERDF and English Rural Development Programme funding programmes – being delivered through the sub-regional partnerships, tourist boards and other partners, Lottery funds, and local authority funding through local transport plan programmes and other programmes and projects. Also, subject to Defra funding, Natural England will support the creation and maintenance of new sections of the English Coastal Route over the initial 10-year implementation stage.
- g. **effective marketing will be a key to the Coastal Trail’s success** - at this early stage, the focus for marketing, brand development and communications will be on promoting awareness and support for the Trail concept and its development amongst potential partner and funding organisations, communities, user groups and other key stakeholders.

Overall, this review identifies a valuable ‘window of opportunity’ to capitalise on the strategic fit between the Coastal Trail proposals and partner organisations’ policy intentions, funding regimes and implementation programmes and, thereby, to expedite progress on the Coastal Trail and related programmes.

Appendix A. KEY REFERENCES

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- 15 *Activity Holidays - UK*, Mintel 2003, in *Outdoor Activities*, VisitBritain, 2005
- 16 *National Travel Survey: 2007*, Dept. of Transport, 2007
- 17 *Draft Marine Bill*, TSO, 2008
- 18 *Consultation on Proposals to Improve Access to the English Coast*, Defra, 2007
- 19 *The North West Plan: Submitted Draft Regional Spatial Strategy for the North West of England*, NWRA, 2006
- 20 *Northwest Regional Economic Strategy 2006*, NWDA, 2006
- 21 *Review of Sub-national economic development and regeneration*, Treasury, BERR & DCLG, 2008
- 22 *NWDA: Corporate Plan 2008-2011*, NWDA, 2008
- 23 *Marketing the Natural Environment of the Northwest*, Team, for NWDA, 2006
- 24 *Natural Tourism: summary report*, Blue Sail & Team, for NENW, 2008
- 25 *The economic benefits of Green Infrastructure: the public and business case for investing in Green Infrastructure and a review of underpinning evidence*, ECOTEC, for Mersey Forest & NENW, 2008
- 26 *Environmental Economy of the North West: Final Report*, Bridge Economics, for Environment Agency, 2006
- 27 *Lancashire Green Infrastructure Strategy*, Ecotec, for Lancashire Economic Partnership et al, (in preparation)
- 28 *The economic and social value of walking in England*, Christie M. & Matthews J., Ramblers Association, 2003
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- 30 *The Economic Impact of Cycle Tourism in North East England*, Univ. of Central Lancs. for One NorthEast, 2006
- 31 *Benefits to Business of the National Trails of Wales, 2006*, The Tourism Company for The Countryside Council for Wales
- 32 *Pennine Bridleway Business Development and Visitor Enjoyment Report*, Countryside Agency, 2005
- 33 *The Park Life Report*, GreenSpace, 2007
<http://www.cotswoldcanalsproject.org>
- 34 *Does Money Grow on Trees?*, CABE Space, 2005

- 37 *Conservation Works...for local economies in the UK*, Rayment M. & Dickie I., for RSPB, 2001
- 38 *Leighton Moss Nature Reserve and the Local Economy*, 2000, RSPB
- 39 *A Sustainable Future for Cycling*, Dept. for Transport, 2008
- 40 *Valuing the Benefits of Cycling – Executive Summary*, SQW, undated
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- 42 *Help Us Develop Natural England's Health Campaign*, Natural England, undated
- 43 *Natural Fit: Can Green Space and Biodiversity Increase Levels of Physical Activity*, Bird Dr. W., for RSPB, 2004
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- 45 *Developing a Green Network in Kirklees*, Kirklees Council, undated
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- 47 <http://www.nationaltrail.co.uk/hadrianswall>
- 48 *The Social and Economic Benefits of Rights of Way*, Cranfield University, for Defra, 2007
- 49 *Pembrokeshire Coast Path National Trail User Survey*, Pembrokeshire Coast NPA, 1998
- 50 *The Economic Value of Walking in Rural Wales*, University of Wales, for the Ramblers Association, 2000
- 51 *Economic Appraisal for local walking and cycling routes*, Sustrans, 2006
- 52 *The value of investment in active travel*, Active Travel Information Sheet FH10, Sustrans, 2007
- 53 <http://www.erdfnw.co.uk/>
- 54 *North West Coastal Trail Guidelines*, North West Coastal Forum, 2008

Additional references in respect of a wide range of national , regional and sub-regional policy and project reports are presented in Appendix B: Tables B1. and B2..

Appendix B. NATIONAL, REGIONAL AND SUB-REGIONAL POLICIES: SUMMARY

Table B1. National and Regional Policies of Relevance to the North West Coastal Trail

| Policy Areas and Intentions (not in any priority order) | Key Documents (illustrative, non-comprehensive list) | |
|--|--|---|
| | National Policies | Regional and Sub-Regional Policies |
| Countryside Recreation & Access | | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> improve access to coastal land, including creation of English coastal route and 'spreading room' provide leisure opportunities to enable urban and rural dwellers to enjoy the wider countryside invest in recreational infrastructure – e.g. long distance walking, cycling and riding routes ensure and enhance the accessibility of paths and other routes and enable people from a wider range of backgrounds and abilities to enjoy the countryside and coast protect, enhance and encourage use of public rights of way and fill gaps in PRow networks Rights of Way Improvement Plans to show how local authorities will provide integrated and enhanced walking, cycling and riding networks increase opportunities for everyone to understand, enjoy and benefit from the natural environment | <p><i>Draft Marine Bill</i>, HM Govt., 2008 <i>Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2002</i> <i>PPS 7: Sustainable Development in Rural Areas</i>, ODPM, 2004 <i>PPG 13: Transport</i>, ODPM, 2001 <i>PPG 17: Planning for open space, sport and recreation</i>, ODPM, 2002 <i>Our coasts and seas – making space for people, industry and Wildlife</i>, English Nature, 2005. <i>Walking and cycling: an action plan</i>, DfT, 2004 <i>Choosing Activity: physical activity action plan</i>, DoH, 2005 <i>Inclusive mobility</i>, DfT, undated <i>Rural Strategy 2004</i>, Defra, 2004 <i>The Rural Development Programme for England 2007-2013</i>, Defra, 2007 <i>Sport England Strategy 2008-2011</i>, Sport England, 2008</p> | <p><i>The North West Plan - Submitted Draft Regional Spatial Strategy for the North West of England</i>, NWRA, 2006 - referred to below as <i>North West Plan: Draft RSS</i> (policies RT7) <i>The Strategy for Tourism in England's Northwest 2003 – 2010</i>, NWDA, revised 2007 <i>RDPE: The Implementation Plan for England's Northwest 2007-2013</i>, NW Rural Strategy Board, 2007 <i>North West On The Move: The North West Plan for Sport & Physical Activity 2004-2008</i>, NW Sports Board, 2003</p> |
| Sustainable Economic and Community Development | | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> regenerate, strengthen and diversify coastal and rural economies and communities, in ways which protect, enhance and sustain the natural, built and cultural heritage develop the economic benefits of, and deliver sustainable growth based on, the NW's heritage environments and assets maximise the economic benefits of tourism through encouraging more day and tourist visits, greater spend, etc. support innovative rural-based business and micro-enterprises develop skills in sustainable countryside and coastal management, through conservation projects, green gyms, social enterprises, etc. | <p><i>PPS 1: Delivering Sustainable Development</i>, ODPM, 2004 <i>PPS 7: Sustainable Development in Rural Areas</i>, ODPM, 2004 <i>The Rural Development Programme for England 2007-2013</i>, Defra, 2007</p> | <p><i>North West Plan: Draft RSS</i>, NWRA, 2006 (policies: RDF4, W1, W6, W7) <i>Northwest Regional Economic Strategy 2006</i>, NWDA, 2006 (Action 113, 115) <i>Natural Tourism summary report</i>, NENW, 2007 <i>Moving Forward: The Northern Way Growth Strategy</i>, Northern Way, 2004 <i>The Economic and Regenerative Value of the Natural Environment in the North West</i>, WDA, EN, et al, 2003 <i>RDPE: The Implementation Plan for England's Northwest 2007-2013</i>, NW Rural Strategy Board, 2007</p> |
| Active and Healthy Communities and Social Cohesion | | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> marketing the outdoors and promoting walking, cycling and other activities to encourage active lifestyles, improve health and well-being, increase productivity, promote social inclusion and reduce crime, etc. promote culture change, leisure and activity provision and safe, attractive and supportive environments – including open spaces and walking and cycling routes - to encourage physical activity amongst all the community, including the young, elderly and ethnic groups develop rural communities' capacities to become involved in/take responsibilities for local initiatives | <p><i>PPS 1: Delivering Sustainable Development</i>, ODPM, 2004 <i>PPG 17: Planning for open space, sport and recreation</i>, ODPM, 2002 <i>Walking and cycling: an action plan</i>, DfT, 2004 <i>Choosing Activity: physical activity action plan</i>, DoH, 2005 <i>The Rural Development Programme for England 2007-2013</i>, Defra, 2007 <i>Review of the Rural White Paper - Our countryside: the future</i>, Defra, 2004</p> | <p><i>North West Plan: Draft RSS</i>, NWRA, 2006 (policy: L1) <i>Northwest Regional Economic Strategy 2006</i>, NWDA, 2006 (Action 59) <i>RDPE: The Implementation Plan for England's Northwest 2007-2013</i>, NW Rural Strategy Board, 2007 <i>Investment For Health: A Plan For North West England 2003</i>, GONW, 2003 <i>North West On The Move: The North West Plan for Sport & Physical Activity 2004-2008</i>, NW Sports Board, 2003</p> |

Table B1. National and Regional Policies of Relevance to the North West Coastal Trail (continued)

| Policy Areas and Intentions | Key Documents | |
|---|--|---|
| | National Policies | Regional and Sub-Regional Policies |
| Sustainable Travel | | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • promote and provide for non-motorised travel, especially for access to jobs, leisure, shopping and services on foot, by bicycle or by public transport – including by disabled persons and for trips to school • local authorities to produce local walking and cycling strategies, which give greater priority to walking and cycling and provide safe routes • reallocate road-space for walking and cycling - including quiet lanes • complete the national cycle network and promote local cycle networks, cycle tracks and paths • integrate networks of continuous, attractive and safe routes for walking and cycling to widen accessibility and maximise environmental, social and health benefits | <p><i>PPS 1: Delivering Sustainable Development</i>, ODPM, 2004 <i>PPS 7: Sustainable Development in Rural Areas</i>, ODPM, 2004 <i>PPG 13, Transport</i>, ODPM, 2001 <i>Walking and cycling: an action plan</i>, DfT, 2004</p> | <p><i>North West Plan: Draft RSS</i>, NWRA, 2006 (policies: RT2, RT7)</p> |
| Sustainable Tourism | | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • promote sustainable growth in coastal tourism, including through a 'tourism for all' approach • promote eco-/natural tourism, through defining, packaging and themeing natural environment products and experiences – e.g. promoting walking, cycling, adventure activities, wildlife watching, leisure learning (e.g. photographic skills), conservation breaks and environmental events • NW Coastal Trail to link resorts and natural, cultural and built heritage; thereby, strengthening the regional tourism product • enhance visitor destinations and provide high quality, environmentally-sensitive, well-designed attractions, infrastructure and services, to assist economic regeneration and rural diversification, support rural services and revitalise towns and villages • improve the product associated with the region's tourism 'attack brands' and 'signature projects' (e.g. Mersey Waterfront) • promote facilities which extend the visitor season and meet the needs of a diverse range of visitors • enhance interpretation of the environment and cultural heritage – including the maritime heritage and developing physical access and quality products and services based on the environment • make visits to the NW easy, by improving information, booking, getting around, etc. | <p><i>The Rural Development Programme for England 2007-2013</i>, Defra, 2007 <i>Winning: A tourism strategy for 2012 and beyond</i>, DCMS, 2007 <i>Planning for a Sustainable Future – White Paper</i>, HM Govt., 2007 <i>Good Practice Guide on Planning for Tourism</i>, DCLG, 2006 <i>Tomorrow's Tourism</i>, DCMS, undated</p> | <p><i>North West Plan: Draft RSS</i>, NWRA, 2006 (policies: RDF3, RDF4, W1, W6, W7) <i>Northwest Regional Economic Strategy 2006</i>, NWDA, 2006 (Action 101) <i>RDPE: The Implementation Plan for England's Northwest 2007-2013</i>, NW Rural Strategy Board, 2007 <i>The Strategy for Tourism in England's Northwest 2003 – 2010: Developing the Visitor Economy</i>, NWDA, rev. 2007 <i>Natural Tourism summary report</i>, Natural Economy Northwest, 2007 <i>Marketing the Natural Environment of the Northwest</i>, Team, 2006 <i>Moving Forward: The Northern Way Growth Strategy</i>, Northern Way, 2004 <i>A New Vision for the Northwest Coastal Resorts</i>, Locum Destination Consulting, 2003</p> |

Table B1. National and Regional Policies of Relevance to the North West Coastal Trail (continued)

| Policy Areas and Intentions | Key Documents | |
|---|---|---|
| | National Policies | Regional and Sub-Regional Policies |
| Natural Heritage, Green Infrastructure and Cultural Heritage | | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> conserve and enhance biological and geological diversity recognise importance of green infrastructure to delivering sustainable communities and supporting ecological services plan provide and enhance green infrastructure, including green and blue (water) corridors, natural habitat networks and greenspaces – for ecological services and related environmental, economic, social (e.g. health) and other benefits (e.g. adaption to climate change) strategies, proposals and schemes should identify, protect, maintain and where possible, enhance natural, man-made and historic features that contribute to the character and culture of landscapes, places and local distinctiveness within the North West – including its maritime heritage | <p><i>PPS 9: Biodiversity and Geological Conservation</i>, ODPM, 2005</p> <p><i>PPG 17: Planning for open space, sport and recreation</i>, ODPM, 2002</p> <p><i>Our coasts and seas – making space for people, industry and wildlife</i>, English Nature, 2005.</p> <p><i>Designing sustainable communities for people and biodiversity</i>, English Nature, 2005</p> <p><i>Green Infrastructure - Report to Royal Commission on Environmental Pollution</i>, D. Goode, 2006</p> <p><i>The Rural Development Programme for England 2007-2013</i>, Defra, 2007</p> | <p><i>North West Plan: Draft RSS</i>, NWRA, 2006 (policies: RDF1, EM1, EM3)</p> <p><i>Northwest Regional Economic Strategy 2006</i>, NWDA, 2006 (Actions 84, 113, 119)</p> <p><i>RDPE: The Implementation Plan for England's Northwest 2007-2013</i>, NW Rural Strategy Board, 2007</p> <p><i>Natural Tourism summary report</i>, Natural Economy Northwest, 2007</p> <p><i>Rising to the Challenge A Climate Change Action Plan for England's Northwest 2007-09</i>, NWDA et al, 2006</p> <p><i>North West Green Infrastructure Guide</i>, North West Green Infrastructure Think Tank, undated</p> <p><i>Advancing the Delivery of Green Infrastructure: Targeting Issues In England's Northwest</i>, TEP, 2005</p> |
| Regional Park Development | | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> promote the North West's coast as a priority area of search for developing regional parks within an agreed Strategic Framework - including proposed Mersey Waterfront and Ribble Estuary Regional Parks and North West Coastal Trail and investigation of regional park potential of Morecambe Bay and West Cumbria regional parks to have multi-functional social, environmental and economic regeneration roles | | <p><i>North West Plan: Draft RSS</i>, NWRA, 2006 (policy: EM4)</p> <p><i>Northwest Regional Economic Strategy 2006</i>, NWDA, 2006 (Action 116)</p> <p><i>Rising to the Challenge A Climate Change Action Plan for England's Northwest 2007-09</i>, NWDA et al, 2006</p> |
| Enhancing the Region's Image and Profile | | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> market the North of England and its natural environment, nationally and internationally – to attract visitors, new tourism businesses and challenge perceptions of the region enhance communications with the region's visitors, including to enhance awareness of the North West's natural and cultural heritage and to promote positive images of the region and its coastal resorts as places to live, work, visit and invest in potential themes of relevance to the North West's coast are – <i>The Eco Coast</i> and <i>The Recreational Coast</i>; sub-regional brands should be based on geographical sections of coast, with <i>Classic Resorts</i> used to classify and market selected resorts ensure that the region's rich inheritance and contemporary culture is central to its external image invest in the public realm, greenspaces, environmental quality and tourism 'attack brand' and 'signature project' locations | <p><i>The Rural Development Programme for England 2007-2013</i>, Defra, 2007</p> <p><i>Good Practice Guide on Planning for Tourism</i>, DCLG, 2006</p> <p><i>Tomorrow's Tourism</i>, DCMS, undated</p> | <p><i>North West Plan: Draft RSS</i>, NWRA, 2006 (policies: RDF1, RDF4)</p> <p><i>Northwest Regional Economic Strategy 2006</i>, NWDA, 2006 (Action 95, Action 119)</p> <p><i>The Strategy for Tourism in England's Northwest 2003 – 2010</i>, NWDA, revised 2007</p> <p><i>Natural Tourism summary report</i>, Natural Economy Northwest, 2007</p> <p><i>Marketing the Natural Environment of the Northwest</i>, team, 2006</p> <p><i>Moving Forward: The Northern Way Growth Strategy</i>, Northern Way, 2004</p> <p><i>A New Vision for the Northwest Coastal Resorts</i>, Locum Destination Consulting, 2003</p> <p><i>The Cultural Strategy for England's North West</i>, North West Cultural Consortium, 2001</p> |

Table B2. Sub-Regional Policies of Relevance to the North West Coastal Trail

| Policy Areas and Intentions (not in any priority order) | Key Documents (illustrative, non-comprehensive list) |
|--|--|
| Cheshire Sub-Region | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve connectivity in the sub-region, with Cheshire and Warrington as a gateway to the North West • maintain high quality of life, distinctive sense of place and sub-region's attractiveness as place to live, work and visit, with environmental quality and culture as drivers of economic growth • revitalise rural areas and market towns, develop sustainable enterprises, reclaim brownfield sites and develop/enhance green infrastructure - including NW Coastal Trail, Weaver Valley Regional Park, and Revive and Newlands programmes • increase profile of, and economic impacts of visitors to, Cheshire and Warrington sub-region • enhance Cheshire's visitor appeal - including industrial heritage, waterways, gardens, equestrianism and other green tourism products; e.g. walking and cycling (Wirral Way and Wirral Circular Trail) • capitalise on Chester's status as a regional tourism 'attack brand' and progress Chester Renaissance - including product development, increasing cultural offer, place marketing, events, gateway facilities and routes, visitor management and links to other destinations/brands • enhance culture's contributions to the economy and communities – promote and develop cultural facilities and assets, conserve and enhance the natural and built heritage, promote the use of public spaces and rights of way and improve cultural, environmental and heritage interpretation and education • increase sport's and activity's contributions to health, well-being, economy and community development • promote sustainable and safe travel and healthy exercise, including walking and cycling • maintain, enhance and promote awareness of the rights of way network, promote its use to all groups, improve its quality, safety, linkages and users' confidence, involve communities, land managers and businesses, enhance access to the natural and historic environment, etc. | <p><i>Investing in Success: Sub-Regional Action Plan 2008-11</i>, Cheshire and Warrington Economic Alliance, 2007</p> <p><i>Growing our Visitor Economy: A refreshed framework for Cheshire & Warrington to 2015</i>, Cheshire and Warrington Tourist Board, 2008</p> <p><i>Growing our Economy: Destination Management Plan for Cheshire & Warrington 2008 – 2011</i>, Cheshire and Warrington Tourist Board, 2008</p> <p><i>Chester Culture Park: An Integrated Programme of Culture and Visitor Development & Management in Chester (Draft)</i>, Chester City Council, 2006</p> <p><i>Cultural Strategy for Cheshire and Warrington</i>, Cheshire County Council <i>et al</i>, undated</p> <p><i>Cheshire's Local Transport Plan 2006-2011</i>, Cheshire County Council, 2006</p> <p><i>Cheshire's Rights of Way Improvement Plan 2006-2011</i>, Cheshire County Council, 2006</p> <p><i>Cheshire's Sustainable Community Strategy 2006 (Draft)</i>, Cheshire County Council, 2006</p> <p><i>Forging the future: Cheshire & Warrington Sports Partnership Strategy 2005-09</i>, Cheshire & Warrington Sports Partnership, 2005</p> <p>(also, local development frameworks, community plans, walking and cycling strategies, etc.)</p> |
| Merseyside Sub-Region | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • regain Liverpool's status as a premier European city region with an internationally competitive economy and cultural offer, outstanding quality of life and vibrant communities contributing to/ sharing in sustainable wealth creation – by encouraging enterprise and inward investment, and enhancing the environmental economy – including green infra-structure, the public realm and community health and well-being, and skills and employment, and by engaging communities • promote the City Region as a world-class leisure tourism destination and cultural and leisure capital of the North, develop tourism in sustainable ways and as a catalyst for regeneration and conservation, and increase and spread the social, economic and environmental benefits of tourism • key tourism/leisure development projects include Mersey Waterfront Regional Park – including Windows on Waterfront, Pride in our Promenades, River of Light, Coastal Places & Open Spaces, Promoting the Place and Mersey Waterfront Way programmes, public realm improvements – especially gateways and access corridors, World Heritage Site management, repositioning Southport as a classic resort, and improving the visitor welcome, experience and information • create an integrated and safe travel network, which supports economic growth while protecting/ enhancing the environment, air quality and reducing climate change impacts and promote informed choices and active travel – i.e. walking and cycling (e.g. Sefton Coast Path) • protect, maintain, improve and provide information on the public rights of way network, promote its increased and safer use and access for all and improve the network's safety and connectivity • increase the public rights of way network's contributions to the tourist economy and community health – including development of the NW Coastal Trail, Mersey Way and coastal access | <p><i>The Liverpool City Region: Transforming our Economy</i>, Mersey Partnership, 2005</p> <p><i>Liverpool City Region Development Programme Report 2006</i>, Mersey Partnership, 2006</p> <p><i>Destination Management Plan for the visitor economy of the Liverpool City Region 2008 – 11</i>, Mersey Partnership, 2008</p> <p><i>Merseyside Strategy for Sport and Physical Activity 2006-2010</i>, Merseyside Sports Partnership 2006</p> <p><i>Liverpool First – 2005-2008: Our Sustainable Community Strategy</i>, Liverpool Partnership Group, 2005</p> <p><i>Second Local Transport Plan for Merseyside 2006-2011</i>, Merseyside Local Transport Plan Partners, 2006</p> <p><i>Rights of Way Improvement Plan for Merseyside 2008-2018</i>, Merseyside Local Transport Plan Partners, 2007</p> <p>(also, local development frameworks, community plans, walking and cycling strategies, etc.)</p> |

Table B2. Sub-Regional Policies of Relevance to the North West Coastal Trail (continued)

| Policy Areas and Intentions (not in any priority order) | Key Documents (illustrative, non-comprehensive list) |
|--|--|
| Lancashire Sub-Region | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2025 vision is of Lancashire having a world-class economy, breathtaking environments and exceptional communities – towns, cities and rural areas will have separate identities, but strong economic, social and environmental connections • diversify the overall, rural and tourism economies – by building on the strengths of coast, landscapes and heritage, coordinated marketing and improving Lancs’ image, investing in/supporting community cohesion and capacities, sustainable land and coastal management, developing quiet lanes, greenways and cycle and path networks, developing the environmental economy and green infrastructure, enabling adaption to climate change, and protecting, promoting and enhancing appreciation of the natural and cultural heritage • revitalise and reposition the visitor economy – focus on Blackpool (world class resort), Preston (City Vision), Lancaster (Historic Towns Initiative) and Coast (Classic Resorts), with investment in the visitor experience - including information, accommodation, events, visitor gateways and quality destinations and services • visitor development priorities include Blackpool’s Golden Mile, Ribble and Wyre Estuaries, walking and cycling, birdwatching and wildlife, seaside towns and the Cultural Coast • promote, celebrate and invest in Lancashire’s culture and the culture and diversity of its communities • promote sport and physical activity and their contributions to economic growth, stronger communities, positive lifestyles and local skills • increase access to jobs and services – including travel to schools and increase the contributions of transport to quality of life, (e.g. safety, accessibility, public realm, health and air quality) • promote safe and active travel – including walking, cycling and all-mobility travel, improve links between urban areas and countryside, provide, maintain and promote safe footpath and cycle route networks, quiet lanes and greenways, and further develop the North West Coastal Trail and Lancs. Coastal Way • protect, improve, promote and provide information on rights of way, including community- community and community-countryside links, bridleways, off-road cycle routes, ‘access for all’ routes and tourism routes | <p><i>Ambition Lancashire 2005-2025: strategic vision for the future of Lancashire</i>, The Lancashire Partnership, revised 2008</p> <p><i>Shaping the future of Lancashire: Lancashire Economic Strategy and Sub-regional Action Plan</i>, Lancashire Economic Partnership, 2006</p> <p><i>Lancashire Economic Strategy 2006-2009 - Co-ordinated actions for Rural Lancashire</i>, Lancashire Economic Partnership, 2006</p> <p><i>Central Lancashire City Region Development Programme</i>, Lancashire Economic Partnership, 2006</p> <p><i>Lancashire and Blackpool Visitor Economy Strategy 2006-2016; also Action Plan (2006-2009)</i>, Lancashire and Blackpool Tourist Board, 2006</p> <p><i>Lancashire Local Transport Plan 2006-2010</i>, Lancashire County Council, 2006</p> <p><i>Lancashire County Council, Blackpool Council, Blackburn with Darwen Borough Council Rights of Way Improvement Plan</i>, Lancashire County Council, Blackpool Council, Blackburn with Darwen Borough Council, undated</p> <p><i>The Cultural Strategy for Lancashire 2003-2006</i>, Lancashire County Council, 2003</p> <p><i>Changing Lives: Lancashire Sport Strategy 2005</i>, Lancashire Sports Partnership, 2005</p> <p>(also, local development frameworks, community plans, walking and cycling strategies, etc.)</p> |

Table B2. Sub-Regional Policies of Relevance to the North West Coastal Trail (continued)

| Policy Areas and Intentions (not in any priority order) | Key Documents (illustrative, non-comprehensive list) |
|---|---|
| Cumbria Sub-Region | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • regenerate the economy – including Britain’s Energy Coast, Carlisle Renaissance, Hadrian’s Wall Zone and Barrow-in-Furness (Marine Village, Waterfront Gateway) initiatives; ‘major developments’ at Barrow-in-Furness, Carlisle, Worthington and Whitehaven; ‘significant developments’ at Ulverston and Maryport; and ‘moderate developments’ at Cockermouth, Millom, Silloth, Grange-over-Sands, etc. – also ‘Bridge-over-Bay’ energy/transport concept • strengthen rural economy, communities and connectivity between agriculture, tourism, outdoors, food, etc. and build on Cumbria’s culture of volunteering – by investing in active, self-help and engaging communities • diversify the tourism economy - by improving facilities and tourism skills, promoting the ‘Cumbrian’, ‘Adventure Capital UK’ and ‘Carlisle’ brands, exploiting Cumbria’s attractiveness for active recreation and walking, cycling and equine tourism, and developing ‘active leisure’ products and brand. Sport and the outdoors have potential to contribute to 2% increase per year in activity tourism and 5% increase in sports participation by residents by 2010 – strongest activity products include short/long walks, cycling and riding • capitalise on the landscape, natural and cultural heritage – including through countryside management • use sport to promote more active, healthier, skilled, secure and integrated communities • celebrate and promote Cumbria’s cultural highlights and develop the cultural infrastructure, events, etc. • promote sustainable transport – including walking and cycling, and promote access for all, extend, improve and protect the rights of way network, fill gaps in national and regional cycle networks (e.g. Millom to Barrow), provide information, interpretation and maps (esp. Solway AONB, West Cumbria), improve signs, provide and promote short/long distance walking and cycling routes, new riding routes, cycle tourism hubs, and cycling and riding on quiet lanes | <p><i>Cumbria Sub Regional Spatial Strategy 2008 to 2028</i>, Cumbria Strategic Partnership, 2008 <i>Cumbria Community Strategy: 2008 to 2028</i>, Cumbria Strategic Partnership, 2008 <i>Cumbria Local Area Agreement 2008-2011</i>, Cumbria Strategic Partnership, 2008 <i>Cumbria Economic Plan September 2007</i>, Cumbria Vision 2007 <i>Britain’s energy coast - a Masterplan for West Cumbria – executive summary</i>, Cumbria Partners, undated <i>Growing Carlisle – An Economic Strategy For The Carlisle City Region</i>, Carlisle Renaissance, 2008 <i>Cumbria’s Cultural Strategy</i>, Cumbria County Council, 2006 <i>Cumbria Sports Partnership: A strategic framework for sport and physical activity in Cumbria 2006-2009</i>, Cumbria Sports Partnership, 2006 <i>Sustainable Cumbria: The Sports Economy Scoping Exercise and Action Plan 2006-2010 - Executive Summary</i>, Impact Research Ltd., 2006 <i>Cumbria: Local Transport Plan</i>, Cumbria County Council, 2006 <i>Cumbria: Rights of Way Improvement Plan</i>, Cumbria County Council, 2005 <i>Destination Management Plan: The Visitor Economy Action Plan for Cumbria 2008-09</i>, Cumbria Tourism, 2008</p> <p>(also, local development frameworks, community plans, walking and cycling strategies, etc.)</p> |