

Local Habitat Map User Guide

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Introduction

The main purpose of the Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS) is to:

- identify our **priorities** (objectives) for nature recovery
- identify potential **measures** (actions) that would help meet these priorities
- **map** the locations where enhancing, restoring or creating habitat is most likely to provide the greatest benefit for nature and the wider environment

The Local Habitat Map identifies zones within which opportunities for nature recovery are strategically significant at a landscape scale. It **does not operate at a field scale** resolution, but it can show how nature recovery on your land fits into the wider landscape. The Local Habitat Map **does not mandate any requirement** to implement the identified potential measures.

There are two elements to the LNRS. The written document forms one part (the Statement of Biodiversity Priorities) and the Local Habitat Map forms the other. The Local Habitat Map shows where taking action for nature will have the most positive impact. The Statement of Biodiversity Priorities and the Local Habitat Map are designed to be used together when informing decision-making. Where [...] is displayed on the map, additional detail on this potential measure can be found in the Statement of Biodiversity Priorities.

Any **nature recovery projects must be informed by detailed site-specific feasibility studies, comply with legal requirements and regulatory policy**, and should follow standards, guidance, and good practice, in line with our LNRS principles for nature recovery.

The Local Habitat Map is based on the best available data at the time of publication. In order to improve our Local Habitat Map, we need to increase the quality and quantity of data we have for habitat type, extent and condition. We encourage anyone who is collecting habitat or species data in Cumbria to share it with Cumbria Biodiversity Data Centre¹ so that it can be added to their database and help to improve our understanding of the state of nature in our county.

The map can be accessed here: <https://www.cbdc.org.uk/about-us/projects/cumbria-lnrs-interactive-map/>

It is recommended that you have the Local Habitat Map open when referring to this user guide.

¹ <https://www.cbdc.org.uk/>

Nature Recovery Networks

In order to identify where we should be targeting our efforts for nature recovery, we must first understand what habitats we have in Cumbria. The Cumbria Biodiversity Data Centre carried out a review of new and existing habitat data, from both local and national sources, to gather as much information as possible. This information helped create the Cumbria Habitat Base Map. This was then used with the Natural England Habitat Network Model to create local nature recovery networks. The local nature recovery networks show where we should improve, restore, or create specific habitats.

The local nature recovery networks are grouped by each **broad habitat theme** (e.g. woodland, trees and scrub, moorland, heathland and montane, grassland and limestone pavement) and show the existing wild-life rich habitats for each theme, along with the opportunities for restoration or creation of these. The maps are available to view online, and the data can also be downloaded as a shapefile to be used in GIS software. Each local nature recovery network contains three categories: **enhance**, **restore** and **create**.

Enhance

This includes the improvement of **existing wildlife-rich habitats**² (e.g. upland hay meadow) to give better condition or distinctiveness of habitat.

Restore

This applies to **degraded or fragmented** habitats that are **not currently classed as wildlife-rich**. Associated measures would result in improving their condition or distinctiveness to make them wildlife-rich where the **broad habitat type would stay the same** (e.g. modified grassland being transformed into hay meadow).

Create

This is on land that could be suitable for the creation of wildlife-rich habitat and would give a **broad change in habitat** type (e.g. modified grassland being transformed into broadleaved woodland). This will make our existing wildlife-rich habitats bigger and more joined up.

² As defined in Table 2 in Natural England. (2024) Environment Act Habitat Target – Definitions and Descriptions. Available at <https://publications.naturalengland.org.uk/publication/6427187599900672>

Local Habitat Map Structure

The Local Habitat Map can be divided into three parts:

- Areas of Particular Importance for Biodiversity
 - Areas that Could Become of Particular Importance
 - areas that are outside of the nature recovery network

Areas of Particular Importance for Biodiversity

This shows the areas that are already protected under planning policy for their biodiversity value and include

- all statutorily designated conservation sites (SPAs, SACs, Ramsar sites SSSIs, NNRs, LNRs, LPOs and HPMAs)
- County Wildlife Sites
- irreplaceable habitats

Areas that Could Become of Particular Importance

The parts of the nature recovery networks that fall outside of the Areas of Particular Importance for Biodiversity are classified as Areas that Could Become of Particular Importance.

Areas outside of the nature recovery network

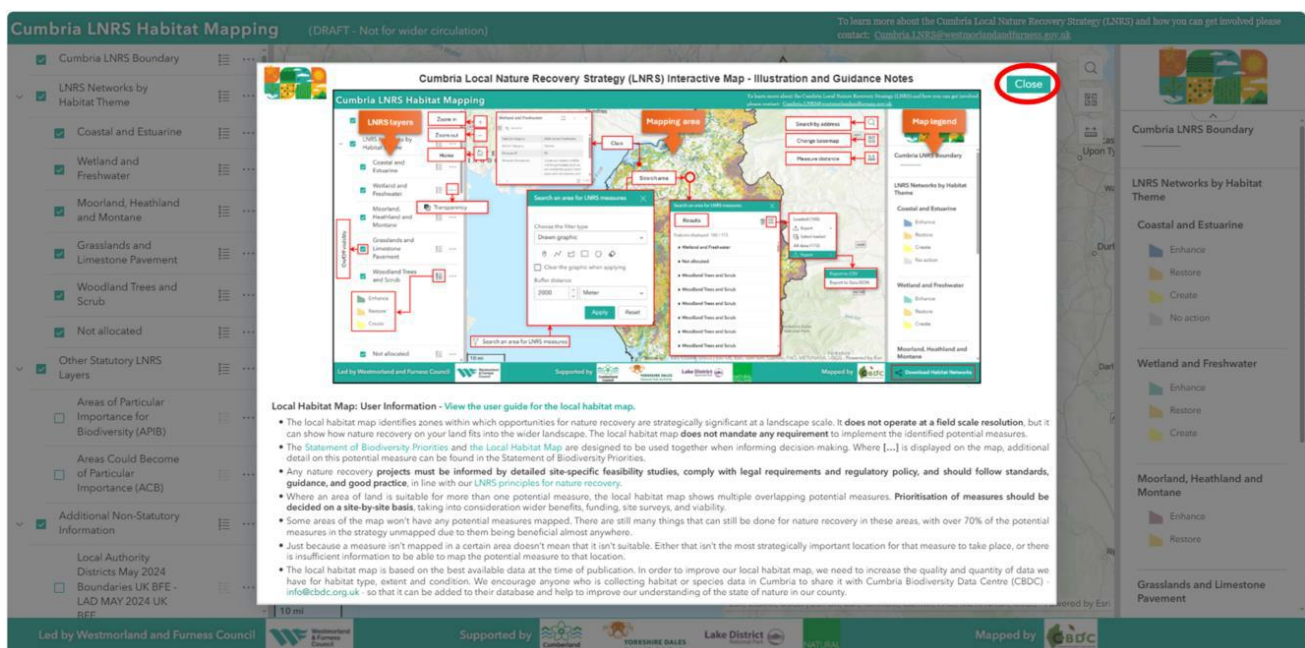
Some areas won't fall within a strategic network and therefore won't have measures shown on the map. Everywhere is important for nature recovery and there is still lots that can still be done for nature recovery in these areas, including many of the unmapped potential measures. Over 70% of potential measures in the strategy are unmapped due to them being beneficial almost anywhere, or there being insufficient information to be able to map specific locations for a potential measure.

Similarly, just because a mapped measure isn't mapped in a certain area doesn't mean that it isn't suitable, it just means that it isn't the most strategically important location for that measure to take place for the purpose of the nature recovery network. These areas can still be used to deliver mapped potential measures if site surveys determine them to be a suitable location.

Opening the Local Habitat Map

The Local Habitat Map is hosted online using ArcGIS. It can be viewed online on any standard web browser. The map can be accessed via the [Cumbria LNRS Mapping Portal](#). It is also available on the LNRS website³ and in the Statement of Biodiversity Priorities.

When the map opens it will automatically open an information box showing an instruction summary graphic and the key information that should be read and understood before using the Local Habitat Map. Once you have read this information, press 'close' or click anywhere outside of the text box to close it.

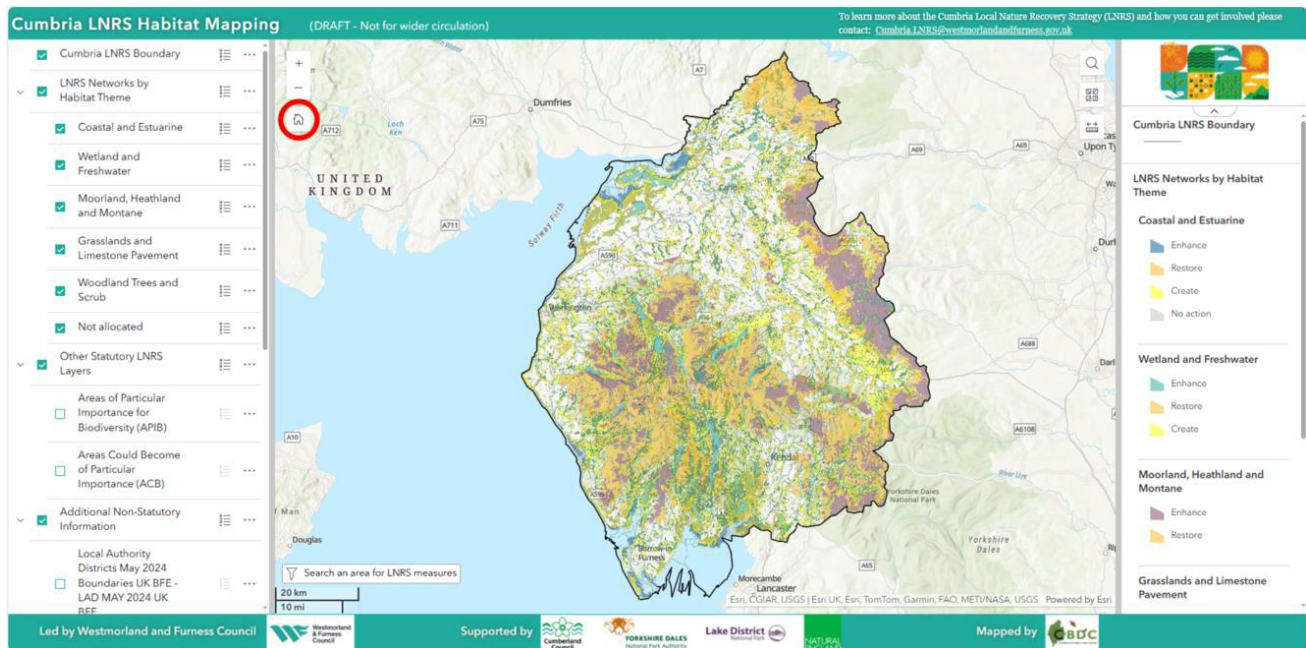


The map will then load with the Cumbria boundary and all of the local nature recovery network habitat theme layers enabled. There are several other layers available that are automatically unselected. These will be discussed later.

You can always **reset the map zoom** by pressing the 'home' button in the top left-hand corner of the map.

³ <https://cumbrialnrs.org.uk/>

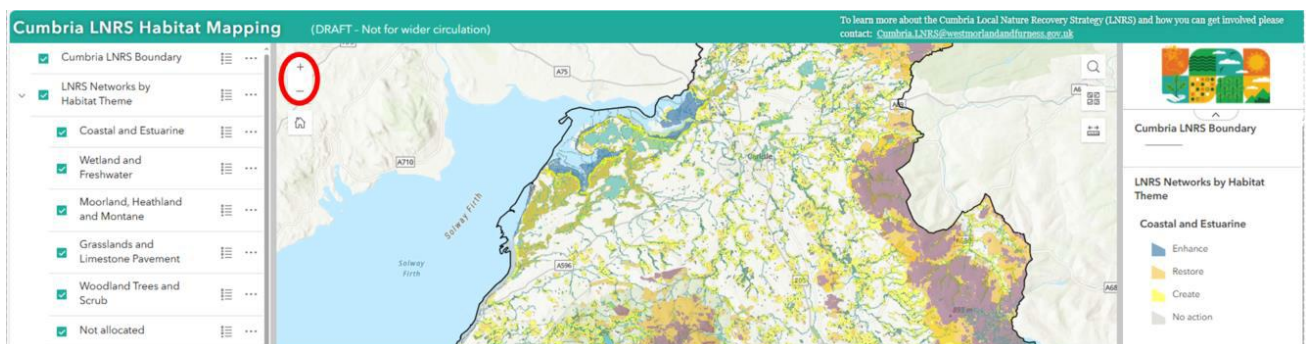
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Exploring the Local Habitat Map

You can explore the map to see where has been identified as being of particular importance for biodiversity, or as having the opportunity for habitat enhancement, restoration or creation in your local area.

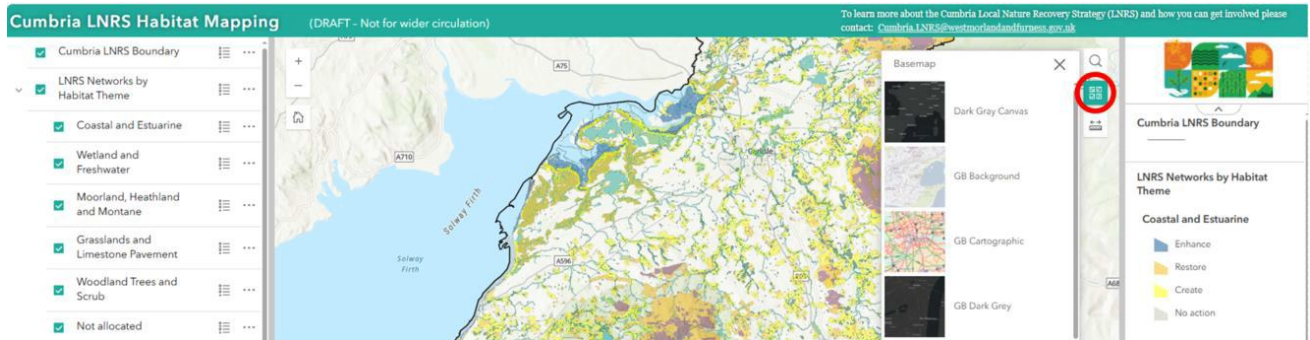
The map is designed to identify landscape scale opportunities. As a result there is a visibility limit on the level that you can zoom to. If the map disappears, zoom out a bit. You can **zoom in and out** using the scroll wheel on your mouse or the '+' and '-' buttons in the top left-hand corner of the map.



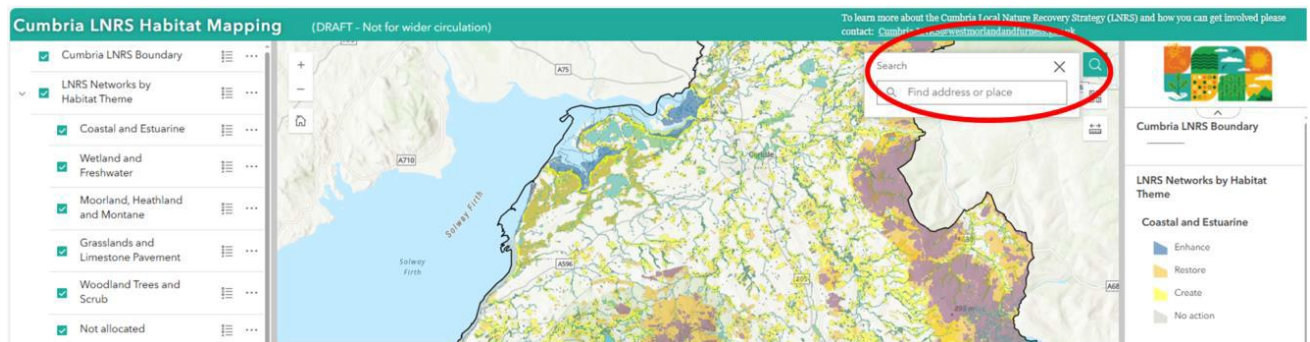
The map automatically loads with Esri's topographic map as the background. You can **change the background** map to any one of a number of open-source maps by clicking on

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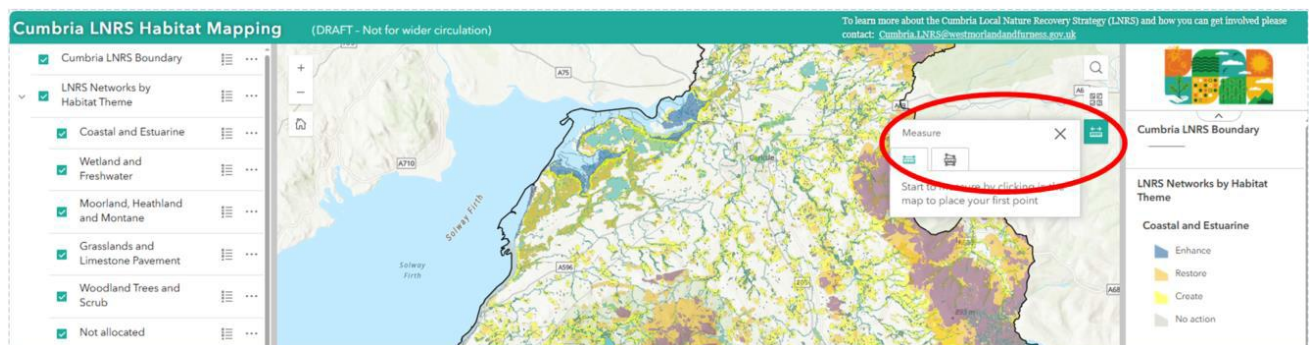
the middle button in the right-hand corner of the map and then selecting your preferred background.



You can **search for a specific location** on the map by clicking on the search button in the top right-hand corner and typing a place name or postcode into the search box.



You can **measure distances** or areas on the map by clicking on the ruler icon in the right-hand corner of the map.



Exploring the local nature recovery network

When you have found your area of interest, you can click anywhere on the map to see what **measures** have been identified for that location. A pop out box will appear, listing a range of information:

Habitat category

This is the broad habitat theme that the measure applies to, and links directly to a chapter of the Statement of Biodiversity Priorities, which is the written part of the LNRS.

Action Category

This is the action category to which the measure applies. This will either be enhance, restore, or create.

Measure ID

This is the Measure number, that can be cross referenced with the list of measures in the Statement of Biodiversity Priorities.

Measure Description

This is the wording of the potential measure, as it appears in the Statement of Biodiversity Priorities. Where the potential measure description displayed on the map contains the [...] symbol, additional detail on this potential measure can be found in the Statement of Biodiversity Priorities.

Habitat Network

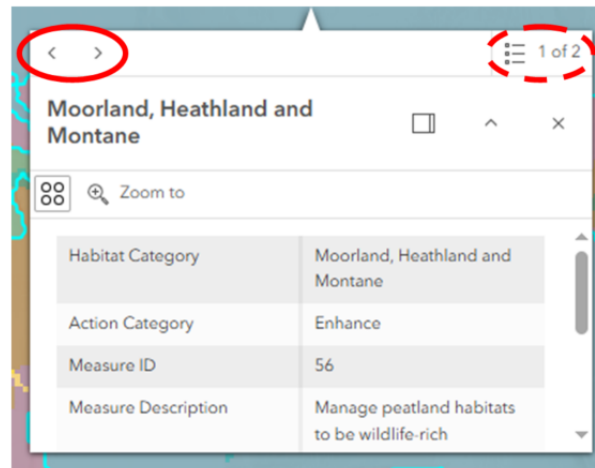
This refers to which part of the Natural England Habitat Network Model has been used when creating the map.

Notes

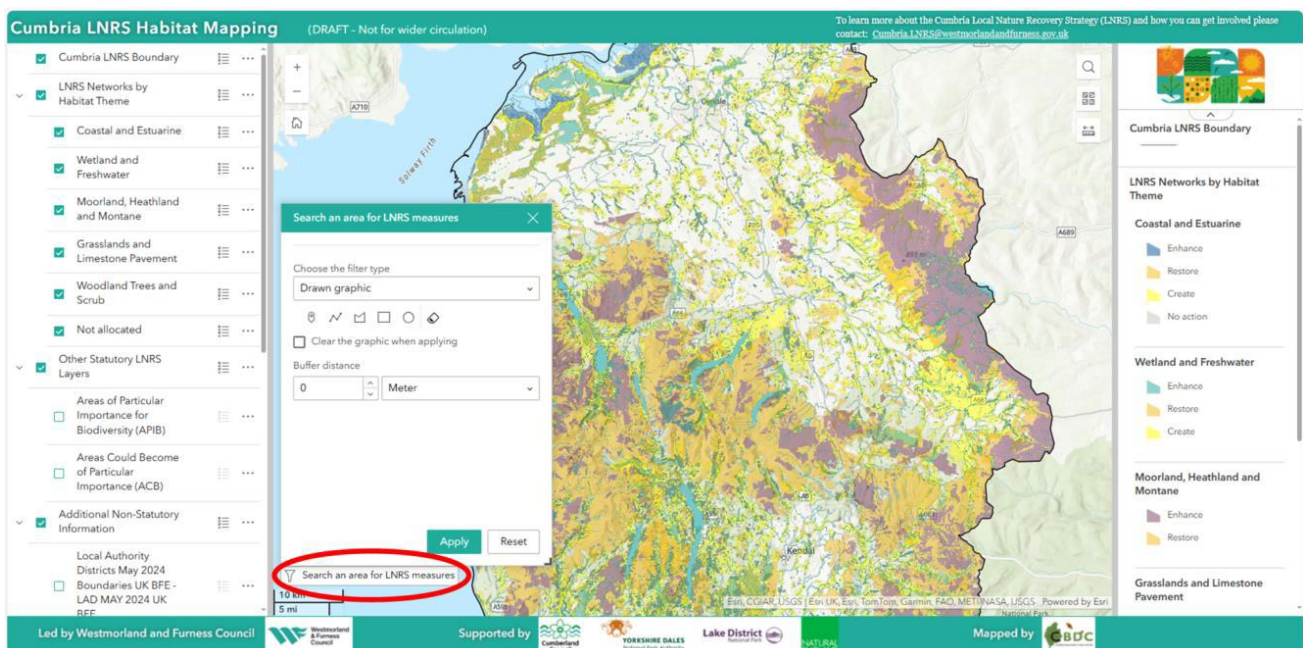
The contains any additional comments that are relevant to the area selected.

If there is **more than one potential measure** mapped where you have clicked, the dialogue box will show '1 of XX' in the bottom or top right-hand corner (red dashed circle on the image below). Use the arrows in the bottom or top left-hand corner to view the different potential measures available (circled red on the image below).

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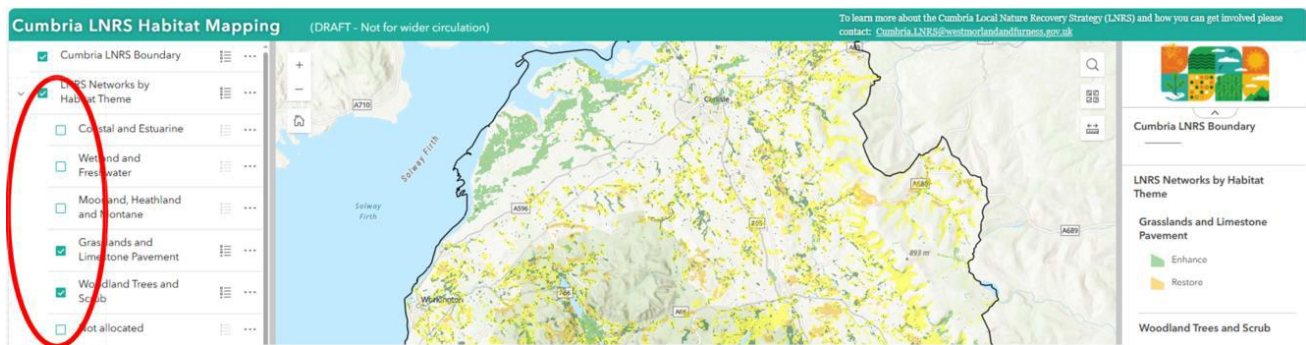
You can view a list of all of the measures for a particular area by clicking on the filter button in the bottom left corner of the map and selecting the area you would like to search by **dropping a pin or drawing a shape** on the map.



If you are interested in exploring the opportunities for a particular habitat theme, you can de-select the habitats that you do not wish to have displayed on the map. You can also **hide all layers** by de-selecting the 'LNRS networks by habitat theme' layer. **Both the 'parent' layer and the 'child' layer must be ticked for the layers to be visible.**

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You can then zoom in and out on the map and click to view the available potential measures for your selected nature recovery network(s).

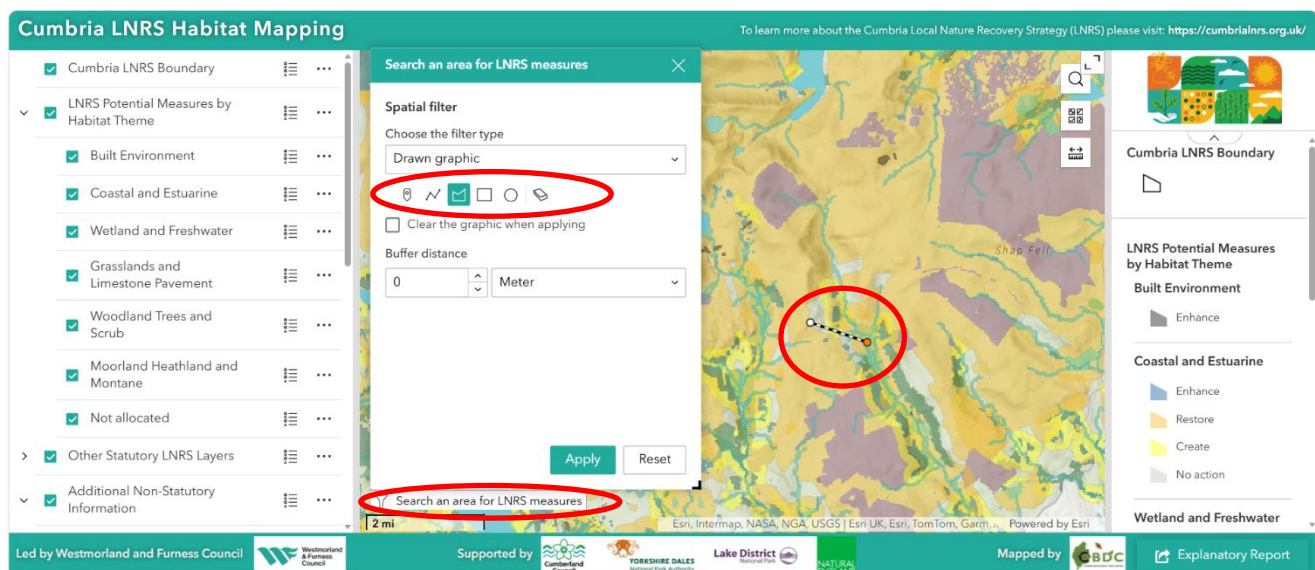


Drawing a shape on the map and exporting data

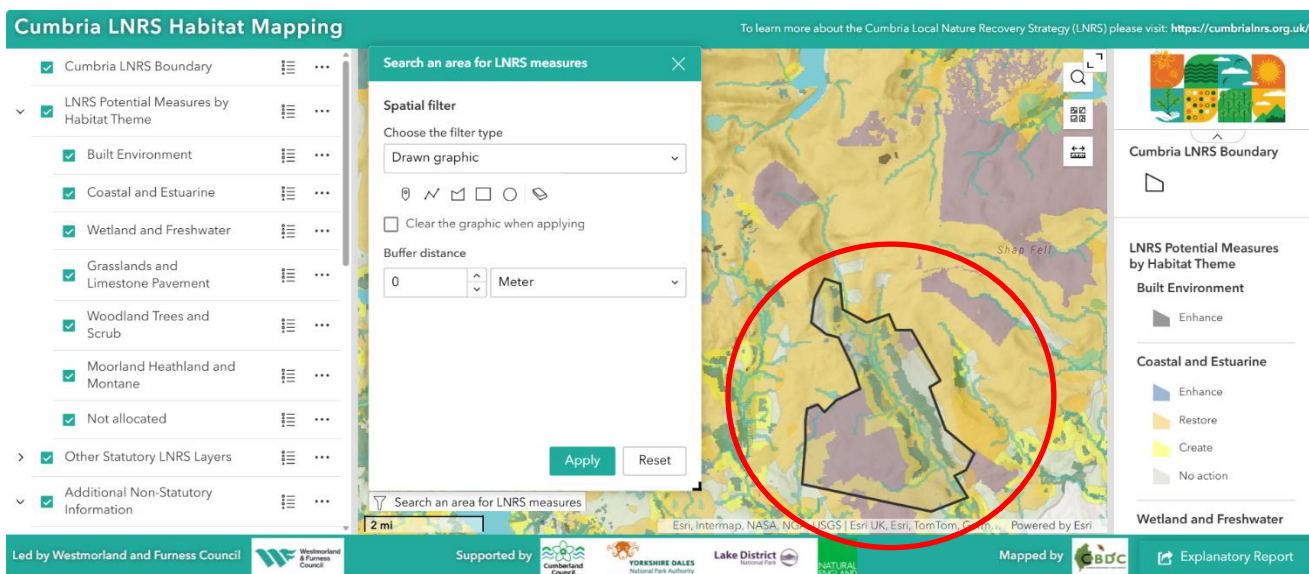
Drawing a shape on the map

To draw a shape on the map to search the potential measures that fall within that shape, first make sure the 'LNRS Potential Measures by Habitat Theme' layer is selected, navigate to your area of interest on the map, then click 'Search an area for LNRS measures' at the bottom left hand of the map.

There are options to drop a point or draw a line, polygon, square or circle. To draw a polygon around an area of interest, select the polygon icon. To start drawing your shape, click once, then move your mouse to the next point on your shape and click again. Keep moving your mouse and clicking once until your shape is complete. You can zoom in and out and move the map around between clicks if you need to adjust your view. If you make a mistake, you can click the 'clear all' button. To finish your shape double click.

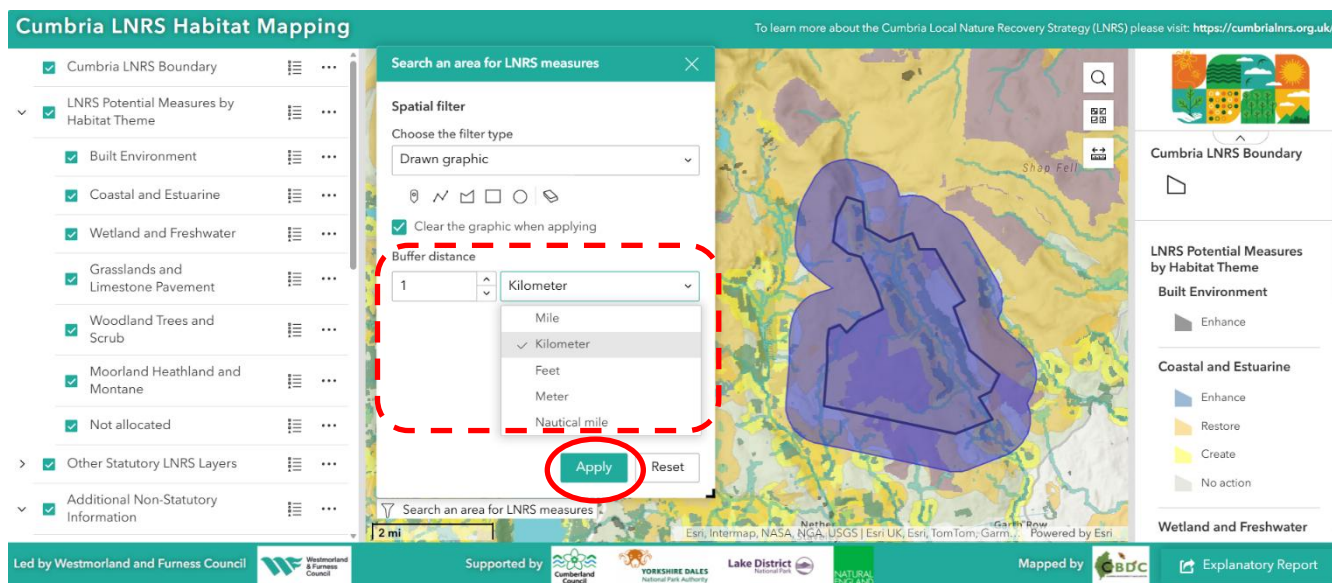


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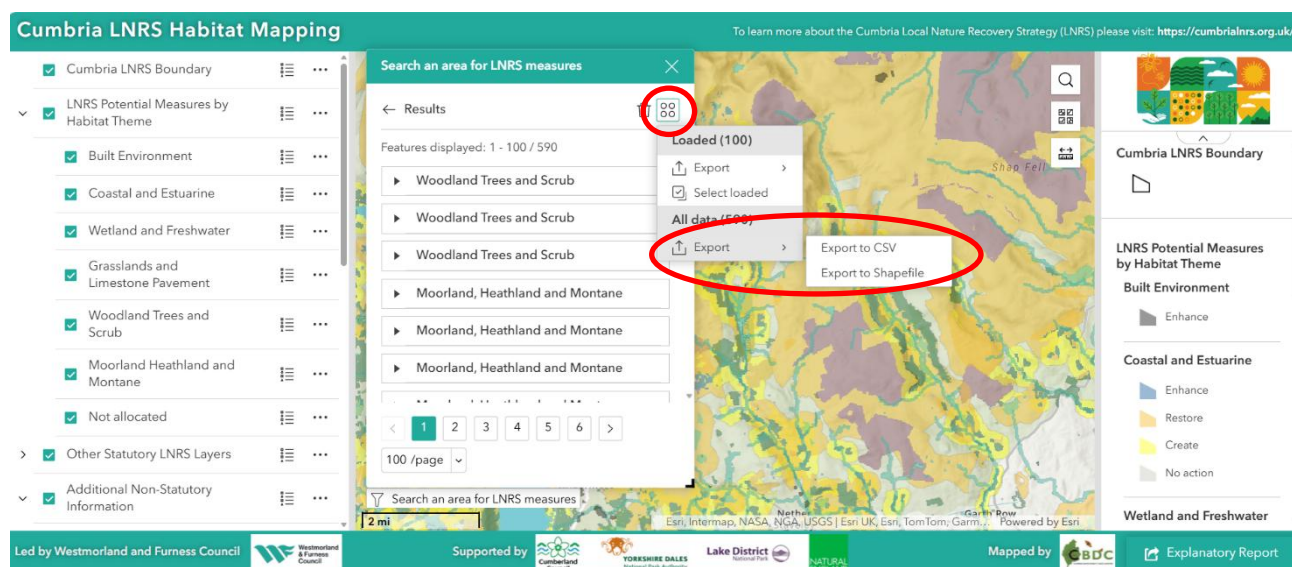
You can also choose to include measures within a certain distance from the boundary of your shape but adding a buffer.

Once you're happy, click 'apply' to bring up the search results.



Exporting the potential measures

You can also export your results. This can be helpful if you want to do some further analysis on the data or view the potential measures in your own GIS software. To do this, click on the 4 dots in the top right corner of the results pop-up. You will then have the option to export to a CSV or Shapefile.



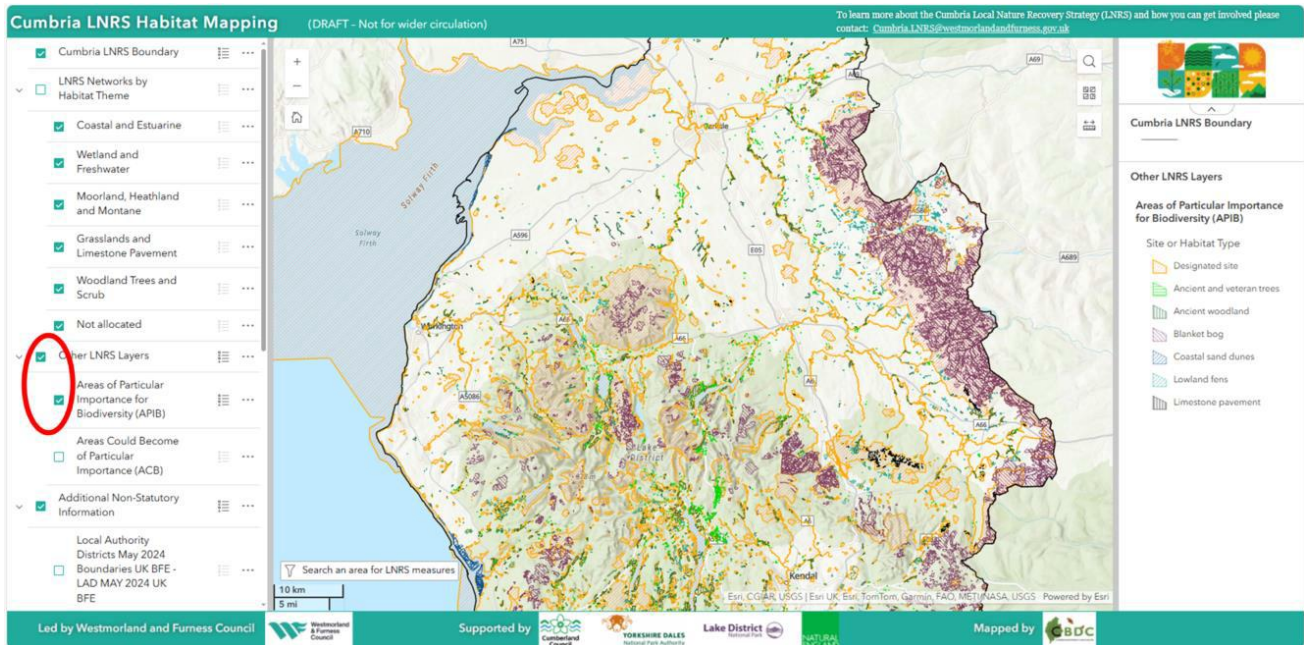
Individual Habitat Networks

Once published, individual habitat networks will be available to download for specific wildlife-rich habitats (such as meadows, or lowland raised bog). These will follow the same format as the overall and habitat theme maps and will be able to be downloaded as a GIS file by clicking on the 'Download Habitat Networks' button in the bottom right of the map.

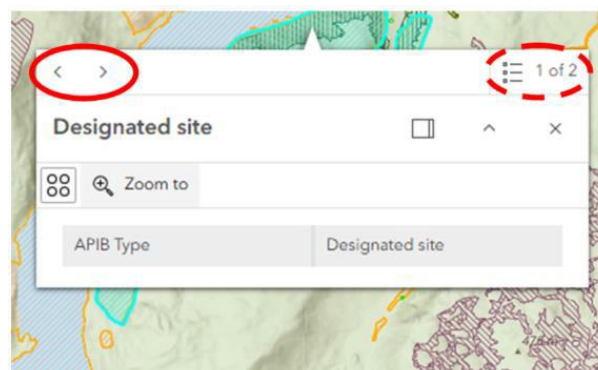
Exploring Areas of Particular Importance for Biodiversity

When you have found your area of interest, you can view whether that area is of particular importance for biodiversity by selecting the '**Areas of Particular Importance for Biodiversity**' layer, under the 'other Statutory LNRS Layers' parent layer. **Both the 'parent' layer and the 'child' layer must be ticked for the layers to be visible.**

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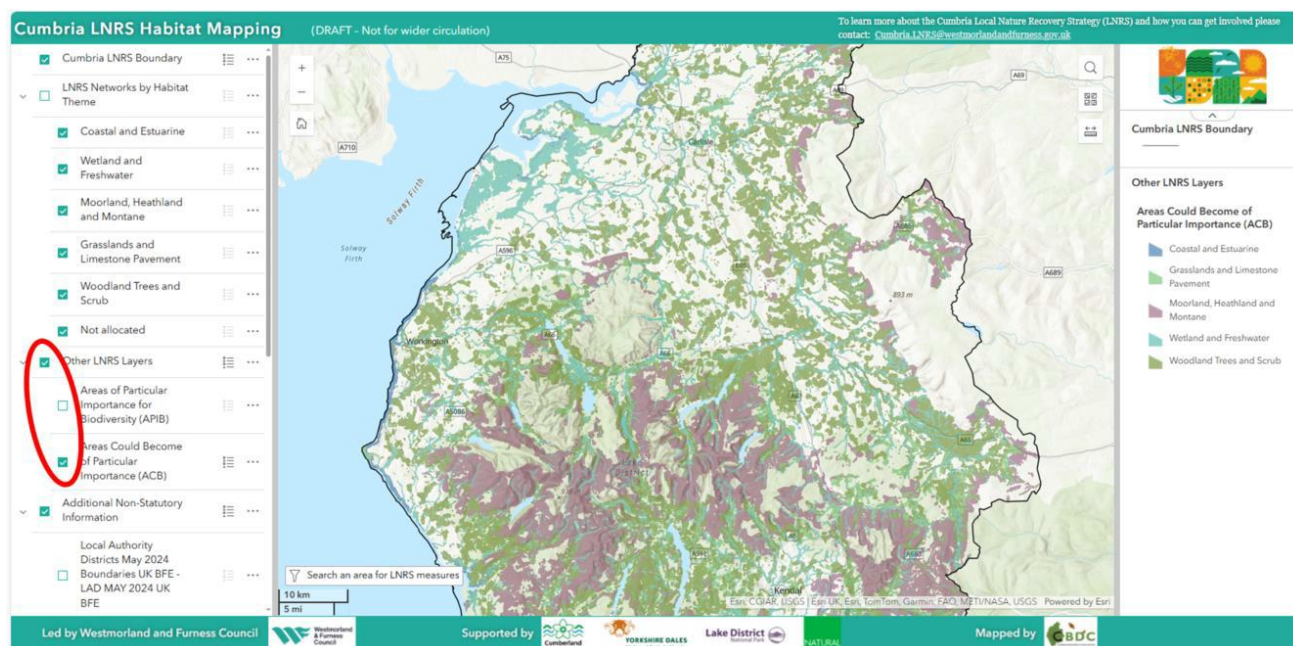


Click anywhere on the map to see what areas of particular importance for biodiversity have been identified for that location. If there is more than one criteria met where you have clicked, the dialogue box will show '1 of XX' in the bottom or top right-hand corner (red dashed circle on the image below). Use the arrows in the bottom or top left-hand corner to **view the different potential measures available** (circled red on the image below).



Exploring Areas that Could Become of Particular Importance

When you have found your area of interest, you can view whether that area could become of particular importance by selecting the '**Areas that Could Become of Importance for Biodiversity**' layer, under the 'other Statutory LNRS Layers parent layer'. **Both the 'parent' layer and the 'child' layer must be ticked for the layers to be visible.**



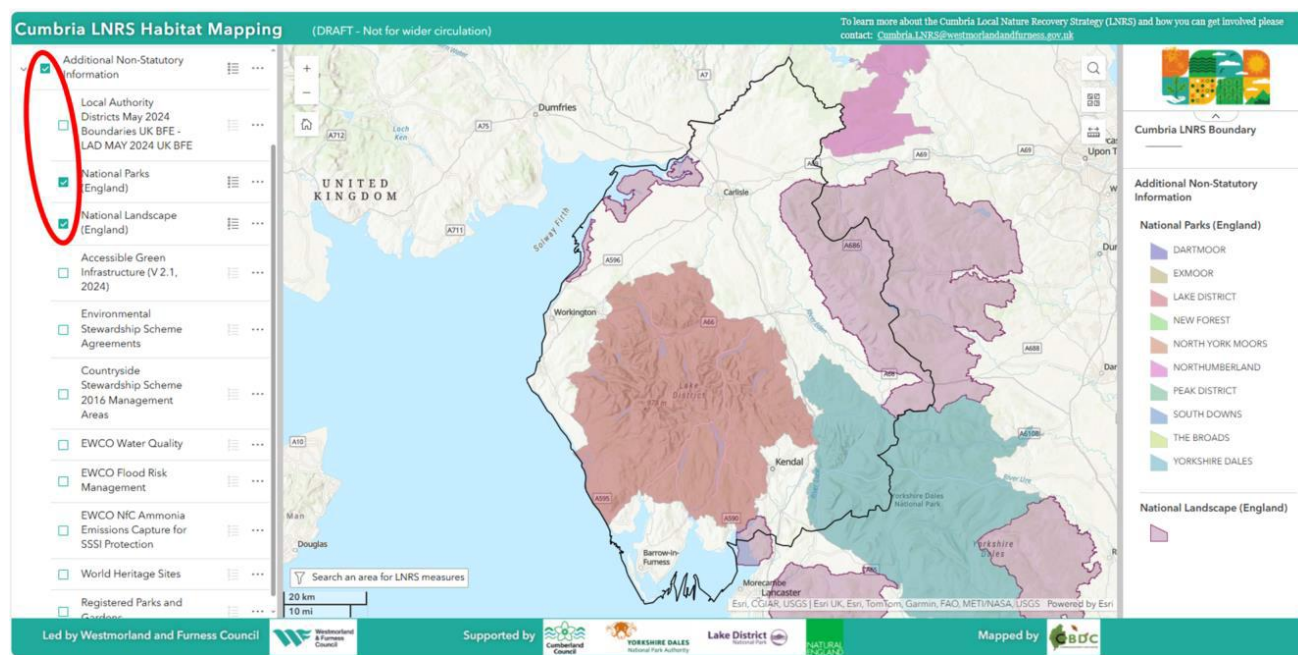
Additional Non-Statutory Information

There are several other layers provided below the statutory LNRS layers. These provide **additional useful open-source information** that can be used alongside the habitat networks to gather further information on opportunities and constraints.

These include Local Authority boundaries, National Parks, National Landscapes, World Heritage Sites, Statutory Designated Site details, Environmental/Countryside Stewardship Scheme agreement areas, and datasets on wider environmental benefits. Where possible these layers have been linked to their source so that they automatically update, but please note this may not be possible for all datasets and the original data provider should always be consulted for the most up-to date information.

The layers can be turned on and off by selecting the '**Additional non-Statutory Information**' layer followed by the appropriate sub-layers. **Both the 'parent' layer and the 'child' layer must be ticked for the layers to be visible.**

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Local Authority Districts

This displays the boundaries for Cumberland and Westmorland & Furness councils, as well as other UK local authority areas.

National Parks

This contains details on the extent, name, and designation for each of our National Parks.

National Landscapes

This contains details on the extent, name, and designation for each of our National Landscapes.

Accessible Green Infrastructure

This shows the location of natural greenspace which is thought to be publicly accessible. Please note that this is a static copy of the dataset provided by Natural England and may not be the most up to date version.

Environmental Stewardship Schemes (ESS)

This contains details on the extent of land currently in a scheme, and the type of scheme signed up for.

Countryside Stewardship Schemes (CSS)

This contains details on the extent of land currently in a scheme, and the type of scheme signed up for.

EWCO Water Quality

This shows the areas that have been identified where woodland creation could contribute towards water quality objectives.

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EWCO Flood Risk Management

This shows the areas that have been identified where woodland creation could contribute towards flood risk management objectives.

EWCO NfC Ammonia Emissions Capture for SSSI Protection

This shows the areas that have been identified where woodland creation could contribute towards air quality objectives for SSSI protection.

World Heritage Sites

This contains details on the extent, name, and designation for each of our World Heritage Sites.

Registered Parks and Gardens

This contains details on the extent, name, and designation for each of our registered parks and gardens.