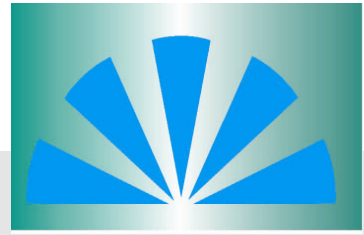


BOWLES GREEN LTD



Highway Signage Strategy for the Solway Plain Area



Consultants' Report

October 2007

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1 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Introduction

- 1.1 Consultants, Bowles Green Limited, have been appointed to formulate a Highways Signage Strategy for the Solway Coast and Plain. The work aims to address the lack of 'coverage' of North Allerdale in the current Cumbria Tourism Branding Strategy, the dis-jointed nature of existing signage and the signage needs and proposals of the Solway Coast AONB and Hadrian's Wall Heritage.
- 1.2 The project area is North Cumbria from the M6 junction 41 along the B5305 to Wigton then follows the A596 to Maryport encompassing the coast and returning to the M6 corridor at junction 44. It is concerned with three 'levels' of signage, as follows:

Level	Description
Primary	Signing from the M6
Secondary	Signing within the network of towns and roads between the M6 and the
Tertiary	Signing within the destination – effectively within Aspatria, Silloth and Wigton, plus gateways (Maryport and Dalston)

- 1.3 Whilst the primary audience will be visiting motorists, the needs of pedestrians, cyclists and people arriving by public transport are also to be taken into account.
- 1.4 tourism in the area is summarised as follows:
- Tourism in the area is concentrated along the coast and around Silloth and Allonby in particular
 - Day visitors appear to come chiefly from Carlisle and North Cumbria and from the northern Lake District
 - Staying visitors are dominated by traditional seaside holidays staying at the coastal chalet and caravan parks
 - A small number of visitors come to the area to pursue gentle (walking, visiting heritage sites) and more strenuous (kite surfing, windsurfing) activities
 - The number of cyclists using the Hadrian Cycle Route is increasing
- 1.5 An audit of existing signage showed that:
- Existing signage is the result of unplanned activity and the result is a mixture of approaches, styles, quality, age, etc
 - Overall there seems to be a low level of brown signage in the study area
 - There is no 'destination signage' to the Solway Plain
 - There are few formal visitor attractions, but a large number of smaller, informal 'visitor destinations' throughout the study area and especially on the coast. These include – towns and villages, managed and informal countryside sites, rural pubs & other eateries, etc
 - Most existing brown signage relates to caravan parks and places to eat
 - There is no/limited threshold signage for the Solway Coast and Plain and for the AONB

- AONB signage is located mostly at managed, informal sites along the coast and at honeypots, such as Allonby
- Overall there is no sense of arrival or of welcome, except at some AONB-managed sites
- Most signs at car parks and other arrival points is negative or prohibits some or other activity

1.6 The signage strategy makes recommendations for primary, secondary and tertiary signs to the Solway coast. The main routes into the Solway Plain & coast are:

From the M6 south	- B5305 & B5302
From Carlisle and the M6 north	- A595, A596, B5303 & B5302
	- B5307 & B5302
From the Lake District	- A591, A595, B5301/B5299 & B5301
	- A66, A595 & B5301
	- A66, A594 & B5300
From West Cumbria	- A596 & B5300

1.7 The strategic approach is as follows:

- Creating a distinctive identity for the destination
- Promoting Silloth as the focus for the destination
- Promoting Wigton as 'Market Town of the Solway'
- Promoting Aspatria as a service centre
- Promoting Dalston, Maryport, Wigton and Aspatria as 'gateways' to the destination
- Developing a coastal route for motorists, cyclists and walkers
- A clear relationship for overlapping brands
- A phased approach to delivery

1.8 A brand identity and design are proposed, as follows:



1.9 A three phase action plan is proposed beginning with the design and implementation of tertiary signage in Aspatria, Silloth and Wigton during the current financial year.

2 INTRODUCTION, BACKGROUND & METHODOLOGY

Introduction

- 2.1 This report describes a strategy for highway signing in relation to the Solway coast and plain area of North Allerdale as a visitor destination. The aim of the strategy is to 'show visitors the location of the Solway Plain and its attractions and to encompass it within the mainstream tourism product.
- 2.2 The project area is located in North Cumbria from the M6 junction 41 along the B5305 to Wigton then follows the A596 to Maryport encompassing the coast and returning to the M6 corridor at junction 44.
- 2.3 There is a variety of attractions and places to visit within the study area which covers an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, part of a World Heritage Site and associated National Trail, and three market towns (not including Maryport and Carlisle).
- 2.4 The project has been funded by the North West Development Agency through the North Allerdale Partnership. The work was steered by a steering group chaired by the Solway Coast AONB with representatives from Allerdale Borough Council, Cumbria County Council, Cumbria Tourism, Hadrian's Wall Heritage Ltd, the Solway Coast AONB and the Western Lake District Tourism Partnership

Background

- 2.5 Following the adoption of the Cumbria Branding Strategy in 200x, North Allerdale was positioned and promoted as part of the 'Keswick and the Western Lake District' sub brand. The primary tourism brand for the sub-region 'Cumbria-The lake District' was intended to attract visitors to the central Lake District. Five peripheral, sub- brands, of which Keswick and the Western lake District was one, were used to draw these visitors to other parts of the county.
- 2.6 There is a feeling, and evidence from previous research (Solway Coast & Plain Marketing Strategy & Marketing Advice, 2005) that this branding strategy is not succeeding in visitor marketing terms for North Allerdale and in particular for the Solway coast and plain area. This is reflected in current destination brown signing arrangements.
- 2.7 In 2007, a new branding strategy was adopted for Cumbria and this will come into full use with publication of the 2008 Holiday Guide. The new strategy uses a single brand – 'the Lake District Cumbria' to attract and disperse visitors. The 'Lake District Cumbria' branding is flexible and can be used in association with geographical areas and activities/themes.
- 2.8 This strategy seeks to build on existing visitor awareness of the Solway coast and plain and to develop a highways signing strategy for visitors which both strengthens awareness and understanding of the Solway coast and plain and which links the Solway coast and plain into visitor flows and patterns in Cumbria.

Methodology

2.9 Seven stages of work were undertaken to produce this strategy, as follows:

- | | |
|---------------------|---|
| 1. Start-up Meeting | - To brief the consultants |
| 2. Research | - Strategic framework |
| | - Visitor demand |
| | - Tourism product |
| | - Existing signage |
| 3. Consultation | - To understand stakeholders needs and views |
| 4. Analysis | - To understand the opportunities and considerations |
| 5. Strategy | - Formulating a strategy, including a strategy workshop |
| 6. Action Plan | - Implementation proposals and costs |
| 7. Reporting | - Producing a report |

2.10 The strategy is focussed on vehicular traffic but takes account of the needs of cyclists and pedestrians. It considers three levels of signage, as follows:

- | | |
|-----------|----------------------------------|
| Primary | – Signing from the M6 |
| Secondary | – Signing within the study area |
| Tertiary | – Signing within the destination |

3 PRESENT SITUATION

3.1 This section explores the following; issues and opportunities arising are discussed later in the report.

:

- What is known about the volume and nature of tourism in the study area
- The policy context for the study
- Existing signage

Tourism in the Study Area

3.2 Data is available from a number of sources though, as with much tourism data, it is of variable quality and consistency.

Cumbria Tourism Survey 2006

3.3 The Cumbria Tourism Survey is the most up-to-date and accurate summary of visitors to Cumbria. This report comes from a representative sample of visitor days, with 29% of day visitors and 71% staying visitors interviewed. The results are summarised in Table 1. It shows that a high proportion are repeat visitors and that most first time visitors are from younger age groups.

Table 1: Summary of Cumbria Tourism Survey 2006

Aspect	Characteristics
Previous visits	64% had visited within the last 2 years One in five had visited the area more than 2 years ago 1996-2002, level of repeat visits has remained constant
Gender	54% male; 46% female
Age	62% 45 years and over 15% 34 years and younger 29% overseas visitors & 29% first time visitors in age range 34 and younger
Party size	Average party size including children and adults was 3.19 32% had children in their group 69% of visitors came as a couple
Party type	69% were couples 40% visited with family, of which 33% were staying visitors 13% visited with friends Only 5% travelled alone
Decision maker	Majority of visitors considered themselves to be the main decision maker 14% were joint decisions 8% partner/spouse decision
Origin of visitors	9% from overseas, of which 32% were first time visitors; 48% from Europe (13% Germany, 5% France) 91% UK residents: 7% lived in Cumbria, 65% were from regions bordered by Cumbria
Social Grade	6% social grade A 67% B/C1 social grade 5% grade D 1% grade E Cumbria is seen to attract people of higher social grades with greater disposable incomes; 54% UK population belong to social grades A-C1 compared to 73% of Cumbria visitors

*Highway Signage Strategy for the Solway Plain Area
Report ~ December 2007*

Aspect	Characteristics
Location of accommodation	<p>Keswick 13%</p> <p>Windermere 8%</p> <p>Carlisle 5%</p> <p>Ambleside 5%</p> <p>Coniston 3%</p> <p>Grasmere 3%</p> <p>Kendal 2%</p> <p>South Lakeland (38%) and Allerdale (28%) attracted the highest proportions of visitors and holding the highest market share; Eden (14%), Copeland (9%), Carlisle (8%)</p>
Length of stay	<p>Average number of nights 6.1</p> <p>34% of visitors stayed 1-3 nights</p> <p>64% stayed more than 4 nights</p>
Type of accommodation	<p>20% self-catering</p> <p>10% camping</p> <p>10% Guest/B&B</p> <p>11% staying with friends & family</p>
Choice of accommodation	Location 2.6 mean, facilities 2.4 mean & availability 2.4 mean were most important factors governing choice of accommodation
Booking of accommodation	<p>49% direct booking by telephone</p> <p>31% internet bookings</p> <p>12% on arrival</p>
Spend on accommodation	<p>Overall average cost of accommodation per party was £325.39, an 11% increase in spend for 2006 over 2002; however this cost rose to £341.55 within the National Park</p> <p>Average cost per person per trip £117.23</p>
Rating of accommodation	4.5 mean rated highly both quality and value for money
Mode of transport	<p>85% car, van, motorbike or motorhome</p> <p>8% used some form of public transport</p> <p>34% overseas visitors arrived by plane with 10% UK visitors flying</p> <p>80% used motorised vehicles during their stay</p>
Expenditure	<p>Average spend (excl accommodation) per party per day was £46.10, with overseas visitors £55.25 and first time visitors £54.80</p> <p>Day spend equivalent was £17.87, with day visitors spending on average £18.78 and staying visitors £17.51</p> <p>Total expenditure costs per person per trip including accommodation £134.88</p>
Activity undertaken	<p>Countryside 76%</p> <p>Towns and villages 73%</p> <p>Short walks 66%</p> <p>Touring by car 65%</p> <p>Visiting pubs 51%</p> <p>Visiting restaurants 47%</p> <p>Shopping 45%</p> <p>Visiting heritage attractions 45%</p> <p>Long walks 42%</p>
Time of decision to visit	<p>Largely spontaneous with visitors planning their trips within the last week (65%)</p> <p>45% were organised within the last 2 days</p>
Source of information	<p>56% Previous experience</p> <p>33% Internet</p> <p>13% brochure</p> <p>10% Guidebook</p> <p>5% TIC</p>

Aspect	Characteristics
Reasons for choosing visit	95% chose the physical scenery and landscape 92% chose emotional characteristics 66% stated it was a place they knew 47% convenient place to visit
Overall satisfaction	4.8 mean (good to very good) – a high level of satisfaction with their visit rating 80% likely or very likely to visit again

Source: Cumbria Tourism Survey, Cumbria Tourism, 2006

- 3.4 STEAM is a widely accepted model for estimating the volume and value of tourism on a geographical basis. It has been used by Cumbria Tourism for a number of years to measure tourism in Cumbria. It is a useful guide to year on year change and to overall economic impact. Whilst this is not of direct relevance to this study, the Cumbria Steam report 2000-2005 does identify some relevant trends, as follows; Tables 2 & 3 show the number and profile of trips:

- The number of visitor days in Cumbria grew by 7.9% from 26.5 million to 28.6 million
- 34% of trips to Cumbria are staying and 66% are day trips

Table 2: Number of Trips Estimated by STEAM (Millions)

Year	Allerdale	Cumbria
2000	2.4	14.3
2001	2.4	13.8
2002	2.6	15.1
2003	2.6	15.5
2004	2.7	15.8
2005	2.7	15.5

Source: Cumbria Tourism/GTS Ltd, 2006

Table 3: Day and Staying Trips in Cumbria in 2005 Estimated by STEAM (Millions)

Year	Number	Percent
Staying trips	5.3	34%
Day trips	10.3	66%
All trips	15.5	100%

Source: Cumbria Tourism/GTS Ltd, 2006

Visitor Attractions Admissions

- 3.5 Table 4 summarises visitor numbers at attractions within or close to the study area which submitted returns to Cumbria Tourism during the period 2001-05. It is difficult to draw clear conclusions from this data.

Table 4: Admissions to Selected Visitor Attractions

Attraction	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005
Hutton-in-the-Forest	7,895	-	-	16,263	13,652
Lakeland Sheep & Wool Centre	C	71,290	73,798	C	C
Lake District Coast Aquarium	-	48,877	44,254	47,827	45,520

Attraction	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005
Maryport Maritime Museum	17,216	12,662	13,150	-	-
Priest's Mill	-	-	30,000	28,656	68,160
Senhouse Roman Museum	8,137	6,445	6,875	8,890	9,085
Solway Coast Discovery centre	-	-	-	-	765
Up Front Gallery	-	-	-	-	40,000

*Source: Cumbria Tourism
Tourist Information Centre Visits*

- 3.6 The following total number of visits to TICs in the study area were recorded in 2005:

- Maryport - 15,657
- Silloth - 16,197

Anecdotal Information

- 3.7 Anecdotal information provides some understanding of the nature and profile of tourism within the study area as follows:

- Tourism in the area is concentrated along the coast and around Silloth and Allonby in particular
- Day visitors appear to come chiefly from Carlisle and North Cumbria and from the northern Lake District
- Staying visitors are dominated by traditional seaside holidays staying at the coastal chalet and caravan parks
- A small number of visitors come to the area to pursue gentle (walking, visiting heritage sites) and more strenuous (kite surfing, windsurfing) activities
- The number of cyclists using the Hadrian Cycle Route is increasing

Policy Context

- 3.8 The policy context for the strategy is considered here. A number of regional, sub-regional and local strategies and plans are relevant and there are opportunities to contribute to the delivery of a number of policies through the signage strategy.

Cumbria Local Transport Plan (2006-11) – Allerdale Area Statement

- 3.9 In Allerdale the key priorities are supporting the regeneration of the economy and improving road safety, both of which are Cumbria wide priorities.
- 3.10 The Plan recognises that Allerdale has the third largest incidence of killed and seriously injured (KSI) casualties in Cumbria and highlights the dangers on many roads where all road users share the carriageway, particularly where these form part of recognised cycle or walking routes.
- 3.11 Most accidents occur on high speed roads and attention during the Plan period is to be focussed on these. Currently the A591, A595, A596, A5086

and B5305 are earmarked for attention including improved physical measures and attention from the Road Safety Camera team. Recently, however, the B5300 between Silloth and Maryport has been identified as a route in need of such attention.

- 3.12 Silloth to Maryport is the only uncompleted section of the Hadrian Cycle Route; since there is no signed way, cyclists use the B5300 as the most convenient route. A number of organisations, including Cumbria County Council, Maryport Development and the Solway Coast AONB have recognised the dangers to cyclists using this section of road from fast-moving traffic and propose that, in response, the B5300 between Silloth and Maryport should be given a higher priority for safety measures (note that in 2006, the County Council and AONB received a study into a possible cycle route to the north and south of Maryport).
- 3.13 The Plan also recognises that West Cumbria has an extensive off-road cycle network, but that there are missing access points and key links, including:
- Missing sections of the strategic cycle network in Maryport
 - Wigton and Aspatria are Key Service Centres that are not connected to the strategic cycle network
 - Some cycle and foot trails have on-road sections that are not perceived as being safe due to other traffic
- 3.14 Improvements to Maryport railway station and proposed improvements to parking and bus connectivity means that Maryport will play an increasingly important role as a rail head for Silloth and the south western part of the Solway Coast.
- 3.15 Whilst there are good reasons for additional infrastructure, The Friends of the Lake District study on Rural Road Character highlighted concern over the loss of rural road character through use of inappropriate construction methods, materials and maintenance methods and unnecessary signs, especially in areas protected for their landscape value, including the Solway Coast AONB.
- 3.16 The Plan also identifies poor access to public transport as an issue in rural areas and notes that the Wigton eastern relief road and improving the environment in town centres will be considered as future schemes.

Regional and Sub-regional Tourism Strategy

- 3.17 The Tourism Strategy for England's North West has, as a key objective:
- Making it Easy – improving all stages of the visit process – information, booking, travelling, getting around and making it easy to return
- 3.18 Cumbria Tourism has recently up-dated 'Cumbria Tourism Forecasts' for 2007. One of several 'strategic opportunities' identified is:
- Develop the 'Coastal Frontier' (Maryport through to Solway) as a 'get away from it all' destination focusing on a slower pace of life, exceptional opportunities for family friendly walking and cycling, local

food and forest-based tourism. Day trips from Carlisle could be a starting point in this respect.

Cumbria Destination Management Plan

3.19 The Cumbria Destination Management Plan for 2007-08 recognises a number of key weaknesses in Cumbria's tourism product, as follows:

- The quality of the visitor offer in Cumbria is not matching the increasing expectations of the more mobile and affluent UK and International market – particularly in terms of accommodation, attractions and visitor infrastructure
- Visitor information and marketing activity remains fragmented and is struggling for prominence in a busy consumer market-place
- Productivity within the industry is generally poor. The average bed occupancy for 2005 in serviced accommodation for example was just 56%. This is due in part to the size and nature of the businesses within the County
- There are widespread skill shortages within Cumbria's tourism industry compounded by relatively low wage structures, a high turnover of staff, housing difficulties for the workforce and a continuing exodus of young people from the county
- The industry is disparate and fragmented. Over 90% of businesses have less than 10 employees making it more difficult to generate effective marketing, lobbying, research and customer evaluation programmes

Hadrian's Wall Heritage Marketing Strategy

3.20 Like the Cumbria Destination Management Plan, this strategy also recognises product and marketing weaknesses which are resulting in a decline in visitor numbers, including poor visitor experiences, poor infrastructure and a declining image.

3.21 The strategy intends to:

- Build brand awareness – developing the Hadrian's Wall Country destination brand
- Target a range of consumer markets with an affinity to Hadrian's Wall
- Target existing and new markets – including the best prospects currently not visiting, including:
 - Visitors to the Lake District
 - People living within 2-3 hours drive
 - Local and regional day visitors

3.22 HWH does not believe that the Hadrian's Wall brand is strong enough to encourage visitors to leave the M6 and travel to the Solway Coast or, for that matter, eastwards of Carlisle to visit the Wall. However, HWH considers that the Wall is a strong heritage product for visitors once they have arrived in these destinations.

Solway Coast Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty Management Plan

3.23 The management plan contains a detailed, shared vision which addresses the following aspects of the AONB:

- Landscape
- Natural heritage
- Cultural heritage
- Communities
- Tourism & recreation
- Transport & access
- Education & information

3.24 Relevant objectives are as follows:

- Objective T&R1: To facilitate appropriate levels and types of recreation and sustainable tourism which are compatible with AONB Landscapes
- Objective T&R2: To create a sustainable tourism brand for the AONB and to promote the AONB through sustainable tourism marketing strategies
- Objective T&A1: To conserve and enhance the AONB by ensuring safer access for residents and visitors to, from and within the area

Hadrian's Wall Interpretation Framework

3.25 HWH recognises that signage and interpretation along the Wall and within Hadrian's Wall Country is currently poor and un-co-ordinated. To help with planning for the future, an interpretation framework has been developed.

3.26 The framework specifies two main themes and two linking themes as a way of structuring interpretation as follows:

Main Themes

- The story of the Roman Frontier from the 1st to the 5th century
- The landscape through which the Wall passes

Linking Themes

- The frontier environment
- World Heritage Site status

3.27 The framework recognises that in the main, people will engage with interpretation of Hadrian's Wall on websites and at museums/visitor centres on the ground. However, it also recognises that the spaces and smaller sites between the main ones are important and information should be provided in an appropriate way at these.

Hadrian's Wall in Cumbria

3.28 A2006 study of options for connecting tourism initiatives on the west coast of Cumbria to the rest of Hadrian's Wall recommended the adoption of a 'destination sub-brand' within Hadrian's Wall Country for the Solway Coast AONB plus Wigton, Maryport and Cockermouth.

- 3.29 The Coastal Frontier was suggested, with core brand values including beautiful natural and built environment, distinctive cultural heritage, slower, better pace of life and a place where people can cycle and walk safely.
- 3.30 The study also proposes a 'Frontier Trail' – a signposted driving trail from Carlisle to Maryport via Bowness on Solway and Silloth, promoted by a give away brochure at Rheged on the M6.

Existing Signage

- 3.31 A full audit of existing highways signage within the study area has been supplied as a separate electronic file consisting of a database of signage with images linked to GIS mapping. The nature of existing signage is summarised here.

Overview

- 3.32 Overall, highways signage for visitors in the Solway Plain can be summarised as follows:
- Existing signage is the result of unplanned activity and the result is a mixture of approaches, styles, quality, age, etc
 - Overall there seems to be a low level of brown signage in the study area
 - There is no 'destination signage' to the Solway Plain
 - There are few formal visitor attractions, but a large number of smaller, informal 'visitor destinations' throughout the study area and especially on the coast. These include – towns and villages, managed and informal countryside sites, rural pubs & other eateries, etc
 - Most existing brown signage relates to caravan parks and places to eat
 - There is no/limited threshold signage for the Solway Coast and Plain and for the AONB
 - AONB signage is located mostly at managed, informal sites along the coast and at honeypots, such as Allonby
 - Overall there is no sense of arrival or of welcome, except at some AONB-managed sites
 - Most signs at car parks and other arrival points is negative or prohibits some or other activity

Types of Existing Signage

- 3.33 The three levels of existing signage (primary, secondary and tertiary) are considered here.

Primary Signage

- 3.34 At present there is no signage from the M6 to the Solway Plain. From the south, Wigton is signed at junction 41 and from the north, there is no mention of any location in the Solway Plain on signs at junction 44.



M6 junction 41,
northbound



A74/M6 junction 44, southbound

- 3.35 Motorway signage is managed by the highways Agency, normally through agents and contractors.
- 3.36 Highways Agency policy on tourist brown signs is detailed in the Design Manual for Roads and Bridges TD5204. The policy described in this document relates to tourist attractions – it does not translate well to destinations. The current scheme of 'destination' brown signs on the M6 and trunk roads in Cumbria was put in place as a pilot tourism signage scheme and funded entirely by the Highways Agency. As such it was developed outside of current policy.
- 3.37 This pilot scheme has not yet been evaluated; the consultants have not identified any evaluation criteria. Any request for changes or additions to existing motorway and trunk road signage would need to be made to the Highways Agency Area 13 Office in Manchester by Cumbria County Council as the local highways agency.

Secondary Signage

- 3.38 The main routes into the Solway Plain are:
- | | |
|--------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| From the M6 south | - B5305 & B5302 |
| From Carlisle and the M6 north | - A595, A596, B5303 & B5302 |
| | - B5307 & B5302 |
| From the Lake District | - A591, A595, B5301/B5299 & B5301 |
| | - A66, A595 & B5301 |
| | - A66, A594 & B5300 |
| From West Cumbria | - A596 & B5300 |
- 3.39 Secondary signage is summarised in Table 5, below.
- 3.40 Signage on trunk (A) roads is managed by the Highways Agency and signage on B roads and lower classed is managed by Cumbria County Council.

Table 5: Summary of Secondary Signage

Route	Summary of Signage
B5305 & B5302	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Wigton is signed along the B5305, with several 'distance signs between junction 41 and Wigton itself ▪ From Wigton Silloth is signed
A595, A596, B5303 & B5302	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Silloth is signed from the A596/B5303 junction at Wigton
B5307 & B5302	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Silloth is signed from Carlisle
A591, A595, B5301/B5299 & B5301	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Carlisle is signed from the Crosthwaite Roundabout on the A66 ▪ Bothel is signed at the A591/A595 junction ▪ Silloth is signed from Aspatria
A66, A595 & B5301	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Aspatria is signed from the A595/B5301 junction ▪ Silloth is signed from Aspatria
A66, A594 & B5300	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Maryport is signed from the A595/A594 junction ▪ Silloth is signed from Maryport
A596 & B5300	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Maryport is signed from Workington ▪ Silloth is signed from Maryport

3.41 There are some 'tourist' brown signs; these sign particular visitor facilities – attractions, accommodation facilities, tea rooms, etc. Cumbria County Council policy of brown signs is summarised below. Cumbria Tourism currently has no policy of brown signs since it has no responsibility for highways.

3.42 Brown signs can be applied for by the following attractions and facilities:

- Historic and architectural buildings, sites, etc
- Craft centres/workshops
- Industrial tourism facilities
- Natural attractions
- Picnic sites
- Tourist information centres and points
- Exhibition, conference and convention centres
- Hotels and serviced accommodation
- Self-catering accommodation
- Camping and caravan sites
- Youth Hostels
- Restaurants and cafes
- Retail outlets
- Recreational facilities
- Cinemas and theatres

3.43 The chief purpose of brown signs is to help visitors find the specific location once they have reached their destination. Whilst the County Council applies different criteria to applications from different kinds of facilities, the same basic principles apply to all, as follows:

- The minimum requirement is to be open for 4 hours a day, 180 days a year; though most facilities have a higher requirement in order to avoid disappointing visitors

- Facilities and attractions are expected to promote themselves through advertising, etc
 - There must be adequate parking at the destination to avoid on-street parking problems
 - There must be a significant volume of people visiting from outside of the local area who would be likely to need signs
 - The facility must be open to people making casual visits not just those who have appointments or are members of a users' club
- 3.44 The application procedure includes a published scale of fees and consultation with the appropriate planning authorities. Costs are to be met by the attraction applying for signage.

Tertiary Signage

- 3.45 There are two kinds of tertiary signage, as follows:

- Local information signage in and around settlements
- AONB signage

Local Information Signage in and Around Settlements

- 3.46 Tertiary signage in Aspatria can be summarised as follows:

- No signage for Queen Street Car Park for traffic approaching from south
- No signage of library Car Park
- Poor relationship between car parking and services (for visitors)
- Location of Aspatria is poor in relation to visitor routes

- 3.47 Tertiary signage in Silloth can be summarised as follows:

- Poor signage for arriving traffic to the Discovery Centre
- Confusing signage at Discovery Centre/Texaco Garage/Fire Station junction
- There is no obvious centre for arriving traffic at which to provide orientation and information
- There is no sense of welcome and little sense of the significance of the place as the gateway to the AONB
- Threshold signage to the AONB at West Beach is poor
- Signage to West Beach is inadequate
- Signage on Station Road is confusing (proliferation of private signage and overflow car park and to a degree HCW signs are 'lost')
- Re-design of the Discovery Centre and development of a café facility presents an opportunity to create an arrival point for Silloth

- 3.48 Tertiary signage in Wigton can be summarised as follows:

- From B5305 on sign to main car park then narrow route to Water Street Car Park
- No direction signage at Market Place
- Small signs to Market Hill Car Park
- No signs to Station Road Car Park
- Information in Water Street Car park is in poor condition and out-dated

- There is no directional signage from the three car parks to the centre – this is a particular issue at Water Street

3.49 A wide variety of styles are used for local information signage.

AONB Signage

- 3.50 The AONB has site threshold signs and information signs at a number of sites. Site threshold signs are painted cast metal fixed to boulders and information signs are blue, painted wooden signs with white lettering. There are also interpretation/information panels at some locations.



AONB Site Threshold Sign



AONB Information Sign



AONB Information/Interpretation Sign

- 3.51 AONB signage is managed by the AONB. Wooden signs are maintained by volunteers at low cost to the organisation. Site threshold signs are reaching the end of their viable lives and require replacement in the near future.
- 3.52 The Solway Coast Discovery centre has its own signage, based very loosely on the AONB style.
- 3.53 In general, the AONB signage fits well into the landscape, being of appropriate style, size and colour.

Tourist Routes

- 3.54 There are currently no signed tourist routes in Cumbria. However, current guidance does make provision for the signing of 'tourist routes', 'scenic routes' or 'coastal routes'. This is a possible approach however such signage is not recommended for busy trunk roads or for motorways and so is unlikely to be a useful means of signing the destination.

4 ISSUES AND OPPORTUNITIES

- 4.1 A number of issues and opportunities arise from the existing situation. These are listed below and have been used by the consultants to guide formulation of the strategy.

Issues

- Declining numbers of visitors to Hadrian's Wall WHS
- Some decline in visitors to Cumbria, the Lake District
- Concerns at poor quality visitor experience
- Concerns at declining quality of visitor infrastructure
- Need to improve information to make it easy for visitors to find places
- Need to avoid proliferation of signage
- Several tourism brands overlap at the study area
- No signage to North Allerdale as a visitor destination
- Poor and disjointed nature of existing highways signage
- Poor and out of date tertiary signage in settlements

Opportunities

- 65% of visitors to Cumbria take part in touring by car – opportunity to attract some of these visitors to the study area
- Most use previous experience to plan visit – likely to be influenced by signs
- Number of tourists to Cumbria and to Allerdale is increasing – larger market to compete for
- Creating greater impact by organisations working in partnership to promote and sign the destination
- Retain brand sharing capability within design proposals
- Innovative maintenance proposals

5 SIGNAGE STRATEGY

5.1 The Solway Plain Highways Signage Strategy has four elements and these are described here:

- Overall approach
- Branding
- Design
- Location of Primary, Secondary and Tertiary Signs
- England's Solway Coast Route

Overall Approach

5.2 The overall approach provides a framework for the strategy; it is described as follows:

- Creating a distinctive identity for the destination
- Promoting Silloth as the focus for the destination
- Promoting Wigton as 'Market Town of the Solway'
- Promoting Aspatria as a service centre
- Promoting Dalston, Maryport, Wigton and Aspatria as 'gateways' to the destination
- Developing a coastal route for motorists, cyclists and walkers
- A clear relationship for overlapping brands
- A phased approach to delivery

5.3 This strategy is a key element in the Solway Coast AONB's plan to create a sustainable visitor destination (also noted in 3.6 of the Cumbria Destination management Plan).

Branding

5.4 Branding is the foundation for the strategy. The 2003 Marketing Strategy and Branding Study suggested further testing of two options:

- Developing a destination brand based on the Solway Coast
- Strengthening the coastal element of the existing Keswick & the Western Lake District brand

5.5 Since then, these options have been widely discussed and it has been accepted by many that the 'Western Lake District' brand has not succeeded for the coast.

5.6 A signage strategy workshop was held in Silloth on 24th September 2007, attended by participants, who represented stakeholders in the study area. They discussed the above two branding options and the possibility of developing a brand based on Hadrian's Wall – the Coastal Frontier. This meeting agreed unanimously that the brand for the destination should be **'England's Solway Coast'**.

5.7 It was felt that:

- Solway is a distinctive word and, though public awareness is not high, gives the destination a geographical fix

- The coast is where most visitors to the destination are heading
 - 'England's' differentiates the destination from the Scottish Solway Coast which is already promoted through the 'Solway Heritage Trail'
 - England's Solway Coast is strong enough to draw visitors from the M6 and the Lake District
- 5.8 It is recommended that the core values for the 'England's Solway Coast' brand are those already identified for the area in previous studies (see 3.28-3.30 above), as follows:
- Beautiful natural and built environment with lots of charm
 - Distinctive cultural heritage
 - A slower, better pace of life
 - A place where you can get away from cars and cycle and walk around safely
 - Anti clone
- (Source: Strategic Study of Options for Connecting Tourism Initiatives on the West Coast of Cumbria to the Rest of Hadrian's Wall WHS, 2006, Locum Consulting)*
- 5.9 The following brand marque is recommended. This builds on the existing promotion of the area by the AONB, but is differentiated from the AONB logo.



Proposed Brand Marque: England's Solway Coast

- 5.10 The England's Solway Coast branding strategy should be applied as follows:
- Apply England's Solway Coast branding to all signage outside of the AONB
 - Within the AONB the term Solway Coast should be used instead of England's Solway Coast, in order to reflect the statutory requirements of AONB designation

Design

- 5.11 The design has been applied to primary, secondary and tertiary signage and examples to illustrate this are shown here.



Directional Brown Sign



Small Directional Brown Sign



Town/Gateway Threshold Sign



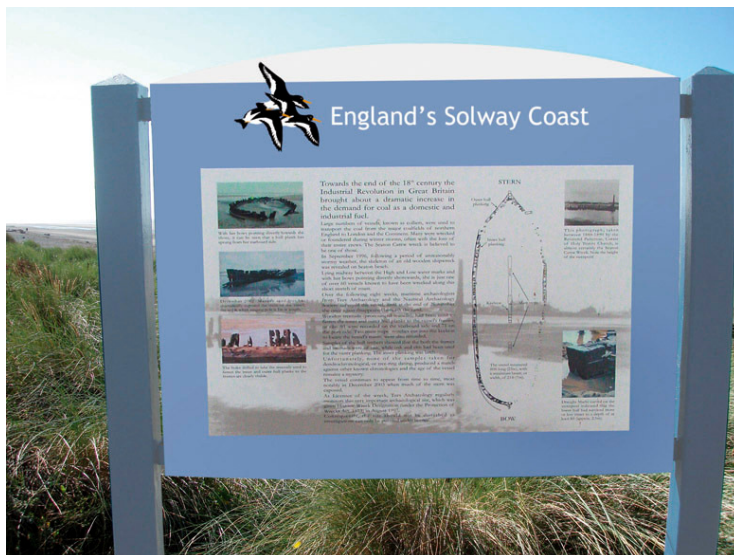
Brown Signage Applied to Motorway Exit Sign



Brown Directional Signage Applied to Junction Directions Sign



Proposal for Tertiary Signage



Proposal for Interpretation/Information Panel



Branding Applied to Solway Coast Discovery Centre

Location of Signs

- 5.12 Recommended location for primary, secondary and tertiary signage is detailed here.

Primary Signage

- 5.13 The destination should be signed for northbound traffic from junction 41 of the M6, with advanced information at junction 40, and for southbound traffic from junction 44 via the new Carlisle Northern Development Road.

Table 6: Location of Primary Signage

Ref	Location	Sign Type	Description
1.1	M6, junction 40, northbound	Exit 1 mile ahead	Add brown sign panel with 'For England's Solway Coast use junction 41'
1.2	M6, junction 41, northbound	Exit 1 mile ahead	Add brown sign panel with 'England's Solway Coast'
1.3	M6, junction 41, northbound	Exit ½ mile ahead	Add brown sign panel with 'England's Solway Coast'
1.4	M6, junction 41, northbound	Exit	Add brown sign panel with 'England's Solway Coast'
1.5	M6, junction 41, northbound	Roundabout information on slip road	Add brown sign panel against first exit with 'England's Solway Coast'
1.6	M6, junction 41, northbound	Roundabout exit to B5305	Add brown sign to roundabout exit sign with 'England's Solway Coast'
1.7	A74/M6, junction 44, southbound	Exit 1 mile ahead	Add brown sign panel with 'England's Solway Coast'
1.8	A74/M6, junction 44, southbound	Exit ½ mile ahead	Add brown sign panel with 'England's Solway Coast'
1.9	A74/M6, junction 44, southbound	Exit	Add brown sign panel with 'England's Solway Coast'
1.10	A74/M6, junction 44, southbound	Roundabout information on slip road	Add brown sign panel at (fourth) exit – Carlisle Northern Development Road - with 'England's Solway Coast'
1.11	A74/M6, junction 44, southbound	Roundabout exit to Carlisle Northern Development Road	Add brown sign to roundabout exit sign with 'England's Solway Coast'
1.12	M6 junction 44, northbound	Exit 1 mile ahead	Add brown sign panel with 'England's Solway Coast'
1.13	M6 junction 44, northbound	Exit ½ mile ahead	Add brown sign panel with 'England's Solway Coast'
1.14	M6 junction 44, northbound	Exit	Add brown sign panel with 'England's Solway Coast'
1.15	M6 junction 44, northbound	Roundabout information on slip road	Add brown sign panel against (second) Carlisle Northern Development Road exit with 'England's Solway Coast'

- 5.14 Given the situation described in 3.36 and 3.37 the recommended approach to the Highways Agency (subject to response from Cumbria Tourism) should be as follows:

Preferred Option

- CCC to apply (as the local highways authority) for an addition to the existing tourism brown signage scheme, as detailed in Table 6

Fallback if Refused

- CCC to apply for an extension of the B5305 to Silloth (re-numbering the B5302)
- Adding Silloth (or Silloth-on-Solway) as the primary destination of exit signs at junction 41
- Retaining Wigton on exit signs at junction 41

- 5.15 Given the up-grading of the A74 and the demand for signage at junction 44 (trunk road primary destinations -Carlisle, Workington – tourism signage – Carlisle, Hadrian's Wall) it is likely that securing space for Silloth on exit signage at junction 44 will be challenging.

Secondary Signage

- 5.16 The strategy will provide information for visitors arriving from the following:

- West Cumbria
- The Lake District (via Cockermouth and via Keswick)
- From the east via the A66
- From the south (from M6 junction 41)
- From the east via the A69
- From Carlisle
- From the north (from M6 junction 44)

- 5.17 Routing for the above traffic is detailed in Table 7.

Table 7: Traffic Routing Recommendations

Arriving Traffic	Route
West Cumbria	A596 & A5300
The Lake District via Cockermouth	A595 and B5301
The Lake District via Keswick	A591, A595 and A5301
From the east via the A66	A66, A591, A595 and A5301
From the south leaving the M6 at junction 41	A5305 & A5302
From the east via the A69	M6 north, Carlisle Northern Development Road, A595, A596 & B5302
From Carlisle	A595, A596 & A5302
From the north leaving the A74/M6 at junction 44	Carlisle Northern Development Road, A595, A596 & A5302

- 5.18 Signage recommended to facilitate these arrival routes is shown in Table 8.

Table 8: Location of Secondary Signage

Ref	Location	Sign Type	Description
2.1	A595/A596 junction north of Distington	Junction	Add brown sign panel with 'For England's Solway Coast follow Maryport'
2.2	A596/A66 junction in Workington Town Centre	Junction	Add brown direction sign 'England's Solway Coast'

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Ref	Location	Sign Type	Description
2.3	A596 Northside Roundabout	Roundabout directions	Add brown sign panel at third exit (A596) with 'England's Solway Coast'
2.4	A596 Northside Roundabout	Roundabout exit	Add brown direction sign at roundabout exit for A596 with 'England's Solway Coast'
2.5	A596/A594 junction, Maryport Town Centre	Junction directions sign	Add brown tourist panel for ahead with 'England's Solway Coast'
2.6	A596/B5300 junction, Maryport	Junction directions sign	Add brown tourist panel for B5300 with 'England's Solway Coast'
2.7	A596 Northside Roundabout	Sign at junction	Add brown direction sign at exit with 'England's Solway Coast'
2.8	A66/A5086 roundabout	Brown tourist attractions sign	Add 'England's Solway Coast' ahead
2.9	A66/A595 roundabout	Roundabout directions	Add brown tourist panel for A595 with 'England's Solway Coast'
2.10	A66/A595 roundabout	Roundabout exit	Add brown direction sign at exit for A595 with 'England's Solway Coast'
2.11	A595/A594 roundabout	Roundabout directions	Add brown tourist panel for A594 with 'England's Solway Coast'
2.12	A595/A594 roundabout	Roundabout exit	Add brown direction sign at exit for A594 with 'England's Solway Coast'
2.13	A591/A66 Crosthwaite Roundabout (from Keswick)	Roundabout directions	Add brown direction sign at exit for A591 with 'England's Solway Coast'
2.14	A66/A591 Crosthwaite Roundabout (from Penrith)	Roundabout directions	Add brown direction sign at exit for A591 with 'England's Solway Coast'
2.15	A66/A591 Crosthwaite Roundabout	Roundabout exit	Add brown direction sign at exit with 'England's Solway Coast'
2.16	A591/A595 junction	Junction directions sign	Add brown direction sign for left on A595 with 'England's Solway Coast'
2.17	A591/A595 junction	Sign at junction	Add brown direction sign to left for 'England's Solway Coast'
2.18	A595/B5301 junction southbound	Junction direction sign	Add brown direction sign for right on B5301 with 'England's Solway Coast'
2.19	A595/B5301 junction southbound	Sign at junction	Add brown direction sign to right for 'England's Solway Coast'
2.20	B5301/A596 junction in Aspatria	Junction direction sign	Add brown direction sign for ahead on B5301 with 'England's Solway Coast'
2.21	B5301/A596 junction in Aspatria	Sign at junction	Add brown direction sign for ahead with 'England's Solway Coast'
2.22	On B5305, after M6 junction 41 roundabout	'Reassurance' sign	Add brown sign with 'For England's Solway Coast follow B5305'
2.23	B5305/A595 junction	Junction direction sign	Add brown direction sign to right & left staggered for 'England's Solway Coast'
2.24	B5305/A595 junction	Sign at junction	Add brown direction sign to right for 'England's Solway Coast'
2.25	A595/B5305 junction northbound	Sign at junction	Add brown direction sign to left for 'England's Solway Coast'
2.26	B5305/B5304 junction in Wigton	Junction direction sign	Add brown direction sign to right for 'England's Solway Coast'
2.27	B5305/B5302 junction, in Wigton Town Centre	Junction direction sign	Add brown direction sign to left for 'England's Solway Coast'
2.28	B5302/A596 Junction	Junction	Add brown direction sign to right &

Ref	Location	Sign Type	Description
		direction sign	left staggered for 'England's Solway Coast'
2.29	B5302/A596 Junction	Sign at junction	Add brown direction sign to right for 'England's Solway Coast'
2.30	A596/B5302 junction northbound	Sign at junction	Add brown direction sign to left for 'England's Solway Coast'
2.31	A69/M6 at junction 43	Roundabout directions	Add brown sign panel for M6 north exit for 'England's Solway Coast'
2.32	A69/M6 at junction 43	Roundabout exit sign	Add brown direction sign at M6 north exit
2.33	Carlisle Northern Development Road/A595 junction	Junction direction signs as required	Add brown signs for 'England's Solway Coast'
2.34	A595/Carlisle Northern Development Road	Junction signs as required	Add brown signs for 'England's Solway Coast'
2.35	A595/A596 junction at Thursby	Roundabout directions	Add brown sign panel with 'England's Solway Coast' for A596 exit
2.36	A595/A596 junction at Thursby	Roundabout exit	Add brown direction sign at A596 exit for 'England's Solway Coast'
2.37	A596/B5302 junction	Junction direction sign	Add brown direction sign to B5302 for 'England's Solway Coast'
2.38	A596/B5302 junction	Sign at junction	Add brown direction sign to right for 'England's Solway Coast'

Tertiary Signage

5.19 Tertiary signage includes the following

- Settlements
- Gateways
- Brown signs for individual facilities
- The Solway Coast AONB

Settlements

5.20 Tertiary signing within settlements is to provide local information, to orient visitors and to make links between car parks and facilities. The consultants have made an assessment of the tertiary signage required at Aspatria, Silloth and Wigton and have commenced a process of consultation with the three Town Councils.

5.21 The consultant's proposals for tertiary signage is summarised here. This will be subject to the consultation process before a final action plan can be produced.

Aspatria

5.22 Our initial proposals for local (tertiary) signage in Aspatria include the following:

- Route traffic from Keswick and Cockermouth for Silloth (the centre of England's Solway Coast' via the B5301 through Aspatria
- Town name signs to include 'gateway to England's Solway Coast'

- Sign King Street Car park and WCs at the King Street/Station Road junction
- Install new signage at King Street car park to include – ‘Welcome to Aspatria’ sign, orientation information, information on facilities in Aspatria, information on other places to visit in the Solway area and Hadrian’s Wall Country
- Provide welcome and orientation information at Aspatria Railway Station

5.23 Our initial proposals for local (tertiary) signage in Silloth include the following:

- Use the re-development of the Solway Discovery Centre as an opportunity to create a focal point for arriving visitors in Silloth, with better signage to the centre for traffic arriving along Wigton Road and from the south
- Install orientation information at the sea front car parks to include information on facilities in Silloth, information on other places to visit in the Solway area and Hadrian’s Wall Country and fingerposts pointing the way to the Green, Discovery Centre, shops and West Beach
- Integration of signage around the town and in the green redevelopment proposals

5.24 Our initial proposals for local (tertiary) signage in Wigton include the following; any proposals for Wigton should be held until a planning decision is made on the proposed new supermarket development as, if this goes ahead, it will have a significant impact on traffic flows around the town:

- Consider that the focus for parking will change if the proposed Tesco store development goes ahead – need to take account of this
- Town name signs to include ‘Market town of England’s Solway Coast’
- Signs on approach to town to include facilities symbols
- Replace existing signage at Water Street car park to include – ‘Welcome to Wigton’ signs, orientation information, information on facilities in Wigton, information on other places to visit in the Solway area and Hadrian’s Wall Country and fingerposts pointing the way to the shops
- Provide welcome and orientation information at Wigton Railway Station

Gateways

5.25 Aspatria, Dalston, Maryport and Wigton are to be promoted as ‘gateways’ to England’s Solway Coast. This, in addition to the routing of traffic through and close to these centres will help establish them as service centres and encourage through traffic to stop and spend. Providing a consistent approach to information and signage will help to achieve this.

5.26 The proposed treatment of gateways is detailed in Table 9.

Table 9: Signage and Information Proposals for Gateways

Feature	Description
Threshold signs	Signs to follow proposal at 5.9 above with wording ‘Welcome to: Gateway to England’s Solway Coast’ (or ‘market town’ in the case of Wigton)

Feature	Description
Car parks	All car parks to have a standard design local information panel giving details of location in relation to rest of destination and details of local services
Railway stations	All railway stations to have a standard combined threshold/welcome and information panel giving details of location in relation to rest of destination, bus routes, pedestrian and cycle routes and details of local services
Pedestrian signage	Similar style pedestrian finger posts to give directions to facilities. Each gateway could be differentiated by a different colour

Brown Signs for Individual Facilities

- 5.27 Providing brown tourist signs for individual attractions and facilities will remain the prerogative of the attraction/facility operator, subject to County Council approval. Cost is the major constraint to signage, which can have a significant impact on business turnover and profitability.
- 5.28 Providing assistance to businesses in implementing brown signage is likely to have a significant impact of the success and therefore the quality of local businesses, making a general contribution to quality in the longer term, as businesses making more profit have greater amounts of capital to re-invest. A support scheme should be considered.

Solway Coast AONB

- 5.29 Whilst there is a need for the AONB to promote its own identity, in particular at sites which it manages, there are opportunities to reduce the overall number of signs and to share the cost of signage and information provision amongst a wider range of partners by working through the signage strategy partnership.
- 5.30 It is proposed that the AONB replaces its current AONB location signage at sites which it manages with new AONB location signs. In addition, similar signs should be positioned at the main road entrances to the AONB as threshold signage to raise awareness of the protected area status of the Solway Coast AONB.
- 5.31 A suggested design for these signs is shown below, based on mounting the existing AONB logo on a replica gate between two sandstone gateposts. Threshold signs will be required as follows:
- C road west of Rockcliffe village
 - C road east of Burgh-by-Sands
 - B5307 at Kirkbride
 - B5302 at Abbeytown
 - B5301 at Blitterlees
 - B5300 north of Maryport
- 5.32 In addition, AONB site location signs require replacement in the same way. The AONB should continue to provide its own branded signage (interpretation and information) at sites which it manages. However, it is

recommended that all other signage conforms to the 'England's Solway Coast' branding.

England's Solway Coast Route

- 5.33 A key aspect of managing visitors and maximising economic impacts is the development and promotion of the Solway Coast Route. This will be, initially, along the line of the B5300 between Silloth and Maryport. It will consist of:
- An off-road route for pedestrians and cyclists
 - Traffic calming measures to reduce traffic speeds
 - Further interpretation of the landscape and heritage features along the route
- 5.34 A feasibility study into implementing this route was undertaken in 2006. The route is feasible between Maryport and Dubmill Point by use of the verge and the purchase of a small amount of land. The route would be established on the landward side of the A5300 for sustainability reasons (impact on sensitive habitats and flood defence).
- 5.35 Northwards of Dubmill Point can follow the Cumbria Coastal Way/Allerdale Ramble waymarked route.
- 5.36 This project is being progressed by a partnership of organisations including Maryport Development, Cumbria County Council, Hadrian's Wall Heritage, the Solway Coast AONB and user groups. An up-dated costing is being carried out concurrent with production of this signage strategy.
- 5.37 Whilst the off-route between Maryport and Dubmill Point could be achieved relatively quickly and at modest cost, the more ambitious proposals for traffic calming, interpretation and branding will take longer to deliver. Traffic calming might be possible through the LTP, which recognises the need for such activity but not, as yet on the B5300. As a first step, a detailed study is recommended to:
- Identify interpretation opportunities, specify and cost interpretation proposals
 - Explore traffic calming opportunities, propose and cost traffic calming
 - Develop branding and marketing proposals

Management and Delivery

Delivering the Action Plan

- 5.38 Management and delivery of the strategy should be by the 'Solway Signage Partnership' – essentially a partnership of organisations brought together to steer preparation of the strategy, consisting of:
- Allerdale Borough Council
 - Cumbria County Council
 - Cumbria Tourism
 - Hadrian's Wall Heritage
 - North Allerdale Partnership

- Solway Coast AONB
 - Western Lake District Tourism Partnership
- 5.39 The partnership should consider the implementation implications of the action plan and agree a working method for delivery. It is not envisaged that a separate body of staff will be required to deliver the action plan, but that management of delivery can be shared by existing organisations to an agreed programme.
- 5.40 The Action Plan contains a list of tasks prioritised into short, medium and long term delivery phases, beginning with tertiary signage, which is less costly and has a shorter delivery timeframe, and working up to the delivery of primary signage in the long term. This also enables the efficient management of funds available in the short term and time for planning the medium and long term funding. Funding sources are considered in the budget table, included in the Action Plan.
- 5.41 The first step for the Partnership, on receipt of this report, is to submit the proposals to the County Council Highways Department for detailed assessment and approval or comment.
- 5.42 Delivering the strategy will incur a revenue funding commitment for the maintenance of signs. The Solway Coast AONB has developed a cost-effective mechanism of using volunteers to maintain and clean signs. In this way the costs to the AONB are limited to supplying materials – paint, etc.
- 5.43 It is recommended that this approach is applied to all tertiary and gateway signage included in this strategy. The Signage Strategy Partners should work together to identify maintenance partners for all signs at the time that they are installed and agree appropriate maintenance programmes. Partners might include volunteer groups, Town Councils, tourism businesses, etc.

Relationship Between Brands

- 5.44 It is important to agree the relationship between overlapping brands at an early stage, as this will help to avoid conflict in the future. The brands which will be evident within the geographical area of the strategy are as follows:
- The Lake District, Cumbria
 - The Solway Coast AONB
 - Hadrian's Wall Country
 - Cumbria County Council
 - Allerdale Borough Council
 - Town Councils
- 5.45 The following analysis and recommendations are proposed:

Table 10: Relationship Between Overlapping Brands

Brand	Issues	Proposals
The Lake District, Cumbria	Not likely to coincide on the ground; likely to coincide on promotional materials	Take due regard of The Lake District, Cumbria branding guidelines on electronic and printed materials

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Solway Coast AONB	AONB needs to maintain profile and awareness of the landscape designation	Retain AONB identity on AONB threshold signs and on signage at sites managed by the AONB
Hadrian's Wall Country	HWH Ltd seeks a consistent, yet locally differentiated approach to interpretation and information throughout the WHS; it also needs to raise the profile of the WHS	Include England's Solway Coast and Hadrian's Wall Country branding jointly on information panels at tertiary level
Cumbria County Council	Need to retain own identities on some information signage, especially where there is a statutory obligation, for example in relation to safety, etc	Audit local signage provision. Where possible, replace existing signage with England's Solway Coast branded signs. Otherwise, retain existing brand.
Allerdale Borough Council		
Town Councils		

6 ACTION PLAN

6.1 A three phase action plan is proposed as follows:

Table 11: Summary of Action Plan

Phase	Actions
One	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Design and implement tertiary signage proposals
Two	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Planning for Phases Two and Three Design and implement secondary signage proposals Design and implement the Solway Coastal Route
Three	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Design and Implement tertiary signage proposals

6.2 In addition, the following additional actions should be implemented in order to deliver the 'England's Solway' brand and to maximise the effectiveness of the initiative:

- Solway Coast AONB should ensure that the branding and signage initiative(s) is clearly identified as an action to help develop a sustainable visitor destination
- Produce and promote a branding manual for implementation of the 'England's Solway' brand
- Consider a study to investigate options to maximise the effectiveness of public transport as a tourism resource within the study area

6.3 Each phase of the Action Plan is described here. Cost estimates are summarised in the Appendix.

Phase One

Table 12: Action Plan Phase One Tasks

Action	Tasks	Partners	Budget Estimate	Timescale
Plan Tertiary Signage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Agree tertiary signage requirements in Aspatria, Silloth and Wigton Liaise with consultants (WYG) undertaking Auction Mart/Store study Agree branding application to tertiary signage Agree maintenance regimes for tertiary signage 	Town Councils, NAP	Current study Officer time	Deadline 31 Mar 08
Design Tertiary Signage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Produce detailed specification for tertiary signage Obtain quotations for design, production and installation 	NAP	Officer time	
Install Tertiary signage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Commission production and installation Manage construction and installation 	NAP, Town Councils	Officer time £37,000	

Phase Two

Table 13: Action Plan Phase Two Tasks

Action	Tasks	Partners	Budget Estimate	Timescale
Planning for secondary signage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Commission Capita to undertake costing study of secondary signage proposals 	CCC	TBA	TBA
Planning for primary signage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Prepare case for Highways Agency Approach Highways Agency 	CCC	Officer time	
Design and implement secondary signage proposals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Commission signage production and installation Manage process 	CCC, CCC Agent	£62,000 Officer time	
Design and implement the Solway Coast Route	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implement the off-road route from Maryport to Dubmill Point Sign the Coastal Route Implement traffic calming Implement interpretation Implement branding and marketing 	MD, AONB, CCC, HWH	£ TBA £ TBA £ TBA £ TBA	
Plan the Solway Coastal Route	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lobby for higher priority for safety measures on B5300 Detailed costing of off road route from Maryport to Dubmill Point Scope opportunities for interpretation, traffic calming, branding and marketing of the route 	CCC	Officer time £5,000 £10,000	
Funding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lobby for inclusion of highways signage strategy and branding proposals in the West Cumbria Spatial Masterplan Prepare ground for ERDP bid Lobby for inclusion of highways signage strategy in Allerdale LAGBI scheme Lobby to include the highways signage strategy in the LTP Partners to make provision for future funding contribution 	All	Officer	

Phase Three

Table 14: Action Plan Phase Three Tasks

Action	Tasks	Partners	Budget Estimate	Timescale
Extend current tourist signage scheme	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implement additions to scheme 	CCC, HA, HA Agent	£100,000	TBA

APPENDIX

- Appendix 1: Tertiary Signage Cost Estimates**
- Appendix 2: Tertiary Signage Cost Calculator**
- Appendix 3: Secondary Signage Cost Estimates**
- Appendix 4: Primary Signage Cost Estimates**

Appendix 1: Tertiary Signage Cost Estimates

Fingerposts

Post	£ 252
Fingers (average 2@£150)	£ 300
Ball Finial	£ 52
Carriage	£ 200
Foundation and installation (est)	£ 500
Total (excl VAT)	£1,034

Panels (Ground Mounted)

Design and production	£1,500
Carriage	£ 200
Foundation, groundworks and installation	£ 600
Total (excl VAT)	£2,300

Panels (Wall Mounted)

Design and production	£1,500
Carriage	£ 200
Foundation, groundworks and installation	£ 250
Total (excl VAT)	£1,950

New Town Name Signs

Production (2m ² @£200)	£ 400
Posts (2@2m@£35/m)	£ 140
Foundation and installation	£ 300
Total (excl VAT)	£ 840

Solway Coast Discovery Centre Signs

Production (4m ² @£200)	£ 800
Posts (2@3m@£35/m)	£ 210
Foundation and installation	£ 300
Total (excl VAT)	£1,310

Aspatria

- Route traffic from Keswick and Cockermouth for Silloth (the centre of England's Solway Coast' via the B5301 through Aspatria
- Town name signs to include 'gateway to England's Solway Coast'
- Sign King Street Car park and WCs at the King Street/Station Road junction
- Install new signage at King Street car park to include – 'Welcome to Aspatria' sign, orientation information, information on facilities in Aspatria, information on other places to visit in the Solway area and Hadrian's Wall Country
- Provide welcome and orientation information at Aspatria Railway Station

Silloth

- Use the re-development of the Solway Discovery Centre as an opportunity to create a focal point for arriving visitors in Silloth, with better signage to the centre for traffic arriving along Wigton Road and from the south
- Install orientation information at the sea front car parks to include information on facilities in Silloth, information on other places to visit in the Solway area and Hadrian's Wall Country and fingerposts pointing the way to the Green, Discovery Centre, shops and West Beach

Wigton

- Consider that the focus for parking will change if the proposed Tesco store development goes ahead – need to take account of this
- Town name signs to include 'gateway to England's Solway Coast'
- Replace existing signage at Water Street car park to include – 'Welcome to Wigton' signs, orientation information, information on facilities in Wigton, information on other places to visit in the Solway area and Hadrian's Wall Country and fingerposts pointing the way to the shops
- Provide welcome and orientation information at Wigton Railway Station

Appendix 2: Tertiary Signage Cost Calculator

Location	Sign	Unit Cost	Number	Total
Aspatia	Town sign	840	2	£1,680
	Finger posts	1034	1	£1,034
	Panel (Ground)	2300	1	£2,300
	Panel (Wall)	1950	1	£1,950
				£6,964
Silloth	Town sign	840	2	£1,680
	Finger posts	1034	3	£3,102
	Panel (Ground)	2300	4	£9,200
	Panel (Wall)	1950	1	£1,950
	SCDC Signs	1310	2	£2,620
				£18,552
Wigton	Town sign	840	3	£2,520
	Finger posts	1034	3	£3,102
	Panel (Ground)	2300	2	£4,600
	Panel (Wall)	1950	1	£1,950
				£12,172
Grand Total				£37,688
AONB	Threshold sign		TBA	
	Panel (Ground)		TBA	
	Panel (Wall)		TBA	
	Information		TBA	

Appendix 3: Secondary Signage Cost Estimates

Estimated Panel Cost

Panel (1m²@£200/m²) = £300
(Source: Capita)

Estimated New Direction Sign to Existing Post Cost

Sign = £450
(Source: CCC Cumbria Highways, Traffic Signs to Tourist Attractions & Facilities)

Estimated New Direction Sign Requiring New Post Cost

Sign = £650
(Source: Consultants estimate based on CCC Cumbria Highways, Traffic Signs to Tourist Attractions & Facilities)

New Roadside Sign Cost

Production (2m ² @£200)	£ 400
Posts (2@2m@£35/m)	£ 140
Foundation and installation	£ 300
Total (excl VAT)	£ 840

(Source: Capita)

We have doubled the following estimates and added £30,000 for Trunk Road signage on the A66.

Table x: Location of Secondary Signage

Ref	Location	Sign Type	Description	Cost Estimate
2.1	A595/A596 junction north of Distington	Junction	Add brown sign panel with 'For England's Solway Coast follow Maryport'	£300
2.2	A596/A66 junction in Workington Town Centre	Junction	Add brown direction sign 'England's Solway Coast'	£450
2.3	A596 Northside Roundabout	Roundabout directions	Add brown sign panel at third exit (A596) with 'England's Solway Coast'	£300
2.4	A596 Northside Roundabout	Roundabout exit	Add brown direction sign at roundabout exit for A596 with 'England's Solway Coast'	£450
2.5	A596/A594 junction, Maryport Town Centre	Junction directions sign	Add brown tourist panel for ahead with 'England's Solway Coast'	£300
2.6	A596/B5300 junction, Maryport	Junction directions sign	Add brown tourist panel for B5300 with 'England's Solway Coast'	£300
2.7	A596 Northside Roundabout	Sign at junction	Add brown direction sign at exit with 'England's Solway Coast'	£450
2.8	A66/A5086 roundabout	Brown tourist attractions sign	Add 'England's Solway Coast' ahead	£300

Ref	Location	Sign Type	Description	Cost Estimate
2.9	A66/A595 roundabout	Roundabout directions	Add brown tourist panel for A595 with 'England's Solway Coast	£300
2.10	A66/A595 roundabout	Roundabout exit	Add brown direction sign at exit for A595 with 'England's Solway Coast	£450
2.11	A595/A594 roundabout	Roundabout directions	Add brown tourist panel for A594 with 'England's Solway Coast	£300
2.12	A595/A594 roundabout	Roundabout exit	Add brown direction sign at exit for A594 with 'England's Solway Coast	£450
2.13	A591/A66 Crosthwaite Roundabout (from Keswick)	Roundabout directions	Add brown direction sign at exit for A591 with 'England's Solway Coast	£450
2.14	A66/A591 Crosthwaite Roundabout (from Penrith)	Roundabout directions	Add brown direction sign at exit for A591 with 'England's Solway Coast	£450
2.15	A66/A591 Crosthwaite Roundabout	Roundabout exit	Add brown direction sign at exit with 'England's Solway Coast	£450
2.16	A591/A595 junction	Junction directions sign	Add brown direction sign for left on A595 with 'England's Solway Coast	£450
2.17	A591/A595 junction	Sign at junction	Add brown direction sign to left for 'England's Solway Coast'	£450
2.18	A595/B5301 junction southbound	Junction direction sign	Add brown direction sign for right on B5301 with 'England's Solway Coast	£450
2.19	A595/B5301 junction southbound	Sign at junction	Add brown direction sign to right for 'England's Solway Coast'	£450
2.20	B5301/A596 junction in Aspatria	Junction direction sign	Add brown direction sign for ahead on B5301 with 'England's Solway Coast	£450
2.21	B5301/A596 junction in Aspatria	Sign at junction	Add brown direction sign for ahead with 'England's Solway Coast'	£450
2.22	On B5305, after M6 junction 41 roundabout	'Reassurance' sign	Add brown sign with 'For England's Solway Coast follow B5305	£450
2.23	B5305/A595 junction	Junction direction sign	Add brown direction sign to right & left staggered for 'England's Solway Coast'	£450
2.24	B5305/A595 junction	Sign at junction	Add brown direction sign to right for 'England's Solway Coast'	£450
2.25	A595/B5305 junction northbound	Sign at junction	Add brown direction sign to left for 'England's Solway Coast'	£450
2.26	B5305/B5304 junction in Wigton	Junction direction sign	Add brown direction sign to right for 'England's Solway Coast'	£450

Ref	Location	Sign Type	Description	Cost Estimate
2.27	B5305/B5302 junction, in Wigton Town Centre	Junction direction sign	Add brown direction sign to left for 'England's Solway Coast'	£450
2.28	B5302/A596 Junction	Junction direction sign	Add brown direction sign to right & left staggered for 'England's Solway Coast'	£450
2.29	B5302/A596 Junction	Sign at junction	Add brown direction sign to right for 'England's Solway Coast'	£450
2.30	A596/B5302 junction northbound	Sign at junction	Add brown direction sign to left for 'England's Solway Coast'	£450
2.31	A69/M6 at junction 43	Roundabout directions	Add brown sign panel for M6 north exit for 'England's Solway Coast'	£450
2.32	A69/M6 at junction 43	Roundabout exit sign	Add brown direction sign at M6 north exit	£450
2.33	Carlisle Northern Development Road/A595 junction	Junction direction signs as required	Add brown signs for 'England's Solway Coast'	£840
2.34	A595/Carlisle Northern Development Road	Junction signs as required	Add brown signs for 'England's Solway Coast'	£840
2.35	A595/A596 junction at Thursby	Roundabout directions	Add brown sign panel with 'England's Solway Coast' for A596 exit	£300
2.36	A595/A596 junction at Thursby	Roundabout exit	Add brown direction sign at A596 exit for 'England's Solway Coast'	£450
2.37	A596/B5302 junction	Junction direction sign	Add brown direction sign to B5302 for 'England's Solway Coast'	£450
2.38	A596/B5302 junction	Sign at junction	Add brown direction sign to right for 'England's Solway Coast'	£450

Appendix 4: Primary Signage Cost Estimates

Approximate cost of each exit sign - £20,000

2 separate signs required per exit:

- between 1 mile and half mile exit signs
- between half mile and exit signs

(Source Amey Mouchel)