Muncaster Castle & Gardens Whole Estate Plan Summary

Draft, November 2026

1. Introduction

A Whole Estate Plan is a document prepared by a privately managed estate. It describes the assets of the estate and the opportunities and challenges which the estate may encounter and sets out plans for the future. A Whole Estate Plan is designed to support an Estate which is generally a large landholding which includes complex commercial, social and environmental activities. Once endorsed by the National Park Authority, this Plan will form a material consideration in any planning application and provides a solid contextual background to any development proposals. This Plan also forms a guide for decision makers at Muncaster Estate.

1.1. Muncaster Estate

Muncaster is a large and varied estate located on the west coast of Cumbria almost entirely within the Lake District National Park. It sits at the western end of Muncaster Fell, close to Ravenglass Village which faces onto the large estuary at the confluence of the Irt, Mite and Esk rivers.

At the heart of the Estate is Muncaster Castle, a Grade I listed building with origins in the 13th century, reflecting more than 800 years of continuous occupation, adaptation and modification. The castle nestles in woodland commanding views to the south and east along the Esk valley towards Scafell.

In addition to the castle, the estate has many properties built in the distinctive style of the estate with local granite, sandstone and slate. The Estate has 8 Scheduled Monuments and 10 Listed Buildings. These designations recognise the very high cultural and landscape value of Muncaster Estate.

Successive generations have shaped a distinctive landscape of historic parkland, woodlands, farmland, gardens and estate buildings which together tell the story of changing land management, rural life and conservation practices. This continuity of ownership has enabled Muncaster to retain a strong sense of place and identity, creating a landscape where heritage, nature and productive land use remain closely connected.

Today, Muncaster Estate continues to be a living and working estate. It supports businesses, farming, forestry, tourism, residents and conservation activities, while welcoming thousands of visitors each year. This blend of heritage, stewardship, environmental management and community connection ensures that Muncaster remains relevant and valued, not only as a place of outstanding history and beauty, but as an estate that continues to contribute to the social, economic and environmental wellbeing of the wider area.

2. The Estate’s Vision

The vision is for Muncaster and its surrounding area to be recognised as a leading heritage destination where people can stay, discover , explore and share experiences in history, landscape and nature over multiple days.

We celebrate a place where the castle, mountains, woodland and village meet the coast. This is where people feel part of the landscape rather than passing through it, and where a thriving natural environment, resilient economy, flourishing community and memorable visitor experiences exist in balance.

2.1. Strategic Objectives

1. Support the local community and economy

Work collaboratively with local businesses, suppliers and people to create year-round employment, support skills development and ensure that Muncaster's economic success brings long-term benefit to the wider area.

2. Strengthened narrative and sense of place

Establish the clear and compelling narrative that connects the castle, landscape and the coast - helping visitors understand how Muncaster’s history, environment and community tie together.

3. Ensure long-term sustainability and resilience

Develop and diversify the estate in a financially, environmentally and socially sustainable way - combining conservation with innovation to secure the long-term future of Muncaster as an estate and family home.

4. Create a quality multi-day destination

Develop Muncaster as a destination that encourages longer stays through a joined-up offer of accommodation, food and drink, entertainment, outdoor activity and cultural experiences.

3. Challenges, Opportunities and Actions

This section considers the current challenges faced by Muncaster Estate in meeting the four strategic objectives and explores possible opportunities for improvements. Actions have also been identified to address the challenges and take the opportunities forward. These have been assessed alongside the National Park Authority's vision to ensure future decision-making is in line with the objectives of the National Park Authority.

3.1. Strategic Objective 1 – Support the Local Community and Economy

Muncaster Estate is an important part of the local community and economy, providing employment, homes, services, events and places for people to meet. There are opportunities for the Estate to strengthen this contribution by creating a broader range of year-round jobs and career pathways, investing in community venues and activities, improving awareness of the facilities available to local residents, and supporting the provision of homes and everyday services. By working collaboratively with local people, businesses and partners, Muncaster can help create a thriving and inclusive community while ensuring that future growth delivers lasting social and economic benefits. The economic success of Muncaster is bound tightly with the success of the local people, community and businesses. Therefore, Muncaster must follow a path which works to the benefit of the area within the setting of the National Park.

Challenges	Opportunities	Action Number	Action	Timescale
The Stable Yard is currently the heart of the visitor experience with the cafe, gift shop and toilet facilities as well as the old laundry. These key estate assets are not used consistently nor utilised throughout the year or day. Development of this area may be possible but is restricted by the Grade II listing. Many of the buildings within the Cobbled Yard are currently vacant or underutilised, representing a missed opportunity to contribute to the Estate's visitor offer.	There is an opportunity to re-purpose the buildings in the Cobbled Yard and improve the access link to the Stable Yard to create potential retail or workshop spaces such as a farm shop and bakery. This is an opportunity to re-think the use of the spaces creating a destination that celebrates local creativity, craftsmanship and heritage	1.1	Work with partners to re develop the Stable Yard and Cobbled Yard with the aim of creating a wider and more engaging visitor experience by including for example artisan shop, bakery and restaurant. Improve the facilities and services of this space offered to locals on a more consistent basis.	0-5 years
Despite a successful community programme, opportunities for local people to become actively involved in Muncaster Estate on an ongoing basis remain limited.	Build on the success of the existing community programme and develop good value products and offerings that target locals by expanding volunteering opportunities and initiatives, such as the Kitchen Garden, to strengthen community involvement and participation.	1.2	Strengthen community facilities and community participation by: a) Expanding volunteering opportunities and community led projects including the Kitchen Garden and environmental projects b) Supporting a year-round programme of activities and events that cater to both local people and tourists c) Explore additional funding models for ensuring the financial resilience of this program.	0-5 years 0-5 years
Awareness among local people of the facilities available at Muncaster Estate is limited. Many residents are unaware that the café area is freely accessible or that a local annual pass is available, resulting in underuse of the estate by the local community. The local Post Office in Ravenglass village closed during 2026 leaving residents with a journey to Seascale or Gosforth to obtain postal services.	There is an opportunity to better tailor Muncaster Estate's visitor offer to local residents by adapting tourist products to appeal more strongly to local audiences. This includes ensuring the local annual pass remains affordable and exploring additional local discounts. There is the potential to build on the success of opening the village store at the Pennington by developing the range of goods and exploring the potential for re-opening the village post office, helping to position Muncaster as a valued local service as well as a visitor destination.	1.3	Support access to the estate facilities for local people by: a) Increasing awareness of facilities available to residents b) Further developing local access initiatives such as annual passes and free access to the Stable Yard facilities c) Continue to operate and develop the village store and explore the potential for re-opening the Ravenglass Post Office	0-5 years 0-5 years Ongoing 0-5 years

			d) Increase procurement from local suppliers where feasible and economic	
Many buildings at Muncaster Estate are falling into disrepair, despite having potential for residential or commercial use. At the same time, limited availability of affordable housing in Ravenglass restricts the ability of new and existing employees to relocate to the area as well as young families in general. A critical mass for a healthy community in the parish and area with many houses having been converted into holiday homes or ones only occupied in certain times of year. For the pubs, clubs and various other services to survive in the long term a critical mass of population with diverse demographics is thought necessary.	There is an opportunity to invest in and upgrade existing buildings at Muncaster Estate to bring them into suitable condition for residential or commercial use, while also exploring potential locations for new housing that would allow a diverse range of people to be able to afford to live in Ravenglass. Opportunity to invest in and support the local community to recover to former population sizes with demographic diversity that will facilitate a healthier community.	1.4 1.5 1.6 1.7	Implement a programme of work on existing Estate housing stock to maintain, refurbish and upgrade, making them available to both employees and local people at affordable rates. Work with local people and authorities to develop plans and business cases for development of new housing in the areas identified in this plan around Ravenglass. Deliver the authorised developments and make them available to new residents Look to expand our building team so to be able to provide building services locally and ensure access to good tradesmen. Consider training programs for the tradesmen of the future. Continue to invest in and support the public spaces that Muncaster Estates owns and operates, including the Village Hall, facilitating it evolving to a community centre.	0-5 years 5-10 years 10-15 years 0-5 years 0-5 years

Strategic Objective 2 - Strengthen narrative and sense of place

Muncaster is a place with a rich cultural heritage, a strong connection to local communities, and a growing reputation as a destination for festivals, music, food, learning and outdoor experiences. These elements help create a distinctive sense of place that sets Muncaster apart and enables visitors to connect with the history, character and traditions of the Western Lake District. Festivals, education programmes, locally sourced food and drink, music, outdoor activities and immersive historical experiences can all contribute to a stronger narrative for the Estate, helping to build rural pride, attract new audiences and establish Muncaster as a year-round cultural destination. By investing in experiences that are authentic to its landscape and history, Muncaster can continue to create memorable connections between people, place and culture.

Challenges	Opportunities	Action Number	Action	Timescale
Maintaining the scale and quality of festivals presents operational and capacity challenges in ensuring festivals remain sustainable in the long term whilst continuing to attract audiences to the Estate and wider area.	Build on the strength of Muncaster's events programme by developing a sustainable, evolving festival offer, broadening appeal and strengthening the Estate's identity, positioning Muncaster as a key cultural destination. Appeal to niches that are aligned with the area, that builds a community of people who are invested in the area and want to see it succeed and continue to develop. For example – Krankenhaus audience – now spend 4 days a year in the region and enjoy seeing the region progress.	2.1	Establish Muncaster as a leading cultural destination by reviewing the current festival themes and schedule to identify new ideas and ways of working that will enhance and improve the overall offering across the full year. Bring world class events and niches to Ravenglass that have appeal to those living in West Cumbria and the surrounding areas.	0-5 years 0-5 years

Maintaining Scarecaster and Halloween to a high standard requires significant ongoing investment, capacity and innovation to meet the expectations of a wide visitor base and the local community.	Position Halloween and Scarecaster as a flagship event that attracts visitors from across the UK and further afield, while retaining a strong sense of local ownership. By continuing to invest in Halloween, the Estate can deliver a standout experience that drives tourism and strengthens community pride and participation.	2.2	Market and promote the Muncaster Halloween experience across the north of England and south Scotland with the aim of attracting visitors from further afield whilst promoting Muncaster as a destination for the full year. Continue to develop the Muncaster Express Train to provide better links. Evaluate the possibility of a regular scare event/ghost offering at Muncaster to ensure we continue to develop as an attraction and festival.	0-5 years 0-5 years
Developing Muncaster as a recognised destination for local food requires investment, coordination and audience building to ensure a high-quality event that attracts local and wider interest.	Position Muncaster as the home of Cumberland sausage celebrations, creating a distinctive food-based identity that strengthens the Estate's cultural and tourism offer. There is an opportunity to grow its scale and appeal, deepen community involvement, and establish a unique and recognisable annual event that reflects local character.	2.3	Work with local food producers to widen the appeal and scale of the Sausage Festival to a larger audience Look for more opportunities to work with the Muncaster Parish Council to support the development of more locally culturally significant events such as the St Patrick's Day celebrations.	0-5 years 0-5 years
Maintaining Krankenhaus to a high standard requires significant ongoing investment, infrastructure and innovation to grow and become a world class festival.	Maximise the festival's potential by investing in permanent infrastructure to ensure its ongoing success. This includes enhancing physical infrastructure as well as strengthening social networks and partnerships, creating long-term benefits for residents, businesses and visitors	2.4	Work with the Krankenhaus promoters to examine ways to enhance the festival with investment in infrastructure and buildings that will benefit the festival and the wider visitor experience. Look to develop other festivals of a similar quality at	0-5 years

	while embedding the festival's value within Muncaster .		Muncaster, with niches that fit the context of the local area.	
The success of open mic nights in the Stable Yard requires sustained coordination, audience development and artist participation, particularly to ensure ongoing quality, viability and appeal across seasons. Whilst the Stable Yard is an excellent venue for summer, it is open to the elements for winter events.	Continue to build a platform for performers through open mic nights, increasing footfall and vibrancy. There is the possibility of offering other audience participation events, such as quiz nights, to enhance the offering	2.5	Explore ways to provide a more comfortable open mic atmosphere during the winter months and encourage greater audience/artist participation through diversification of the offering. Look to establish other similar events such as Ceilidh Club.	0-5 years
Muncaster currently lacks a strong identity for music and does not integrate music into the core Muncaster offer.	Develop a distinctive music offer with themed events including 'Country by the Castle' that celebrates a range of genres. By curating high-quality performances and experiences, there is an opportunity to grow Muncaster's reputation as a music venue.		Invest in Muncaster infrastructure, festivals, audience development and local talent to ensure that we are truly a good music destination. Continue to seek funding from organisations such as Arts Council England to ensure impact achieved.	0-5 years
The demand for outdoor theatre and cinema events is currently limited although those who do attend enjoy the experience.	Presents an opportunity to broaden Muncaster's cultural programme, helping to diversify events and support wider ambitions to create a high-quality multi-day destination.		Develop Muncaster infrastructure to be able to more easily host these events. Look to establish a large enough space for indoor events that have the scale required.	0-5 years
The Weapons Hall is one of Muncaster's principal visitor attractions providing a fun connection to the Estate's past. Maintaining its appeal and quality is essential to the Estate's long-term success. It may be appropriate to consider a new theme for the building in due course if/when the Weapons Hall concept requires a refresh.	Continue to invest in the Weapons Hall by maintaining and expanding the range of activities and experiences on offer. In the longer term consider future themes for the building which may replace the Weapons Hall in future.	2.6	Develop future themes for the Weapons Hall building. Ensure it goes beyond the Hall and that we can do outside activities across the board.	5-10 years
Redirecting procurement to local suppliers presents challenges including availability and cost competitiveness.	Opportunity to prioritise and increase local procurement, supporting businesses and producers across West Cumbria. Also presents an opportunity to capitalise on local seafood produce.	2.7	Work collaboratively with local restaurants and food providers to create a more joined-up, high-quality food offer available seven days a week.	0-5 years

Establishing an onsite produce offer requires investment, expertise and coordination to ensure consistent quality, viable production levels and effective routes to market.	Develop a distinctive Muncaster produce brand, using the Estate's unique heritage, landscape and location to create high-quality products with a strong sense of place. The ability to sell branded produce further afield could help meet the aim of providing more jobs outside the main tourism season	2.8	Strengthen the Muncaster brand with the aim of offering produce locally and further afield by: a) Displaying the brand and logo more prominently in media, on vehicles and on property b) Selecting and supporting products suitable for distribution. c) Working with partner outlets to stock and sell Muncaster branded produce outside the locality.	0-5 years 0-5 years 5-10 years
The Estate has several unique heritage buildings which are in a poor and degrading condition located in iconic positions on the landscape which will require conservation and/or restoration.	If funding can be secured the monuments have the potential to be saved from further decay and perhaps given some small low impact usage. Two examples are the Chapels monument visible for a mile from the south approach to the Estate and secondly the Devoke Water Boathouse being the only man-made structure around Muncaster Tarn.	2.9	Investigate if funding can be secured to carry out restoration and repair work on the Chapels monument and Devoke Water Boathouse. Proceed with work when funding is available	5-10 years
A public right of way passes through the Castle grounds, and the Cumbria coastal path passes along the river Esk to the south of the grounds. They create an ongoing challenge in maintaining the integrity of the paid visitor experience	There is an opportunity to develop an estate path which helps to preserve the integrity of the paid perimeter of the castle grounds while also providing a more interesting and circular path around the entire estate which could be made suitable for both pedestrians and cyclists. Ideally swap the footpath through the core of the paid attraction area for a significant circular route.	.2.10	Develop a circular route that encourages local people and visitors to explore more of Muncaster's landscapes and heritage, strengthening connections between the Estate and wider area. This should be considered alongside action 4.5 Develop a bridge across the Esk to link in with the Coastal Route and make the whole area more accessible.	0-5 years 10-15 years
Creating a successful knowledge-sharing hub requires sustained partnerships with universities and other academic institutions and dedicated capacity	Position Muncaster Estate as a recognised hub for learning, collaboration and knowledge exchange. Partnership with academic institutions can give opportunities to provide	2.11	Work with academic institutions to promote Muncaster as a destination for conferences, field trips and retreats. General education centre – the concept of the 'Muncaster	0-5 years

	field trips, conference locations and accommodation for candidates.		Institute', particularly in the winter months.	
Developing environmental education programmes will require investment and partnerships.	Position Muncaster as a place for environmental engagement, experiences and research opportunities.	2.12	Decide how to approach and position Muncaster to host environmental visits and programmes.	0-5 years

Strategic Objective 3 - Ensure Long Term Sustainability and Resilience

Muncaster Estate has been shaped by more than 800 years of family stewardship, adaptation and investment. Maintaining this legacy for future generations will require a careful balance between environmental conservation, heritage protection, economic viability and community wellbeing. The Estate faces a range of challenges, including climate change, increasing pressures on historic assets, evolving agricultural practices, increasing costs and the need to secure sustainable sources of income to support the ongoing management of the wider Estate. There is an opportunity for Muncaster to build on its strengths as a living and working estate by investing in nature recovery, climate resilience, sustainable farming and forestry, thriving visitor experiences and the conservation of its internationally important heritage.

Challenges	**Opportunities**	**Action Number**	**Action**	**Timescale**
Climate change is altering environmental conditions and placing increasing pressure on plant species, habitats and historic gardens across the UK. Adapting to changes in climate will require investment in new plant types, plant expertise and landscaping capability	There is the opportunity to use the unique microclimate at Muncaster as a Cloud Forest Garden, building on the damp climate and rich history of cultivating unusual and internationally significant plant species. These conditions provide a rare opportunity to create a nationally distinctive garden that celebrates species adapted to temperate rainforest and cloud forest environments from around the world.	3.1	Investigate plant species and implement garden landscapes that could capitalise on the Muncaster microclimate to create a sustainable ecosystem for the future. Establish Muncaster as '***Britain's Cloud Forest Garden***', securing a world class team to maintain and develop the garden.	15-20 years 0-5 years
Ongoing challenge to ensure that land management practices continue to evolve in response to changing environmental, economic and policy pressures.	Nature-friendly farming practices can secure the future of traditional farming while enhancing biodiversity, landscape character and climate resilience across the Estate. Set	3.2	Investigate and secure government funding from agricultural and environmental schemes that will help enhance	0-5 years

	Muncaster as world leading in terms of environmental and farming combination.	3.3	traditional farming, biodiversity and landscape Work with tenant farmers to ensure that farming methods employed work in harmony with the Estate and National Park aims for biodiversity and landscape	0-5 years
The current size and configuration of the Bird of Prey Centre limits its ability to expand its conservation, breeding and educational offer.	Muncaster Hawk and Owl Centre is a very successful part of the visitor offering but also plays a key role in conserving threatened bird species. Both roles of the Centre have the potential to be enhanced through the creation of larger facilities that will help education, breeding programmes and research, as well as public engagement.	3.4	Continue to grow and evolve Muncaster's Hawk & Owl Centre, building on its established reputation to create a breeding facility for conservation research, education and public engagement.	5-10 years
Many of Muncaster's heritage assets require ongoing investment to remain in good condition and continue contributing to the Estate's character, visitor experience and cultural significance. Rising maintenance costs, ageing historic buildings and increasing conservation needs present a significant challenge, with some heritage features at risk of deterioration if sufficient resources cannot be secured.	Growing the income generated from tourism is an opportunity but also a necessity to re-invest into the conservation, restoration and enhancement of Muncaster's rich heritage assets, ensuring they are protected and conserved for future generations.	3.5	Develop the activities of Muncaster Visitor Management (MVM) to generate sufficient income to fund Muncaster conservation, restoration and enhancement work into the future	5-10 years
The current configuration of visitor access through the castle can place pressure on sensitive spaces.	Reconfigure access to the castle, including exploring a new entrance through the Cobbled Yard , to create a more intuitive and engaging visitor journey.	3.6	Create a new access route into the castle, taking into consideration the development of the North Tower – Action 4.3	10-15 years
Muncaster's tenanted farms require ongoing investment to remain in good condition and continue contributing to the estate's character.	Invest in Howbank and Brighouse Farms to ensure they remain viable, resilient and productive farm businesses in a changing agricultural landscape.		See action 3.9	
Visitor numbers have declined from their peak in the early 2000s, creating a challenge for the long-term sustainability of the estate and its ability to generate the income needed to	Grow Muncaster's reputation as one of the leading visitor destinations in Cumbria by maintaining and increasing visitor numbers		See action 3.5	

maintain and enhance its heritage, landscapes and visitor attractions.	and encouraging longer, more immersive stays.			
Festivals are one of Muncaster's most successful and recognisable attractions, drawing large numbers of visitors and making an important contribution to the estate's profile and income. However, growing and diversifying the festival programme presents challenges around infrastructure capacity, parking, accommodation, visitor management, environmental impacts and the protection of the estate's heritage and landscape.	There is the opportunity to build on Muncaster's reputation as a festival destination by expanding and diversifying the events programme throughout the year. By developing new festivals and enhancing existing events, the estate can attract a wider range of audiences, increase off-peak visiting and strengthen its position as a leading cultural and entertainment destination on the west coast of Cumbria. Additionally, there is the possibility to use more regenerative methods to sustain the estate's infrastructure. Examples include generation of electricity on site and techniques such as rainwater harvesting	3.7	Carry out a review of the estate infrastructure and set out a plan to improve capacity and resilience to meet future needs including peaks for greater festival and multi day numbers. This should consider: • Roads and parking • Footpaths • Water supply • Toilets and drainage • Electricity generation • Electricity distribution • Gas and heating • Data and connectivity	0-5 years
The estate has carried out several projects to move down the road of adapting greener energy sources for electricity generation, heating and insulation upgrades. This is expensive and intrusive work, particularly on the older and listed buildings on the estate. There are many more properties that will benefit from upgrade to move toward a goal of net zero by 2050	The opportunity exists to make mindful decisions about upgrades to housing stock, commercial buildings and infrastructure that will achieve lower carbon emissions and lower long-term costs. Given the size and diversity of the estate it should be possible to aim for carbon neutrality by 2050 given the correct strategy is put in place to deliver it.	3.8	Prepare an overall energy strategy covering housing, commercial buildings, infrastructure and transport that sets out actions to reduce carbon emissions to net zero for the estate by 2050 or even before	0-5 years
The limited availability of everyday services and community facilities in Ravenglass, including access to a local shop and Post Office, presents an ongoing challenge for residents and affects the sustainability and resilience of the community.	Explore opportunities for new and enhanced community facilities on the estate, including the potential provision of a local shop, post office and other essential services.	3.9	Continue to develop the Pennington Hotel Village Shop to deliver a wider range of services where this is practical and economic.	0-5 years
The estate's existing agricultural buildings are old, in disrepair and increasingly under pressure to meet the needs of modern farming operations.	Brighouse Farm and Howbank have farm buildings which have the potential to be restored and re-purposed to meet the needs of the estate and enhance the landscape by clearing the sites and repairing walls etc.	3.10	Re appraise the building/infrastructure needs of the estate agricultural and forestry operations and then invest in resilient and sensitively designed farm infrastructure to secure the	10-15 years

	Home Farm has buildings which need to be updated to meet modern farming standards and enhance the experience for the Krankenhaus festival which is held at the farm.		long-term future of farming for example construction of new cattle sheds at Brighouse and the repair and restoration of traditional barns at Howbank.	
The current location and arrangement of forestry and farming operations can create conflicts with key visitor areas, including the Hawk & Owl Centre, affecting both operational efficiency and the quality of the visitor experience and farming and forestry operations .	There is the opportunity to review and rationalise the location and operation of forestry and farming activities across the estate to create a more efficient, resilient and sustainable working enterprise while reducing conflicts with visitor attractions.		See action 3.10	
The estate's car park regularly reaches capacity during peak visitor periods, creating constraints on visitor access and limiting opportunities to grow attendance at major events.	Increase parking capacity in a way that supports the estate's long-term ambitions for visitor growth, events and new attractions.	3.11	Plan to increase the car park capacity in conjunction with actions 3.12 and 3.13	5-10 years
When visitors arrive in the main car park, they have a 10-minute walk to access visitor facilities, which creates a less convenient arrival experience, particularly for families, older visitors and those with accessibility needs.	Provide discreet, high quality and accessible toilets within the main car parks.	3.12	Provide new accessible toilet facilities within the main car park. Incorporate alongside actions 3.10 and 3.12 Consider relocating the car park to be the castle side of the road. Reduce the issues with the road crossing	5-10 years
The requirement for visitors to cross the A595 between the main car park and the grounds creates a significant access and safety challenge. As visitor numbers grow, improving the ease, safety and quality of this key arrival point will be critical to enhancing the visitor experience, supporting accessibility and enabling future expansion of Muncaster's visitor offer.	There are short term practical measures that can be implemented to slow and calm traffic to allow visitors to cross the A595 at the main entrance. In the longer term, the car park cannot meet the needs of the estate to hold larger festivals and there is an opportunity to relocate the car park into fields adjacent to Home Farm which would remove the need for visitors to cross the road, and provide more parking spaces.	3.13 3.14	Work with the local authority to explore the options for traffic calming and road crossing safety measures at the main entrance Develop options to re-locate and enlarge the main car park adjacent to Home farm.	0-5 years 10-15 years

Strategic Objective 4 - Create a quality Multi-day Destination

Muncaster has the foundations of a distinctive visitor destination, combining a nationally significant historic attraction with outstanding landscapes, festivals, outdoor activities and strong transport links through Ravenglass. While many visitors currently experience the estate as a day trip, there is considerable potential to encourage longer stays by developing a more comprehensive and connected visitor offer that enables people to spend several days exploring the estate and the wider west coast and western fells of Cumbria.

Challenges	Opportunities	Action Number	Action Plan	Timescale
The limited on-site visitor accommodation, including caravan and camping facilities, limits opportunities to extend visitor stays, support evening activity and maximise the use of the estate's hospitality and visitor facilities.	The size and diversity of the land included in the Muncaster Estate provides the opportunity to position camping and caravan facilities close to the visitor hub. In turn this provides a larger on-site visitor base which would give an economy of scale for improved visitor facilities	4.1	Develop an on-site premium caravan location to encourage longer stay visitors that would enable extended opening hours and an improved visitor offer. Work to develop a coherent strategy with other camping and caravan providers and authorities for the area.	0-5 years
The estate has several heritage properties that require significant investment and sensitive restoration to bring them into viable use. Securing sustainable uses that generate sufficient income while preserving their historic character presents an ongoing challenge.	Convert a limited number of currently vacant heritage properties into high-quality holiday accommodation to secure their long-term conservation, generate revenue for the Estate.	4.2	Make an assessment and initial business case of the potential to convert various properties on the estate to accommodate visitors. Where feasible and economic to do so proceed with the building works.	5-10 years
Parts of the castle are currently underused and require sensitive refurbishment to make them useable rooms.	The North Tower and Nursery Floor of the castle make up a large floor space within the castle and are currently used only for utility and storage. They have the potential to be converted into very desirable accommodation for visitors within the castle itself	4.3	Secure a long-term viable use for currently derelict rooms in the castle by sensitively restoring rooms to create distinctive accommodation, offering a unique experience to visitors. Can support with the concept of Muncaster Institute and ensure the whole castle well maintained, not just display rooms.	10-15 years

The absence of on-site visitor accommodation, including camping facilities, limits opportunities to extend visitor stays, support evening activity and maximise the use of the estate's hospitality and visitor facilities.	A walk-in campsite that caters specifically to visitors arriving by train, bicycle or on foot could attract a growing market of low-impact travellers seeking affordable accommodation.		Work with tenant farmer and locals to which location would work best to situate the campsite.	
The absence of a variety of on-site visitor accommodation limits opportunities to extend visitor stays, support evening activity and maximise the use of the estate's hospitality and visitor facilities.	The grounds and gardens surrounding the castle can provide the location for sensitively designed and located themed accommodation in the form of small huts, tents or pods. Careful choice of the plot will minimise the heritage, environmental or landscape impact.	4.4	Develop a small collection of sensitively designed and located premium themed accommodation in the grounds that complements the estate's heritage and landscape setting	5-10 years
Despite the proximity of Muncaster Castle and Ravenglass, movement between the two locations is dominated by the A595 corridor. Creating safer, more attractive and enjoyable walking connections remains a challenge. The distance between the station and the estate can act as a barrier for visitors arriving by train, particularly those with luggage.	Develop a high-quality active travel links between Ravenglass and Muncaster Castle, making it easier for visitors to arrive by train and continue their journey on foot or by bicycle.	4.5	Create and evaluate options for improved cycle, pedestrian and shuttle bus routes between Ravenglass and Muncaster	5-10 years
Attracting more local and repeat visitors remains a challenge. Awareness of the estate's offer can be limited, while transport connections and perceptions of Muncaster as primarily a tourist destination may reduce engagement from nearby communities.	Muncaster is strategically located within reach of Millom, Egremont and Whitehaven, presenting a significant opportunity to strengthen its role as a valued local destination as well as a visitor attraction.	4.6	Continue to promote and refresh the marketing approach to local people with the aim of increasing the frequency of visits to the estate.	0-5 years
Access by road often involves extended travel through rural routes, while rail journeys typically require multiple connections, which can discourage day visits and reduce the estate's accessibility to wider audiences.	Position Muncaster as an early adopter and potential hub for future zero-emission aviation by exploring the feasibility of an eVTOL landing facility on the estate.	4.7	Explore how we can establish other transport routes to Muncaster and surrounding area. Can we be a transport operator?	0-5 years
Existing water bodies across the Estate are currently underutilised and make a limited contribution to the visitor experience.	The Esk, Mite and Irt rivers converge into the estuary at Ravenglass and at high tide provide over 200ha of water suitable for a range of low-impact water-based activities, including kayaking, canoeing and paddleboarding. In	4.8	Investigate how water-based activities could be utilised on the Muncaster water bodies and if these options make environmental and economic sense.	5-10 years

	addition, Muncaster Tarn and Devoke Water also provide some possibilities for low impact and low volume water-based activities if managed sensitively to protect the biodiversity assets.			
Muncaster is not currently realising its full potential within the growing corporate events, retreats and experiential learning market due to limited facilities.	The corporate market represents a significant and largely untapped opportunity for Muncaster. By enhancing facilities and experiences tailored to corporate clients, Muncaster could establish itself as a distinctive destination for the corporate market.	4.9	Further develop the corporate events business by: a) Survey potential corporate and institutional clients to establish desired facilities and assets b) Prepare business case for new assets based on projected business c) Install new assets and develop business cases	0-5 years 0-5 years 5-10 years
The lack of a direct, memorable and engaging link between the estate and the village reduces opportunities to encourage visitors to move between the two destinations, limits the benefits of rail connectivity, and constrains the potential for a more integrated visitor experience.	A key feature of the topography between Muncaster and Ravenglass is the 50-metre elevation difference. The opportunity exists to exploit this elevation in terms of a transport feature that helps people make the journey but also may become an attraction in its own right	4.10	Explore the feasibility of creating a unique gravity-powered or "skeleton run" experience between Muncaster and Ravenglass.	0-5 years
The Pennington Hotel in Ravenglass is a key facility in the bid to provide multi day accommodation in the locality of the Muncaster Estate. The Hotel is viable but requires investment to both improve the condition and quality of rooms. There are also a number of buildings around the hotel in deteriorating condition that also require work to restore their appearance	The opportunity here is to bring forward an investment plan that will deliver the necessary upgrades to the hotel but also explore the potential to convert some of the surrounding buildings into hotel accommodation. For example, Herbert House next door and the Barn at the rear of the hotel	4.11	Explore the potential for conversion of Herbert House and the Barns at the rear of the Pennington Hotel to additional accommodation in parallel with the refurbishment of the main hotel building.	10-15 years