

**St. Anne's on the Sea  
Neighbourhood Development Plan**

**Sustainability Report**

**January 2016**

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## 1.0: Introduction

The St. Anne's on the Sea NDP is a new type of planning document. It is part of the Government's new approach to planning, which aims to give local people more say about the future of their area. This is set out in the 'Localism Act' that came into force in April 2012.

The NDP is an opportunity for local people to have control over the future of the town, including:

- setting out how the character of the town can be protected and improved
- protecting our green spaces, and community facilities
- protecting the town from uncoordinated speculative development

The NDP has been prepared by the St. Anne's on the sea Town Council. However, it is important to emphasise that it belongs to the people of St. Anne's. The vision, objectives and policies within it are based on extensive consultation with local people, businesses and others with an interest in the parish. A separate consultation report is available on our [website](#) that explains what consultation has been carried out and what people have said.

This report is not intended as a formal 'Sustainability Appraisal', which the town council does not consider to be required. In line with Government advice however (which is set out in more detail below), this report seeks to demonstrate that, in forming the Pre-submission Neighbourhood Plan, care has been taken to ensure that the principles of sustainable development, as defined by the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), are considered throughout the plan making process and that the final Neighbourhood Plan has considered all aspects of economic, social and environmental sustainability in its production.

The process and findings of this report do however commonly refer to an 'appraisal'. Where this is the case, regard should be had to the statement above.

Strategic Environmental Assessment is a requirement of the EC Directive on the assessment of the effects of certain plans and programmes on the environment (Directive 2001/42/EC) known as the Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Directive. This is transposed into UK law through the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004 which applies to plans with significant environmental effects (SEA Regulations). Throughout this document where sustainability appraisal is referred to, the requirements of SEA Directive have been incorporated.

## What is the Neighbourhood Plan and how does it fit into the planning system?

The planning system in England is based on legislation, planning policy and guidance. Policies are rules that set what development can and can't do. National planning policies are set by the government for the whole of England and by Local Planning Authorities for their local areas.

The Localism Act 2011 (Part 6, Chapter 3) introduced neighbourhood planning, including provision for neighbourhood development plans. If developed by the local planning authority, in this case St. Anne's Town Council, and approved by referendum, this Neighbourhood Development Plan forms part of the statutory Development Plan and must be taken into account by Fylde Borough Council when making decisions on planning applications.

The Neighbourhood Plan gives local people greater ownership of the plans and policies that affect their area.

Figure 1.1 shows how the Neighbourhood Plan fits into the planning system

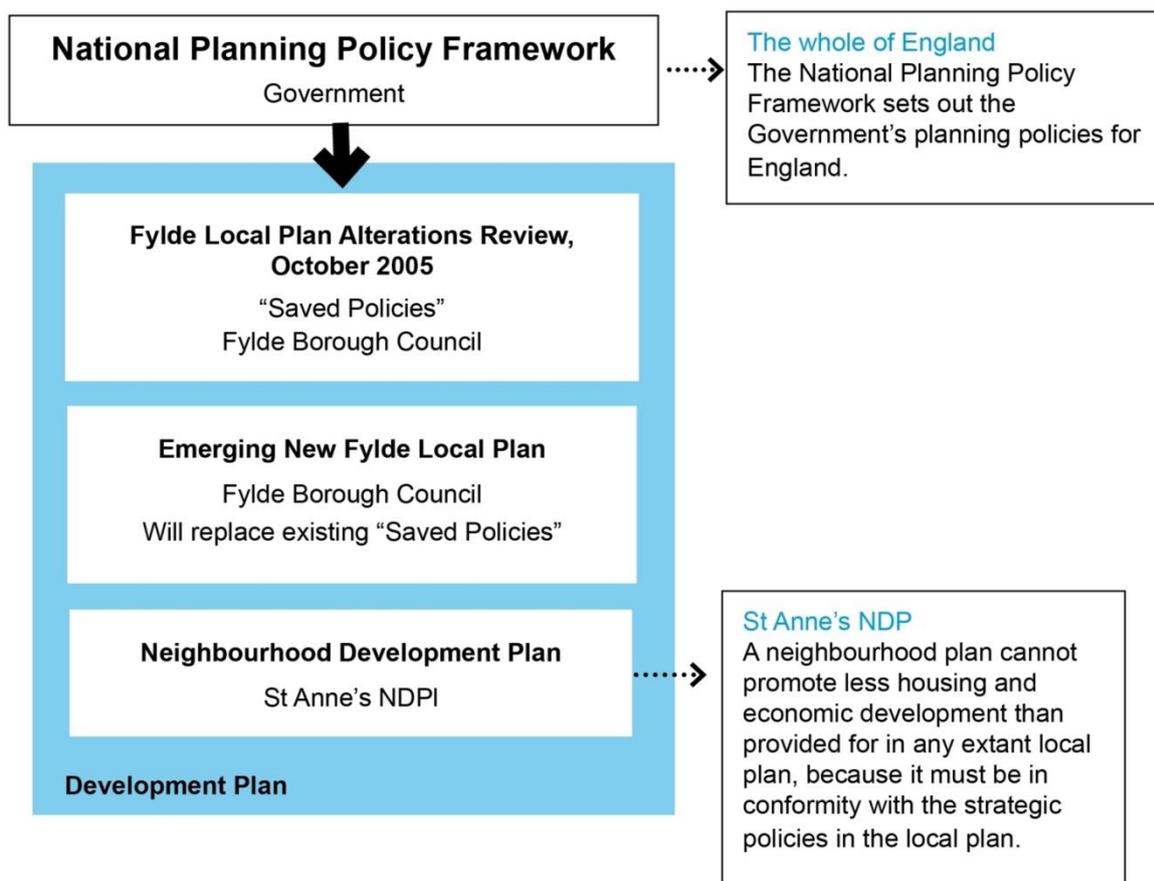


Figure 1.1: How the Neighbourhood Plan fits into the planning system

## How the Draft Plan has been prepared

The process we followed in preparing the Neighbourhood Development Plan has been informed by the appropriate regulations and guidance. Figure 1.2 overleaf highlights the key stages.

Work on the Plan started in February 2014 and has involved the following:

- February 2014 - Initial Meetings with Key Partners and Stakeholders
- February to April 2014 - Preparation of [Neighbourhood Profile Document](#) (a comprehensive review of the background to and evidence informing the Plan)
- 16<sup>th</sup> April to 28<sup>th</sup> May 2014 - Initial Consultation on [Draft Aims and Issues](#)
- September 2014 - Consideration of Report of Consultation and [Issues and Options Report by Town Council](#)
- 15<sup>th</sup> June and 26<sup>th</sup> July 2015 - Consultation on Pre-Submission Plan
- October 2015 - consideration of consultation responses and revisions to the Plan.

All these documents are available to view and download [here](#)

Figure 1.2: The NDP Process

*What we have done*

Investigated background information to understand St. Anne's

- We reviewed existing documents and plans to provide a basis for our policies (the 'Evidence Base')
- We consulted with statutory and other organisations

We consulted local people, and businesses to understand the key issues, objectives and vision for the Plan

We have prepared a range of draft policies to address the key issues, and help meet the vision and objectives agreed

We have considered how the Neighbourhood Plan Policies will be implemented

We have considered which policies relate to specific areas or site

*How it informed the Plan*

We used the information to prepare a separate Neighbourhood Profile Document which is summarised in Section 3: St. Anne's Today

Based on our discussions with Local people and businesses we set out the Key Issues, Objectives and Vision of the Plan

We have set out a range of draft policies in Section 6 focussed on environment, community and health, local character, economy, and getting out and about.

We have set out a range of actions for implementing policies in the separate Delivery Strategy Document

We have shown policies which relate to a specific area or site on the Draft Proposals Map

## 2.0: Background to this Sustainability Report

### Meeting the statutory requirements and the basic conditions

The necessary requirements imposed by statute have been met:

- 1 The neighbourhood development plan (NDP) area is the parish of St. Anne's on the Sea. The Town Council is authorised to act in respect of this area (Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (TCPA) s61F(1) as read with the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (PCPA) s38C(2)(a).
- 2 The NDP specifies the period for which it is to have effect, namely 2015 to 2025, does not include provision about development that is excluded development (as defined in TCPA s61K), and does not relate to more than one neighbourhood area (PCPA s38B(1)).
- 3 No other neighbourhood development plan has been made for the parish of St. Anne's on the sea or any part of it (PCPA s38B(2)),
- 4 There is no conflict with PCPA sections 38A and 38B (TCPA Sch 4B paragraph 8(1)(b) and PCPA s38C(5)(b)).

The Plan has met the basic conditions specified in Schedule 4B to the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (inserted by the Localism Act 2011) as varied for neighbourhood development plans, namely:

- (a) Having regard to national policies and advice contained in guidance issued by the Secretary of State, it is appropriate to make the Plan,
- (b) The making of the Plan contributes to the achievement of sustainable development,
- (c) The making of the Plan is in general conformity with the strategic policies contained in the development plan for the area of the authority (or any part of that area),
- (d) The making of the Plan does not breach, and is otherwise compatible with, EU obligations.

In addition, the combined effect of TCPA Sch 4B paragraphs 8(6) and 10(3)(b) and the Human Rights Act 1998 means that the Plan must be compatible with the convention rights contained in the European Convention of Human Rights and in those of its protocols that the UK has ratified.

A separate 'Basic Conditions Statement', which will accompany the submission Plan will set out how this Plan meets statutory requirements and the basic conditions.

## Sustainability Appraisal

### Habitats Regulations Assessment and Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) screening

Where a Neighbourhood Plan could lead to significant environmental effects it will be necessary to screen the Plan in relation to the Habitats & Species Regulations (as amended) 2010 (the 'Habitats Regulations') and the Environment Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004. One of the basic conditions that will be tested at Examination is whether the making of the plan is compatible with European obligations and this includes requirements relating to the Habitats Directive and SEA Directive.

Strategic Environmental Assessment must be carried out for any plan or programme which sets the framework for land use and future development. It seeks to ensure that a high level of protection is given to the environment by integrating environmental considerations into the process of preparing plans and programmes.

The Town Council sought a screening opinion from Fylde Borough Council to determine whether or not the proposed content of the St. Anne's on the Sea Neighbourhood Plan requires a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) in accordance with the European Directive 2001/42/EC and associated Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004 (see Appendix 3). The Screening opinion concluded that the proposals for St. Anne's on the Sea Neighbourhood Plan will result in positive direct and indirect environmental effects, therefore any cumulative impacts will also be beneficial. The Plan does not promote major new allocations, the environmental impact of the proposals are likely to be minimal due to the nature/ quantum and scale of the development proposed. Therefore it concluded that, the current proposals are unlikely to have a significant environmental effect and therefore do not need to be subject to a full SEA. The three statutory consultees have agreed the conclusion of the screening determination.

Neighbourhood Development Plans that are likely to have a significant effect on European Sites (habitats) must be subject to an appropriate assessment. The St. Anne's on the sea Neighbourhood Development Plan would not have any significant adverse effects on designated landscapes or on national or European protected sites. It would not therefore be likely to require an assessment under Article 6 or 7 of the Habitats directive. Fylde Council issued a screening opinion in December 2015 (see Appendix 4). It concluded as follows:-

*"The proposals for St. Anne's on the Sea Neighbourhood Plan will result in positive direct and indirect environmental effects. The Plan does not promote major new allocations, the environmental impact of the proposals are likely to be minimal due to the nature/ quantum and scale of the development proposed. It is considered that there is unlikely to be an in combination effect from all of the policies in the emerging SANP. Therefore, the current proposals are unlikely to have a significant environmental effect*

*and therefore do not need to be subject to a full Appropriate Assessment. Natural England have agreed the screening determination conclusion".*

### National policy and guidance from the Secretary of State

The [National Planning Policy Framework](#) (NPPF) sets out the Government's economic, environmental and social planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied. The policies set out in this framework apply to the preparation of local and neighbourhood plans and to development management decisions. There is a separate waste planning policy statement which remains in place until the National Waste Management Plan is published.

This national policy context is set out in detail in the Neighbourhood Profile, with the main principles set out in Chapter 3 of that document and detailed guidance in the subsequent 'thematic' chapters of that document.

The Government has produced [National Planning Practice Guidance](#) to set out its approach to planning.

The section of the NPPG on neighbourhood planning provides advice on the neighbourhood planning system introduced by the Localism Act including key stages and decisions (e.g. deciding neighbourhood areas, the legal tests for neighbourhood plans, and the process of independent examination and referendum).

Paragraph 002 advises that communities have choices to achieve the outcomes they want through other planning routes, not just through the neighbourhood planning approach. It says:

*Neighbourhood planning is not a legal requirement but a right which communities in England can choose to use. Communities may decide that they could achieve the outcomes they want to see through other planning routes, such as incorporating their proposals for the neighbourhood into the Local Plan, or through other planning mechanisms such as Local Development Orders and supplementary planning documents or through pre-application consultation on development proposals. Communities and local planning authorities should discuss the different choices communities have to achieving their ambitions for their neighbourhood.*

Paragraph 003 emphasises the benefits of Neighbourhood Planning. It says:  
*Neighbourhood planning enables communities to play a much stronger role in shaping the areas in which they live and work and in supporting new development proposals. This is because unlike the parish, village or town plans that communities may have prepared, a neighbourhood plan forms part of the development plan and sits alongside the Local Plan prepared by the local planning authority. Decisions on planning applications will be made using both the Local Plan and the neighbourhood plan, and any other material considerations.*

*Neighbourhood planning provides the opportunity for communities to set out a positive vision for how they want their community to develop over the next ten, fifteen, twenty years in ways that meet identified local need and make sense for local people. They can put in place planning policies that will help deliver that vision or grant planning permission for the development they want to see.*

*To help deliver their vision communities that take a proactive approach by drawing up a neighbourhood plan or Order and secure the consent of local people in a referendum, will benefit from 25 percent of the revenues from the Community Infrastructure Levy arising from the development that takes place in their area. Communities without a parish or town council will still benefit from this incentive. If there is no Parish or Town Council the charging authority will retain the Levy receipts but should engage with the communities where development has taken place and agree with them how best to spend the neighbourhood funding. Charging authorities should set out clearly and transparently their approach to engaging with neighbourhoods using their regular communication tools e.g. website, newsletters, etc. The use of neighbourhood funds should therefore match priorities expressed by local communities, including priorities set out formally in neighbourhood plans."*

Paragraph 040 advises on the evidence needed to support a neighbourhood plan or Order. It says:

*"While there are prescribed documents that must be submitted with a neighbourhood plan or Order there is no 'tick box' list of evidence required for neighbourhood planning. Proportionate, robust evidence should support the choices made and the approach taken. The evidence should be drawn upon to explain succinctly the intention and rationale of the policies in the draft neighbourhood plan or the proposals in an Order.*

*A local planning authority should share relevant evidence, including that gathered to support its own plan-making, with a qualifying body."*

Paragraph 041 advises on the drafting of neighbourhood plan policies. It says:

*"A policy in a neighbourhood plan should be clear and unambiguous. It should be drafted with sufficient clarity that a decision maker can apply it consistently and with confidence when determining planning applications. It should be concise, precise and supported by appropriate evidence. It should be distinct to reflect and respond to the unique characteristics and planning context of the specific neighbourhood area for which it has been prepared."*

Paragraph 042 addresses whether a neighbourhood plan can allocate sites for development. It says:

*"A neighbourhood plan can allocate sites for development. A qualifying body should carry out an appraisal of options and an assessment of individual sites against clearly identified criteria."*

Paragraph 043 addresses the potential conflict that might occur if a local planning authority is also intending to allocate sites in the same neighbourhood area. It advises: *"If a local planning authority is also intending to allocate sites in the same neighbourhood area the local planning authority should avoid duplicating planning processes that will apply to the neighbourhood area. It should work constructively with a qualifying body to enable a neighbourhood plan to make timely progress. A local planning authority should share evidence with those preparing the neighbourhood plan, in order for example, that every effort can be made to meet identified local need through the neighbourhood planning process."*

Paragraph 044 provides guidance as to whether a neighbourhood plan can allocate additional or alternative sites to those in a Local Plan. It says:

*"A neighbourhood plan can allocate additional sites to those in a Local Plan where this is supported by evidence to demonstrate need above that identified in the Local Plan.*

*A neighbourhood plan can propose allocating alternative sites to those in a Local Plan, but a qualifying body should discuss with the local planning authority why it considers the Local Plan allocations no longer appropriate.*

*The resulting draft neighbourhood plan must meet the basic conditions if it is to proceed. National planning policy states that it should support the strategic development needs set out in the Local Plan, plan positively to support local development and should not promote less development than set out in the Local Plan or undermine its strategic policies (see paragraph 16 and paragraph 184 of the National Planning Policy Framework). Nor should it be used to constrain the delivery of a strategic site allocated for development in the Local Plan.*

*Should there be a conflict between a policy in a neighbourhood plan and a policy in a Local Plan, section 38(5) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires that the conflict must be resolved in favour of the policy which is contained in the last document to become part of the development plan."*

Paragraph 045 addresses whether a neighbourhood plan should consider infrastructure. It advises:

*"A qualifying body may wish to consider what infrastructure needs to be provided in their neighbourhood area alongside development such as homes, shops or offices. Infrastructure is needed to support development and ensure that a neighbourhood can grow in a sustainable way.*

*The following may be important considerations for a qualifying body to consider when addressing infrastructure in a neighbourhood plan:*

- *what additional infrastructure may be needed to enable development proposed in a neighbourhood plan to be delivered in a sustainable way;*

- *how any additional infrastructure requirements might be delivered;*
- *what impact the infrastructure requirements may have on the viability of a proposal in a draft neighbourhood plan and therefore its delivery;*
- *what are the likely impacts of proposed site allocation options or policies on physical infrastructure and on the capacity of existing services, which could help shape decisions on the best site choices.*

*Qualifying bodies should engage infrastructure providers (e.g. utility companies, transport infrastructure providers and local health commissioners) in this process, advised by the local planning authority."*

Paragraph: 046 advises on what a qualifying body should do if it identifies a need for new or enhanced infrastructure? It says that it should set out in the draft neighbourhood plan the prioritised infrastructure required to address the demands of the development identified in the plan.

Paragraph 066 advises that

*"Throughout the process of developing a neighbourhood plan or Order a qualifying body should consider how it will demonstrate that its neighbourhood plan or Order will meet the basic conditions that must be met if the plan or order is to be successful at independent examination."*

### Contributing to the achievement of sustainable development

The UK Sustainable Development Strategy "Securing the Future" describes a common purpose for Sustainable Development:

*"The goal of sustainable development is to enable all people throughout the world to satisfy their basic needs and enjoy a better quality of life, without compromising the quality of life for future generations."*

The UK Sustainable Development Strategy 2005 set a new framework for sustainable development and describes how this should be pursued. Five Guiding Principles are identified:

- Living within environmental limits;
- Ensuring a Strong, Healthy and Just Society;
- Achieving a Sustainable Economy;
- Promoting Good Governance; and
- Using Sound Science Responsibly

The Government's approach to sustainable development as set out in the National Planning Policy Framework is about enabling development to cater for the needs of current generations, ensuring that growth doesn't mean worse lives for future generations.

Paragraph 3 advises that the purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development.

Paragraph 7 states that there are 3 dimensions to sustainable development. These are an **economic role** (contributing to the economy), a **social role** (supporting communities) and an **environmental role** (protecting and enhancing the natural and built environment). Paragraph 8 says that these factors are mutually dependent.

Paragraph 9 says that sustainable development includes making it easier for jobs to be created, replacing poor design with better design and widening the choice of high quality homes.

Paragraph 14 says that there is a presumption in favour of sustainable development. For plan making this means that:-

- Local planning authorities should positively seek opportunities to meet the development needs of their area;
- Local Plans should meet objectively assessed needs, with sufficient flexibility to adapt to rapid change, unless:
  - any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in the Framework taken as a whole; or
  - specific policies in the Framework indicate development should be restricted.

Paragraph 15 says that policies in Local Plans should follow the approach of the presumption in favour of sustainable development so that it is clear that development which is sustainable can be approved without delay. All plans should be based upon and reflect the presumption in favour of sustainable development, with clear policies that will guide how the presumption should be applied locally.

Paragraph 16 says that the application of the presumption will have implications for how communities engage in neighbourhood planning. Critically, it will mean that neighbourhoods should:

- develop plans that support the strategic development needs set out in Local Plans, including policies for housing and economic development;
- plan positively to support local development, shaping and directing development in their area that is outside the strategic elements of the Local Plan; and
- identify opportunities to use Neighbourhood Development Orders to enable developments that are consistent with their neighbourhood plan to proceed.

Paragraph: 072 of the NPPG advises on what a qualifying body must do to demonstrate that a draft Neighbourhood Plan or Order contributes to sustainable development. It emphasises the planning principle that all plan-making and decision-taking should help to achieve sustainable development. It further advises that:

*"A qualifying body must demonstrate how its plan or Order will contribute to improvements in environmental, economic and social conditions or that consideration has been given to how any potential adverse effects arising from the proposals may be prevented, reduced or offset (referred to as mitigation measures).*

*In order to demonstrate that a draft neighbourhood plan or Order contributes to sustainable development, sufficient and proportionate evidence should be presented on how the draft neighbourhood plan or Order guides development to sustainable solutions. There is no legal requirement for a neighbourhood plan to have a sustainability appraisal. However, qualifying bodies may find this a useful approach for demonstrating how their draft plan or order meets the basic condition. Material produced as part of the Sustainability Appraisal of the Local Plan may be relevant to a neighbourhood plan."*

### The Current Position in Fylde

As part of the Emerging Local Plan preparation process, a combined interim Sustainability Appraisal (SA) and Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) was undertaken. The SA process commenced with pre-scoping consultation undertaken in November 2005. Following this an SA Scoping Report was prepared in 2006 which was also consulted upon. In 2010 an updated SA Scoping Report was prepared (that took into consideration all previous consultations) and was issued to statutory consultees. An SA report accompanied the Fylde Borough Council emerging Local Plan preferred option published in June 2013. That sustainability appraisal has informed this paper.

The SA Scoping Report referenced a considerable number of relevant Plans, Programmes and Environmental Protection Objectives that informed its analysis. These reports (and any more up to date references) have been reviewed, and have informed the overall analysis of this report.

## 3.0: The Plan: Vision, Objectives, Issues and Policies

### The objectives and vision of the Neighbourhood Plan

The adopted Fylde Borough Local Plan sets out the Plan's strategy as having the following broad goal for the district as a whole:

*"To provide for the necessary growth and development of the Borough in ways which are sustainable and which seek to preserve and enhance the quality of environment for those living and/or working in the Borough and for visitors."*

The Revised Preferred Option 2015 sets out the council's vision for Fylde, as follows:-

*"By 2032, Fylde will be a welcoming place with highly skilled and healthy communities. There will be a diverse and prosperous culture and an economy that encourages*

*everyone to contribute. Employment opportunities will have been diversified and young people be retained in the job market in Fylde. Access to healthy lifestyle choices, local health care facilities, good education and lifelong learning facilities will have been improved. Significant further educational opportunities and leisure facilities for young people will have been provided. Communities will have the opportunity to access public services, good jobs and decent and affordable homes, close to where they live, through the delivery of mixed use development.*

*Fylde will have continued to develop as a dynamic, prosperous place to live and work through boosting the delivery of sustainable homes and employment growth within the four Strategic Locations for Development, supported by the necessary facilities, services, infrastructure and access to modern telecommunications. New homes of an appropriate type and mix to address affordability, an ageing population and family needs will be located within sustainable locations. High quality design and sustainable building methods will be the key principles of all types of new development, including the delivery of urban extensions in the form of garden suburbs.*

*Fylde will have remained flexible in its approach to changing economic and employment patterns, particularly with regard to major local employers. It will have developed closer working relationships through the duty to cooperate with the adjoining Fylde Coast Authorities and with the Central Lancashire Authorities and other organisations and strengthened its position within the Lancashire sub-region and its linkages and connectivity to the city of Preston.*

*Opportunities for sub-regionally important employment at the Lancashire Advanced Engineering and Manufacturing (AEM) Enterprise Zone at BAE Systems, Warton and Whitehills Business Park will have been realised and employment will have been provided close to where people live, thereby reducing the need to travel long distances. Fylde will have an energy hub, generating a cluster of energy based companies and amenities; together with an energy logistics park, close to Blackpool Airport, to support energy businesses on the Fylde Coast.*

*Fylde will have enhanced its unique qualities including its classic seaside resort towns of Lytham and St Anne's, the historic market town of Kirkham, tranquil coastline, high quality golf courses, tourism offer, picturesque rural settlements and attractive*

*landscapes. The visitor economy will have been strengthened by the area's resort appeal, its reputation as a centre for world famous golf championships and its attractive rural areas. High quality attractions and organised events such as the Lytham 1940s Wartime Weekend and the Lytham Festival, staged activities at Lytham Hall (Grade 1 Listed) and the retention of serviced tourism accommodation in the Holiday Areas, will generate an increase in the number of visitors. The Island Sea Front Area and the Promenade Gardens at St Anne's and Fairhaven Lake will have been regenerated to provide a high quality visitor experience.*

*Lytham and St Anne's will be thriving resorts with quality specialist shops, with Kirkham a vibrant historic market town. Lytham, St Anne's and Kirkham will have retained and enhanced their positions at the top of the retail hierarchy. Warton will be a Local Service Centre with a local retail centre serving the needs of the local community and employment opportunities will have increased and diversified through the development of the Lancashire Advanced Engineering and Manufacturing Enterprise Zone, at BAE Systems. The Fylde-Blackpool Periphery will have become a Local Service Centre by the end of the plan period in 2032, with a local retail centre servicing the new community that will have developed at Whitehills. Wesham and Freckleton will retain their functions as Local Service Centres. Rural settlements will have retained their individual identities and heritage assets and their distinctive features will have been protected, enhanced and promoted.*

*Sufficient levels of housing of an appropriate type, tenure, design, density and mix to address local issues of affordability will have been provided in the smaller rural settlements. There will have been proportionate levels of employment growth to strengthen and diversify the local economies and reduce the need to travel.*

*To overcome traffic congestion and to accommodate all of the growth proposed in Fylde to the year 2032, the M55 (Junction 4) to Heyhouses Link Road between Whitehills and St Anne's will have been completed; and congestion on the A585 trunk road will have been resolved through the delivery of the Blue Route. The Preston Western Distributor Road, to a new junction 2 on the M55, will have been delivered and opened. The construction of the Preston Western Distributor Road will improve road access to the Lancashire Advanced Engineering and Manufacturing (AEM)*

*Enterprise Zone at BAE Systems, Warton, to the wider Fylde Coast, and serve new housing in north-west Preston.*

*Expansion of services provided by Blackpool Airport will have been secured, along with enhanced public transport access to the airport. There will have been an increase in the use of public transport. Public transport services across the rural parts of the Borough and onto Blackpool, Preston and beyond will have been improved. Railway station facilities at Kirkham and Wesham will have been enhanced, making the market town more accessible to other parts of the North West and increasing its sustainability as a residential and employment centre".*

## The purpose of our Plan

This Plan is designed to guide and promote action over a number of years, to realise our vision of creating a unique 'Garden town by the sea, reflecting the distinct character of our town. The Plan is made by and for the residents of St. Anne's.

**The purpose of the Neighbourhood Development Plan is to:**

***Set out a positive vision for the future of St. Anne's, ensuring that it reflects the aspirations of its residents, who will be involved in making the plan, monitoring its progress and delivering development.***

## Our vision

We aim to build on the legacy of our unique tourist offer and stimulate investment in retail, employment, culture and community activity, strengthening our town centre and ensuring that our town grows and develops in a sustainable way.

We aim to build on our town's special character, its legacy of outstanding parks and green spaces, preserve and enhance our countryside and natural environment, making sure that it is accessible to all. We aim to ensure that all new development is of the highest quality of design and that we protect and improve the distinct character of our town, together with its historic and architectural heritage.

We aim to ensure that there is a choice of sustainable transport options, reducing dependence on the car, and providing a network of attractive routes for pedestrians and cyclists. We will improve the 'gateways' into the town centre. We will extend opportunities for our residents to lead active, healthy lifestyles and ensure that our community has the facilities it needs for its cultural and social well-being.

The vision and aims of the neighbourhood plan are to seek to:

- *identify the future development proposals for St. Anne's on the Sea and how these can be enhanced to support the vision of the town as a 'Garden town by the Sea'*
- *bring forward proposals which will support the quality of life in St. Anne's on the Sea for future generations*
- *protect and enhance the distinctive architectural design within the town*

## What we aim to achieve

To further these, the plan will have the following objectives:

1. *ensure that the town will have a sustainable and prosperous local economy and support local business*
2. *secure high quality sensitive design which prioritises local distinctiveness and enriches the landscape and built environment*
3. *enjoy and utilise our natural landscape, green spaces and assets whilst protecting these for enjoyment by future generations*
4. *support high quality housing and other development that meets the town's needs and encourage the reuse of existing and use of renewable resources*
5. *Seek improvements to transport, to utility infrastructure and to digital connectivity*
6. *ensure that St. Anne's remains a high quality year round visitor resort*
7. *ensure that the town is safe, accessible and attractive to all its residents, visitors and people who work in it*
8. *protect the town's heritage assets whilst encouraging appropriate high quality contemporary architecture*
9. *improve health, social and cultural wellbeing for all residents, encouraging and providing opportunities for an active lifestyle, and ensuring high quality local facilities for existing and new residents.*

## Summary of key issues

The initial review of evidence, set out in the Neighbourhood Profile, identified a wide range of issues facing St. Anne's, some of which could be tackled through the Neighbourhood Plan, such as improving transport, housing and community facilities, and many of which were beyond the scope of the Plan, such as fracking. The full set of issues is set out in the NDP Issues and Options Report, together with consideration of how they may best be tackled. The Issues and Options Report assessed these issues against sustainability objectives by assessing each in relation to the 'spokes' of the Egan Sustainability Wheel (see Section 4 below).

After considering the issues and options available, the Town Council worked with Planning Aid to decide the most appropriate and expedient approach for the Plan. Options Ranged from not proceeding with the plan through to either a 'comprehensive' or 'lite' version of the plan. Based on the amount of work required, available resources and the timescale, the Town Council decided that the most realistic option was to adopt a "NDP lite" approach. On this basis, the key issues which the Plan has sought to address can be summarised as follows against their relevant themes:

### **General Development Principles and Strategic Issues:**

- maintaining the strategic gap between St. Anne's and Blackpool
- addressing the needs of an elderly population
- addressing the potential impact of population growth
- ensuring beneficial development at Blackpool Airport

### **Environment:**

- protecting the Lytham Moss area of open countryside and improving recreational use of it
- making better use of the beach and the sea
- improving gateways to the town
- protecting the natural environment and existing green spaces and ensuring that there is adequate green infrastructure
- improving existing parks
- provide new green infrastructure and improve environmental value of the spaces around and connecting areas of green infrastructure.

### **Community and Health:**

- ensuring that adequate community/health/recreation facilities are in place to serve the whole community
- providing 'community hubs'
- protecting community assets

### **Local Character:**

- ensuring adequate protection of heritage assets
- ensuring the future preservation and enhancement of historic parks and gardens
- improving the quality of design in new developments

**Economy:**

- ensuring the availability of employment land and adequate office accommodation
- protecting and improving the town centre

**Getting Around:**

- improving public transport
- ensuring that car parking provision adequately serves the town's needs
- developing pedestrian and cycle networks, ensuring links across the town, improving signage and route mapping

**Housing:**

- meeting housing need, including specialist needs
- ensuring that housing is affordable
- ensuring that the right types of housing are available to meet the town's needs

**Sustainability:**

- adapting to climate change
- reducing surface water flooding

**Delivery:**

- ensuring that the best use is made of funding from the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL)

**The policies of the Neighbourhood Plan**

The St. Anne's on the sea Neighbourhood Development Plan puts forward planning policies for the town, the successful delivery of which, during the plan period will achieve the community's vision for the town.

The Plan does not contain all the development plan policy relating to the parish; it must be viewed as sitting alongside and complementary to the adopted Fylde Local Plan (and the new Local Plan once that has replaced it).

Whilst the 'Basic Conditions' require that the Plan conforms to the strategic policies of the Development Plan (that is the adopted Fylde Borough Local Plan (As Altered) (Oct 2005), the Town Council has sought to ensure that its policies conform with the policy approach in the emerging local plan.

The 'Basic Conditions' require that the Plan conforms to the strategic policies of the Development Plan, that is, the adopted Fylde Borough Local Plan (referred to subsequently as 'the adopted Local Plan'). The town council has also sought to ensure that its policies conform, where possible, with the general policy approach in the emerging local plan. It did so initially by assessing the policies against those set out in the emerging Fylde Borough Council emerging Local Plan preferred option published in June 2013. Upon the publication of the Revised Preferred Option in October 2015, this assessment was reviewed. Reference to compliance with the emerging local plan in this chapter refer to the latest iteration of the Preferred Option (referred to subsequently as RPO 2015). The town council also engaged closely with the officers of Fylde Council. The town council is satisfied that its approach is in conformity with the strategic approach underlying the emerging Local Plan. In some cases the policies of the two plans directly overlap and the two councils have sought to ensure agreed wording. As the NDP is likely to be 'made' well in advance of the adoption of the emerging Local Plan, the town council considered it important to adopt some policies which may well be replicated in the later plan. The town council has sought to avoid this wherever possible but in some cases considered that it was important to have policies in place which addressed key objectives of the NDP and where there would otherwise be a 'policy gap' which would harm its achievement of those objectives. In a few cases the NDP has policies where the wording differs from similar policies in the Revised Preferred Option October 2015 iteration of the emerging Local Plan. This approach has been taken where the town council considered it necessary to reflect the particular circumstances in St. Anne's and where it has been necessary to ensure that the objectives of the NDP are fulfilled. The town council trusts that its approach will be reflected by Fylde Council as the emerging Local Plan evolves.

The Town Council is satisfied that its approach is in conformity with the strategic approach underlying the emerging Local Plan.

The NDP contains policies that seek to achieve the objectives set out in section 3. The policies are set out in sections, dealing with the following broad themes:

- general development principles
- environment
- community and health
- local character
- economy
- getting out and about
- housing
- sustainability

Each 'theme' has an introduction, setting out why policies are necessary; and a summary of the policies for that theme, with a reference to the conformity of each policy with the NPPF, the development plan<sup>1</sup>, and the Plan objectives. For convenience, this information is summarised in a text box, at the beginning of each 'theme'.

Each policy is numbered and is accompanied by a short explanation of the policy intent and a justification.

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<sup>1</sup> At the time of preparing the Draft Neighbourhood Plan the Development Plan for the area comprised the saved policies of the Fylde Borough Local Plan (As Altered) (Oct 2005). Consultation on the 1st stage of the new Fylde Borough Council Plan covering the period 2011 to 2032 is not expected to commence until late 2015.

## 4.0: Our approach to the appraisal

### How we addressed sustainability in appraising potential options for the NDP

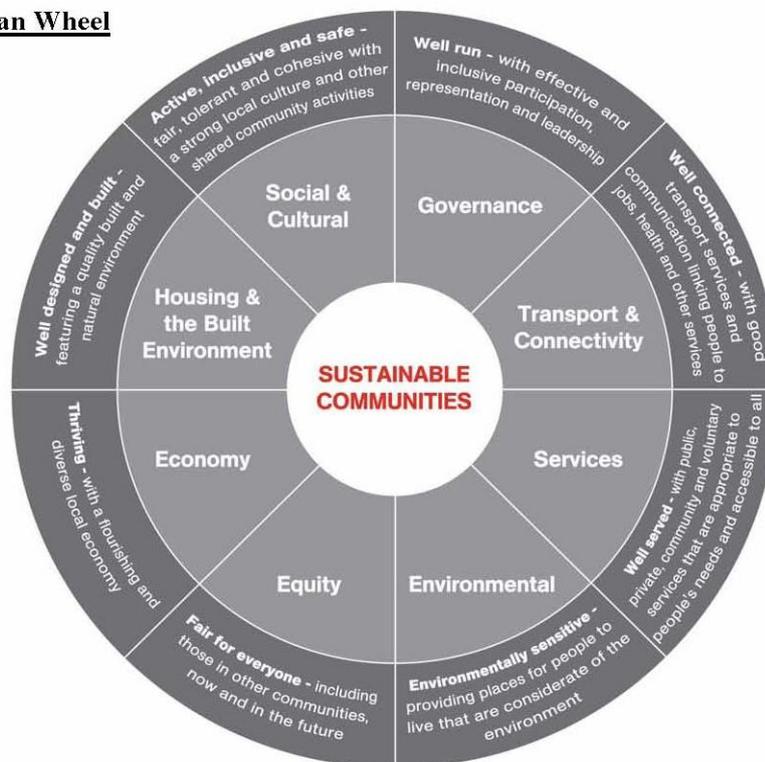
Before a decision was made on the scope of the Plan in terms of issues to be addressed and the nature of policies to be included it was considered to be premature to commence a formal SA process, including a request to Fylde Borough Council for a “Screening Determination”. Instead we appraised each option in terms of its potential contribution to meeting the requirements of the “Egan Sustainability Wheel”. This is a useful tool to gain a broad indication of whether and how a specific policy option can contribute to the sustainability of the town.

#### The Egan Sustainability Wheel

Egan (2004) identifies sustainable communities as meeting the ‘diverse needs of existing and future residents, their children and other users’ through promoting opportunity and choice. At the heart of the process of being sustainable is:

- making effective use of natural resources
- enhancing the environment
- promoting social cohesion and inclusion and
- strengthening economic prosperity

#### The Egan Wheel



He introduced what is referred to as the 'Egan Wheel' (see above), which can be used as a tool for judging sustainable communities.

## The Eight Strands<sup>2</sup>

- **Governance** - When decisions are made about a community, local people are included in the decision-making process. The community enjoys a sense of civic values, responsibility and pride.
- **Transport and Connectivity** - The transport facilities, including public transport, help people to travel within and between communities and reduce dependence on cars. There are facilities to encourage safe local walking and transport.
- **Services** - High quality services for families and children. A good range of affordable public, community, voluntary and private services that are accessible to the whole community.
- **Environmental** - Actively seek to minimise climate change (e.g. people are encouraged to recycle and save water, live in homes that do not waste electricity and that are built on waste land so that no new forest/fields are destroyed). Create cleaner, safer and greener neighbourhoods (e.g. by reducing litter and graffiti, and maintaining pleasant public spaces).
- **Equity** - People of all ages, races, cultures, sexes and abilities are given access to services, jobs and education in the community. This fairness is not a luxury; it is normal to everyone. This fairness lasts to provide opportunities for future generations.
- **Economy** - Local people have the opportunity to make money and have a good quality of life. They are encouraged to open small businesses and spend their wages locally to help improve other people's businesses. Successful businesses create more jobs for more people, and better standards of living for more people in the community.
- **Housing & Built Environment** - A sense of place. Buildings are attractive, safe and useful to the people who use them. Buildings that people want to go into. Lots of open space for people to play and relax.
- **Social & Cultural** - A community spirit is created. People are always welcome to join events. Neighbours look out for one another, and people respect each other. All people are treated fairly. There are low levels of crime, drugs and anti-social behaviour with viable, effective and community friendly policing.

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<sup>2</sup> Taken from [Making Places, Academy for Sustainable Communities](#), educational pack

The resulting draft Issues and Options Report used the Egan Wheel to assess each option to determine its contribution to sustainability. Where relevant, it also drew on the sustainability appraisal work already carried out in support of the emerging Local Plan.

## Screening for SEA/SA

The NDP Issues and Options report set out a wide range of potential policy themes, some with greater potential impact on the environment, the great majority with far less impact.

Following a workshop facilitated by Planning Aid, the Town Council's NDP Steering Group agreed the scope of the proposed NDP. They decided to follow the 'Lite' approach, as set out in the NDP Issues and Options report.

Strategic Environmental Assessment must be carried out for any plan or programme which sets the framework for land use and future development. It seeks to ensure that a high level of protection is given to the environment by integrating environmental considerations into the process of preparing plans and programmes.

The Town Council sought a screening opinion from Fylde Borough Council to determine whether or not the proposed content of the St. Anne's on the Sea Neighbourhood Plan requires a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) in accordance with the European Directive 2001/42/EC and associated Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004. The Screening opinion (see Appendix 2) concluded that the proposals for St. Anne's on the Sea Neighbourhood Plan will result in positive direct and indirect environmental effects, therefore any cumulative impacts will also be beneficial. The Plan does not promote major new allocations, the environmental impact of the proposals are likely to be minimal due to the nature/ quantum and scale of the development proposed. Therefore, the current proposals are unlikely to have a significant environmental effect and therefore do not need to be subject to a full SEA. The three statutory consultees have agreed the conclusion of the screening determination.

Neighbourhood Development Plans that are likely to have a significant effect on European Sites (habitats) must be subject to an appropriate assessment. The St. Anne's on the sea Neighbourhood Development Plan would not have any significant adverse effects on designated landscapes or on national or European protected sites. It would not therefore be likely to require an assessment under Article 6 or 7 of the Habitats directive. The Plan is currently subject of screening for HRA and this report will be updated to take the screening into account.

## SA Framework

To provide a sound basis for a comprehensive appraisal, the sustainability framework we have used to test options and develop policies derives from using the Egan Sustainability Wheel to assess Plan objectives and policies to determine their contribution to sustainability, but also drawing on the sustainability appraisal work already carried out in support of the emerging Local Plan. Fylde Borough Council's, SA Scoping Report produced by Fylde BC (updated in 2010), assessing Plan options for the emerging Local Plan was seen as a logical starting point since the NDP must accord with higher level policy. Whilst this relates to an emerging Plan and there is no requirement to comply with its provisions, the sustainability framework established to assess its policy options remains relevant. The SA objectives relevant to St. Anne's are unlikely to be significantly different from the Fylde Borough Council SA objectives. The sustainability objectives set out in Fylde's SA Scoping Report can be categorised with reference to the spokes of the Egan Wheel. This is set out below:-

<b>Egan Wheel</b>	<b>Fylde Borough Council SA Objectives</b>
Social and Cultural	1. Reduce crime, disorder and fear of crime
Transport & Connectivity	6. Improve sustainable access to basic goods, services and amenities for all groups
Environmental	9. Deliver urban renaissance  10. Protect and enhance biodiversity and geodiversity  11. Protect and enhance landscape and townscape character and quality, and protect tranquillity  12. Protect and enhance the cultural heritage resource  13. Protect and enhance the quality of water features and resources, and reduce the risk of flooding  14. Limit and adapt to the impacts of climate change  15. Protect and improve air quality  16. Ensure the sustainable use of natural resources
Economy	7. Encourage sustainable economic growth and business development  8. Promote economic inclusion
Housing & Built Environment	4. Ensure that housing provision meets all needs
Equity	1. Reduce crime, disorder and fear of crime  2. Improve levels of educational attainment and encourage lifelong learning  3. Improve physical and mental health for all and reduce health inequalities  4. Ensure that housing provision meets all needs  5. Protect and enhance community spirit and cohesion  6. Improve sustainable access to basic goods, services and amenities for all groups

	8. Promote economic inclusion
Services	6. Improve sustainable access to basic goods, services and amenities for all groups
Governance	N/A

## 5.0: Summary of Appraisal findings

Table 5.1 below sets out a summary of the Appraisal findings for the Draft Neighbourhood Plan objectives.

Table 5.2 below sets out a summary of the Appraisal findings for the Draft Neighbourhood Plan policies.

The appraisal gives a clear indication that the objectives underlying the Plan and the policies that seek to meet those objectives would make a clear contribution to wider sustainability objectives.

No objective or policy would have a negative impact on sustainability. Although no objective or policy would have, in itself, a positive impact in relation to 'Governance', it is important to note that the Neighbourhood Development Plan itself, and the process of its creation, is an example of a community being closely involved in the decision-making process. The vision, objectives and policies within it are based on extensive consultation with local people, businesses and others with an interest in the parish. It will be for that community to decide whether or not to proceed with the Plan, and for that community to make its vision a reality.

**Table 5.1: Appraisal of Plan Objectives**

Neighbourhood Development Objective	Social and Cultural	Transport & Connectivity	Environmental	Economy	Housing & Built Environment	Equity	Services	Governance	Comment/ Justification/ Mitigation, if necessary
1. ensure that the town will have a sustainable and prosperous local economy and support local business	↑	→	→	↑	→	↑	↑	→	Maximising employment benefits; ensuring maximum beneficial use of brownfield land; reducing the need to travel; ensuring that services are accessible to all, enhancing community cohesion and wellbeing; contributing to regeneration and urban renaissance
2. secure high quality sensitive design which prioritises local distinctiveness and enriches the landscape and built environment	↑	→	→	↑	→	↑	↑	→	Improved design quality; overall improvement of the environment and wellbeing; potential to attract inward investment to the borough and enhance the tourism offer.
3. enjoy and utilise our natural landscape, green spaces and assets whilst protecting these for enjoyment by future generations	↑	→	↑	↑	→	→	→	→	Benefiting human health and wellbeing; preserving and enhancing biodiversity; can foster cohesive communities and provides essential services; contributing to urban

									renaissance
4. support high quality housing and other development that meets the town's needs and encourage the reuse of existing and use of renewable resources	↑	→	↑	↑	↑	↑	→	→	Meeting housing needs and creating cohesive communities; contributing to urban renaissance; maximising use of brownfield land and minimising adverse impact on open countryside; encouraging economic inclusion; improved health and wellbeing
5. seek improvements to transport, to utility infrastructure and to digital connectivity	→	↑	↑	↑	→	↑	→	→	Maximising opportunities for using (and improving) existing sustainable modes of transport; reducing congestion; improving air quality; benefitting health; providing improved connectivity to (and between) homes and employment; provision of essential services; benefitting all members of the community
6. ensure that St. Anne's remains a high quality year round visitor resort	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	→	→	→	Contributing to improving the vitality and vibrancy of the town centre and enhance the town as a place to visit increase in employment (particularly for young people); may also enhance community spirit and cohesion through the provision of increased indoor attractions for visitors and locals to enjoy. Indirect health benefits may also arise if related to physical activity. New attractions should be easily accessed by sustainable modes of transport.

7. ensure that the town is safe, accessible and attractive to all its residents, visitors and people who work in it	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	→	→	Enhancing the town as a place to visit; increase in employment (particularly for young people); enhancing community spirit and cohesion; improved quality of environment; health benefits; reducing crime
8. protect the town's heritage assets whilst encouraging appropriate high quality contemporary architecture	↑	→	↑	↑	↑	→	→	→	Preservation and enhancement of historic cultural resource and the character of the town; overall improvement of the environment and contributing to community cohesion and the wellbeing of residents and visitors; contributing to regeneration and urban renaissance. By also developing a list of locally important buildings, greater opportunities would be provided for retaining local character and architecture.
9. improve health, social and cultural wellbeing for all residents, encouraging and providing opportunities for an active lifestyle, and ensuring high quality local facilities for existing and new residents.	↑	→	↑	↑	↑	→	→	→	Enhancing the town as a place to live; enhancing community spirit and cohesion; improved quality of environment; health benefits;

**Key: Neutral impact: → Positive Impact: ↑ Negative Impacts ↓**

**Table 5.2: Appraisal of Plan Policies**

Neighbourhood Development Plan Policy	Social and Cultural	Transport & Connectivity	Environmental	Economy	Housing & Built	Equity	Services	Governance	Comment/ Justification/ Mitigation, if necessary
GP1: Settlement boundary	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	→	Focuses development within the existing urban area, maximising access to jobs and reducing employment exclusion and deprivation in the borough's most deprived wards; contributing to regeneration and urban renaissance and minimising adverse impact on open countryside/rural areas; reducing the need to travel
GP2: Demonstrating viability	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	→	Ensures that schemes that are viable can contribute to community and other infrastructure.
EN1: Protection of sites of biological and geological conservation importance	↑	↑	↑	↑	→	↑	↑	→	Benefiting human health and wellbeing, can foster cohesive communities and provides an essential service; contributing to urban renaissance

EN2: Protection of open spaces, local green space (LGS), outdoor recreational facilities and green infrastructure	↑	↑	↑	↑	→	↑	↑	→	Benefiting biodiversity, human health and wellbeing, can foster cohesive communities and provides an essential service; contributing to urban renaissance
EN3: Provision of open space in new residential development	↑	↑	↑	↑	→	↑	↑	→	Benefiting biodiversity, human health and wellbeing; contributing to urban renaissance; Developers are likely to expect to need to make contributions to green infrastructure as a matter of course and so this is unlikely to be a deterrent to investment
EN4: Starr Hills Nature Reserve	↑	↑	↑	↑	→	↑	↑	→	Benefiting biodiversity, human health and wellbeing;
EN5: Urban trees supply	↑	→	↑	↑	→	↑	→	→	Benefiting biodiversity, human health and wellbeing; contributing to urban renaissance
EN6: Community tree planting	↑	→	↑	↑	→	↑	→	→	Benefiting biodiversity, human health and wellbeing; contributing to urban renaissance; developers are likely to expect to need to make contributions to green infrastructure as a matter of course and so this is unlikely to be a deterrent to investment
CH1: Community infrastructure	↑	→	→	→	→	↑	↑	→	Fostering cohesive communities, providing essential services and contributing to urban renaissance

CH2: Community facilities	↑	→	→	→	→	↑	↑	→	Fostering cohesive communities, providing essential services and contributing to urban renaissance
CH3: Encouraging an active and healthy lifestyle	↑	→	→	→	→	↑	↑	→	Fostering cohesive communities, providing essential services and contributing to urban renaissance; Benefiting human health and wellbeing
DH1:Creating a distinctive St. Anne's	↑	→	↑	↑	↑	→	→	→	Improved design quality; overall improvement of the environment and wellbeing; protection of built heritage. Potential to attract inward investment to the borough and enhance the tourism offer.
DH2-Corridors and gateways	↑	→	↑	↑	↑	→	→	→	overall improvement of the environment and wellbeing; contributing to regeneration and urban renaissance
DH7: Protecting the character of historic parks and gardens	↑	→	↑	↑	↑	→	↑	→	Preservation and enhancement of historic cultural resource and the character of the town; overall improvement of the environment and contributing to community cohesion and the wellbeing of residents and visitors; contributing to regeneration and urban renaissance
SS1: Blackpool Airport	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	→	→	→	Maximising employment benefits; enhancing the sub regional economy; reducing the need

									to travel to access an airport; ensuring maximum beneficial use of brownfield land; minimising adverse environmental impact on open countryside
SS2: Island site	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	→	→	→	Maximising employment benefits; ensuring maximum beneficial use of brownfield land;
E1: The town centre and town centre development	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	→	↑	→	Benefiting the sustainable access to goods and encourage people to walk which would offer health benefits; maximising employment benefits; ensuring maximum beneficial use of brownfield land; reducing the need to travel; ensuring that services are accessible to all, enhancing community cohesion and wellbeing; contributing to regeneration and urban renaissance
E2: Primary shopping frontages	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	→	↑	→	Reducing vacant units; ensuring maximum beneficial use of brownfield land; contributing to regeneration and urban renaissance
E3: Secondary shopping frontages	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	→	↑	→	Reducing vacant units; ensuring maximum beneficial use of brownfield land; contributing to regeneration and urban renaissance

E4: Employment and enterprise	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	→	→	→	Maximising employment benefits; ensuring maximum beneficial use of brownfield land; reducing the need to travel; ensuring that services are accessible to all, enhancing community cohesion and wellbeing; contributing to regeneration and urban renaissance
E5: Office development	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	→	→	→	Maximising employment benefits; ensuring maximum beneficial use of brownfield land; reducing the need to travel; ensuring that services are accessible to all, enhancing community cohesion and wellbeing; contributing to regeneration and urban renaissance
E6: Leisure, culture and tourism	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	→	→	→	Contributing to improving the vitality and vibrancy of the town centre and enhance the town as a place to visit increase in employment (particularly for young people); may also enhance community spirit and cohesion through the provision of increased indoor attractions for visitors and locals to enjoy. Indirect health benefits may also arise if related to physical activity. New attractions should be easily accessed by sustainable modes of transport.

Policy E7: Tourism accommodation	↑	↑	↑	↑	→	→	→	→	Promoting new appropriate visitor accommodation within the Primary / Secondary Holiday Areas in St Anne's would contribute to improving the vitality and vibrancy of the town centre and enhance the town as a place to visit / stay; increase in employment
TR1: Accessibility for all	→	↑	↑	→	→	↑	→	→	Maximising opportunities for using (and improving) existing sustainable modes of transport; reducing congestion; improving air quality; benefitting health; providing improved connectivity to (and between) homes and employment; benefitting all members of the community
TR2: Better public transport	→	↑	↑	→	→	↑	→	→	Maximising opportunities for using (and improving) existing sustainable modes of transport; reducing congestion; improving air quality; benefitting health; providing improved connectivity to (and between) homes and employment; benefitting all members of the community.
TR3: Residential car parking	→	↑	↑	→	↑	→	→	→	Maximising opportunities for using (and improving) existing sustainable modes of

									transport; reducing congestion; improving the quality of the built environment.
TR4: Town centre car parking	→	↑	↑	↑	→	↑	→	→	Maximising opportunities for using (and improving) existing sustainable modes of transport; reducing congestion; improving the quality of the built environment; contributing to the viability and vitality of the town centre and urban renaissance
TR5: Getting around St. Anne's	→	↑	↑	→	→	↑	→	→	Maximising opportunities for using (and improving) existing sustainable modes of transport; reducing congestion; improving air quality; benefitting health; providing improved connectivity to (and between) homes and employment; benefitting all members of the community
HOU1: Housing development	→	↑	↑	→	↑	→	→	→	Maximising use of brownfield land and minimising adverse impact on open countryside
HOU2: Housing for a sustainable community	→	→	↑	→	↑	↑	→	→	Meeting housing needs and creating cohesive communities; contributing to urban renaissance
HOU3: New apartments	→	→	↑	→	↑	→	→	→	Creating cohesive communities; encouraging economic inclusion; improved health and wellbeing

HOU4: Retirement hubs	→	→	↑	→	↑	→	→	→	Meeting housing needs; creating cohesive communities; encouraging economic inclusion; improved health and wellbeing
HOU5: Residential design	→	→	↑	→	↑	→	→	→	Improvement of the environment and wellbeing; adapting to climate change
SU1: Incorporate sustainable urban drainage into new development	→	→	↑	→	↑	→	→	→	Benefitting water quality, encouraging inward investment; benefitting health and wellbeing, reducing surface water flooding, and potential harmful run-off to sea and local water courses
SU2: Decentralised energy networks and district heating systems	→	→	↑	→	↑	→	→	→	Adapting to climate change; coherent approach needed to mitigate any potential adverse impact on design in the built environment and on landscape/townscape/heritage assets; indirect health benefits as there is a link between high quality housing and health.
DEL1: Developer contributions	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	→	Provision of essential services and contribution to implementation of Plan objectives and policies will have wide ranging impact on meeting sustainability objectives

**Key: Neutral impact: → Positive Impact: ↑ Negative Impacts ↓**

## Appendix 1: Habitat Regulations Assessment Screening opinion by Fylde Council



**Strategic Environmental Assessment  
Screening Opinion of**

**St. Annes on the Sea Neighbourhood Development Plan**

**Prepared by Fylde Council**

**May 2015**

Strategic Environmental Assessment Screening Opinion of  
St. Annes on the Sea Neighbourhood Plan

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- 
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Strategic Environmental Assessment Screening Opinion of  
St. Annes on the Sea Neighbourhood Plan

## 1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 This Screening Opinion report is designed to determine whether or not the proposed content of the St. Annes on the Sea Neighbourhood Plan (hereafter known as ‘SANP’) requires a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) in accordance with the European Directive 2001/42/EC and associated Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004.
- 1.2 SEA is a systemic process for evaluating the environmental consequences of plans and programmes to ensure that environmental issues are integrated and assessed at the earliest opportunity in the decision-making process.
- 1.3 Neighbourhood plans (hereafter known as ‘NP’) do not automatically require the undertaking of SEA, it is the case that a screening procedure is undertaken to determine whether the plan is likely to have a significant environmental effect. If there are significant effects, a SEA is required.
- 1.4 The legislative background set out in the following section outlines the regulations that require the need for this screening exercise. Section 4 provides a generic screening of a Neighbourhood Plan and Section 6, provides a screening assessment of both the likely significant environmental effects and conclusion as to the need for a full SEA based on the proposal for SANP.

## 2.0 Legislation

- 2.1 The need for environmental assessment of plans and programmes is set out in the European Directive 2001/42/EC known as the Strategic Environmental Assessment or SEA Directive. The Directive was subsequently transposed into English Law by the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004, or SEA Regulations. The government has produced guidance in relation to these regulations and is available in “A Practical Guide to the Strategic Environmental Assessment Directive” (ODPM, 2005).
- 2.2 The Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires local planning authorities to produce a Sustainability Appraisal (SA) of any documents which form part of a Local Plan, including core strategies, site allocation documents and area action plans. It is considered best practice to incorporate the requirements of the European Directive on SEA into the Sustainability Appraisal which should be an integral part of the plan preparation process, and should consider all the likely significant effects on the environment, economic and social factors.
- 2.3 The SEA requirements for Neighbourhood Plans are described in the UK Government’s Planning Practice Guidance. The guidance states that:

*“There is no legal requirement for a neighbourhood plan to have a sustainability appraisal as set out in section 19 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.”*

*However, “In some limited circumstances, where a neighbourhood plan is likely to have significant environmental effects, it may require a strategic environmental assessment. Draft neighbourhood plan proposals should be assessed to determine whether the plan is likely to have significant environmental effects. This process is commonly referred to as a “screening” assessment and the requirements are set out in regulation 9 of the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004.”*

## Strategic Environmental Assessment Screening Opinion of St. Annes on the Sea Neighbourhood Plan

The guidance continues, stating that an SEA may be required, for example, where:

- *“a neighbourhood plan allocates sites for development;*
- *the neighbourhood area contains sensitive natural or heritage assets that may be affected by the proposals in the plan;*
- *the neighbourhood plan is likely to have significant environmental effects that have not already been considered and dealt with through a sustainability appraisal of the Local Plan.”*

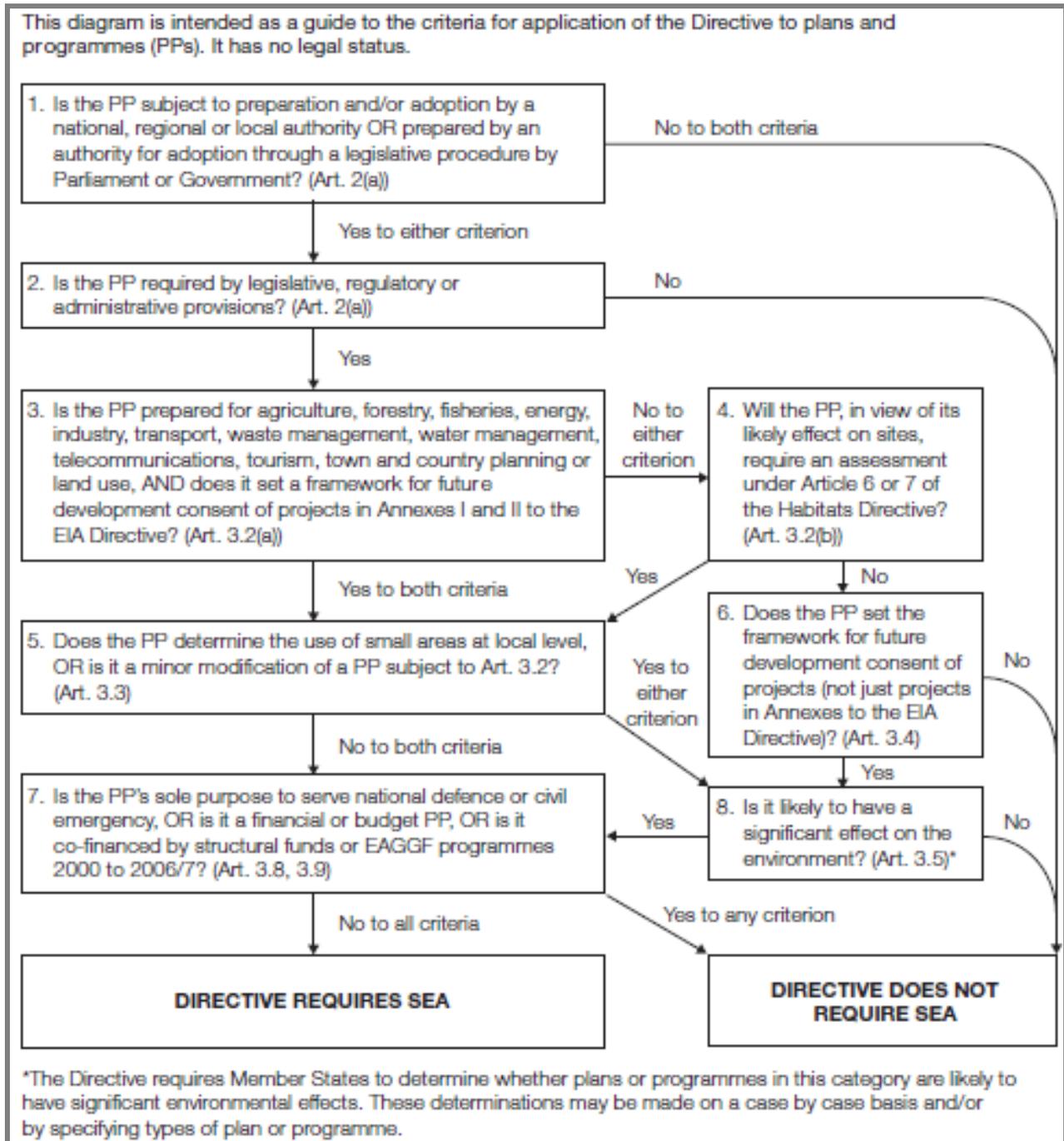
- 2.4 When determining whether the proposals are likely to have a significant environmental effect, the local planning authority is required to consult the three statutory consultation bodies: the Environment Agency, Historic England (formerly English Heritage) and Natural England.
- 2.5 Where a local planning authority determines that the plan is unlikely to have a significant environmental effect, and does not require a SEA, a statement of its reasons for the determination should be provided to the ‘qualifying body’<sup>1</sup> which can be made available to the independent examiner as part of the Neighbourhood Plan examination process.
- 2.6 If the local planning authority concludes that a SEA is required, it will be the responsibility of the ‘qualifying body’ to prepare the full SEA. The first stage of the process will require the preparation of a SEA Scoping Report, which will subsequently have to undergo a five week consultation with the three statutory consultation bodies. The local planning authority may be able to offer relevant support and assistance.
- 2.7 Where a SEA is required, the ‘qualifying body’ may wish to voluntarily expand the scope of the SEA so that it covers the wider social and economic issues, in addition to environmental aspects. The added benefit of undertaking a Sustainability Appraisal is that it can demonstrate the impact of the Neighbourhood Plan on social, economic and environmental factors and can demonstrate to an independent examiner that the plan has been prepared to promote sustainable development and that all reasonable alternative options have been considered.
- 3.0 **Generic assessment of Neighbourhood Plans - Application of criteria of the SEA Directive to Plans**
- 3.1 Figure 1 illustrates the process for screening a planning document to determine whether a full SEA is required.
- 3.2 A generic assessment of the characteristics of a Neighbourhood Plan has been undertaken with the results of this assessment being set out in Table 1 of this report.

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<sup>1</sup> A town or parish council is the ‘qualifying body’ for producing a Neighbourhood Plan. In an area not covered by a town or parish council, a designated Neighbourhood Forum is the qualifying body.

Strategic Environmental Assessment Screening Opinion of  
St. Annes on the Sea Neighbourhood Plan

Figure 1: Application of the SEA Directive to plans and programmes



Source: A Practical Guide to the Strategic Environmental Assessment Directive 2005

Table 1: Assessment of the characteristics of a Neighbourhood Plan

Assessment Criteria	Assessment	
	Y/N	Justification
1. Is the PP (plan or programme) subject to preparation and/or adoption by a national, regional or local authority OR prepared by an authority for adoption through	Yes	A NP will be prepared by the “qualifying body” under the provision of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990, as amended by the Localism Act 2011. The NP will be prepared subject to The Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012 and The

Strategic Environmental Assessment Screening Opinion of  
St. Annes on the Sea Neighbourhood Plan

<p>a legislative procedure by Parliament or Government? (Art. 2(a))</p>		<p>Neighbourhood Planning (referendums) Regulations 2012.</p> <p>A NP will subject to independent examination and following a successful referendum, the Plan will be “made” (brought into legal force) by Fylde Council as the local planning authority.</p>
<p>2. Is the PP required by legislative, regulatory or administrative provisions? (Art. 2(a))</p>	<p>No</p>	<p>There is no requirement for a NP to be produced by a Parish/Town council or a Neighbourhood Forum (as the ‘qualifying body’). However, a NP once ‘made’ will form part of the statutory Development Plan and be used when determining planning applications.</p>
<p>3. Is the PP prepared for agriculture, forestry, fisheries, energy, industry, transport, waste management, water management, telecommunications, tourism, town and country planning or land use, AND does it set a framework for future development consent of projects in Annexes I and II to the to the EIA Directive? [Article 3.2(a)]</p>	<p>Yes</p>	<p>A NP can cover some of the topics identified in the list and they could set the framework for future development of a scale that would fall under Annex II of the EIA Directive. However, for NP, developments which fall under Annex I of the EIA Directive are ‘excluded development’ a set out in Section 61k of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended by the Localism Act 2011).</p>
<p>4. Will the PP, in view of its likely effect on sites, require an assessment for future development under Article 6 or 7 of the Habitats Directive? (Art. 3.2 (b))</p>	<p>?</p>	<p>A NP could potentially have an impact on an internationally designated wildlife site covered by the Habitats Directive. For this reason, a case by case assessment of each NP may be required.</p>
<p>5. Does the PP Determine the use of small areas at local level, OR is it a minor modification of a PP subject to Art. 3.2? (Art. 3.3)</p>	<p>Yes</p>	<p>A NP can determine the use of small areas at the local level.</p>
<p>6. Does the PP set the framework for future development consent of projects (Not just projects in annexes to the EIA Directive)? (Art 3.4)</p>	<p>Yes</p>	<p>A NP once ‘made’ will form part of the statutory Development Plan and be used when determine planning applications. The policies in a NP therefore set the framework for future development.</p>
<p>7. Is the PP’s sole purpose to serve the national defence or civil emergency, OR is it a financial or budget PP, OR is it co-financed by structural funds or EAGGF programmes 2000 to 2006/7? (Art 3.8, 3.9)</p>	<p>No</p>	<p>A NP will not deal with these matters.</p>
<p>8. Is it likely to have a significant effect on the environment? (Art. 3.5)</p>	<p>?</p>	<p>The impact of a NP on the environment will depend on the proposal included within the Plan. For this reason, a case by case assessment of each NP will be required.</p>

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3.3 The generic screening of a NP characteristic has determined that depending upon the content of the Plan, an SEA may be required. For this reason, a case by case analysis is recommended to determine the likely significant effects of the NP proposals on the environment.

4.0 **Criteria for Assessing the Effects of Neighbourhood Plans (the ‘plan’)**

4.1 Assessment of the significance of the effect of a NP will depend on the proposal within it. The criteria for assessing the likely significance of the environmental effects are set out in Annex II from Article 3.5 of the SEA Directive. The relevant schedule of the regulations is set out below:

**Figure 2: Criteria for assessing the likely significance of effects on the environment**

1. The characteristics of plans and programmes, having regard, in particular, to
  - the degree to which the plan or programme sets a framework for projects and other activities, either with regard to the location, nature, size and operating conditions or by allocating resources,
  - the degree to which the plan or programme influences other plans and programmes including those in a hierarchy,
  - the relevance of the plan or programme for the integration of environmental considerations in particular with a view to promoting sustainable development,
  - environmental problems relevant to the plan or programme,
  - the relevance of the plan or programme for the implementation of Community legislation on the environment (e.g. plans and programmes linked to waste-management or water protection).
2. Characteristics of the effects and of the area likely to be affected, having regard, in particular, to
  - the probability, duration, frequency and reversibility of the effects,
  - the cumulative nature of the effects,
  - the transboundary nature of the effects,
  - the risks to human health or the environment (e.g. due to accidents),
  - the magnitude and spatial extent of the effects (geographical area and size of the population likely to be affected),
  - the value and vulnerability of the area likely to be affected due to:
    - special natural characteristics or cultural heritage,
    - exceeded environmental quality standards or limit values,
    - intensive land-use,
  - the effects on areas or landscapes which have a recognised national, Community or international protection status.

Source: Annex II of SEA Directive 2001/42/EC

**5.0 St. Anne’s on the Sea Neighbourhood Plan Context**

5.1 The parish of St. Anne’s on the Sea is located in Fylde, Lancashire. To the north, the town is bounded by the A5230, Squires Gate, and includes Blackpool International Airport. Blackpool is four miles to the north. To the southeast it abuts the townships of Ansdell and Lytham. Its Irish Sea coastline lies at the northern edge of the estuary of the River Ribble, whilst inland the town includes part of the agricultural Lytham Moss. The population of the parish is 27,105, which comprised 35.7% of the total population of Fylde Borough (2011 Census).

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5.2 The St. Anne's on the Sea Neighbourhood Area was designated on the 11 April 2013 covering the whole of the administrative area of the Town Council. Work on SANP commenced in February 2014 by the Town Council, in collaboration with other stakeholders. The following background documents have been produced following evidence gathering and initial consultation with the community, stakeholders and statutory consultees:

- Issues and Options (draft June 2014)
- Report of Consultation (draft June 2014)
- Neighbourhood Profile (July 2014)
- Identified Theme and Policy Areas (received 21 November 2014)
- 'Lite' Options Appraisal Matrix (received 21 November 2014)

5.3 The Town Council have formally requested a SEA screening opinion of its emerging NP, which was received by Fylde Council on 27 August 2014. This screening determination has been undertaken by Fylde Council.

5.4 The purpose of the SANP is to ensure St. Anne's on the Sea is and remains a thriving, sustainable community. The NP has the following draft aims which it seeks to achieve, these being:

- Identify the future development proposals for St. Anne's on the Sea and how these can be enhanced to support the vision of the town as a 'Garden town by the Sea'
- Bring forward proposals which will support the quality of life in St. Anne's on the Sea in the years to come;
- Protect and enhance the distinctive architectural design and the historic environment within the Town.

5.5 To further these aims, the Plan sets out the following objectives:

1. Set out a positive vision for the future of the town, ensuring that it reflects the aspirations of its residents, who will be involved in making the plan, monitoring its progress and delivering development;
2. Ensure a high quality of life for all the town's residents;
3. Ensure that the town will have a sustainable and prosperous local economy into the future;
4. Support sustainable development meeting local needs;
5. Secure high quality sensitive design which prioritises local distinctiveness and enriches the landscape and built environment;
6. Enjoy and utilise our natural landscape and assets whilst protecting it for future generations;
7. Support the transition to a low carbon future taking full account of climate change, flood risk and coastal change, encourage the reuse of existing resources and the use of renewable resources;
8. Deliver high quality housing development that meets the town's needs;
9. Seek improvements to transport, to utility infrastructure and to digital connectivity;
10. Ensure that St. Anne's remains a high quality year round visitor resort;
11. Ensure that the town is safe, accessible and attractive to all its residents, visitors and people who work in it;

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12. Protect the town's heritage assets whilst encouraging appropriate high quality contemporary architecture; and
13. Improve health, social and cultural wellbeing for all residents, encouraging and providing opportunities for an active lifestyle, and ensuring high quality local facilities for existing and new residents.

5.6 The policies within the plan are to be based on six topic themes<sup>2</sup> which are considered key to achieve the over-riding aim of the Town Council, these being:

- Environment;
- Community & Health;
- Design & Heritage;
- Economy;
- Transport & Movement; and
- Housing

5.7 The Town Council in a letter dated 21 November 2014, indicated that the scope of the proposed NP would largely follow the 'Lite' approach, as set out in the Draft Issues and Options report. The only exception to this related to a potential extension/enhancement of the existing Lytham St Annes Dune Nature Reserve and a potential new nature reserve at the area at Heyhouses, as identified in the SEA Determination Context Plan in appendix 2. In all other respects, the SANP does not seek to promote major new allocations, in the sense of designating land for new 'hard' development uses, such as housing and/or employment.

5.8 Following the letter dated 21 November 2014 and ongoing discussions with Natural England, the Town Council confirmed in an email dated 15 April 2015, that the proposal for a new nature reserve at the area at Heyhouses has been deleted from the emerging Neighbourhood Plan. Instead, the Biological Heritage Site (BHS) is to be taken forward as a local designation in the Neighbourhood Plan and this should be considered instead of the proposed nature reserve as part of the SEA determination. A revised SEA Determination Context Plan is provided in appendix 3.

## **6.0 SEA Screening Determination**

6.1 The proposed parameters of the NP, including proposed themes and policy areas and the preferred 'lite' approach, as set out in section 5 of this report have been used to undertake this Screening Assessment. At this stage in the NP process, it is not possible to confirm the final content of the NP.

6.2 If the conclusion of the screening assessment is that an SEA is not required, any changes to the nature and quantum of development proposed may require further screening assessment to ensure that significant effect are not likely. If it is found that a SEA is required, any changes to the nature and quantum of development can be assessed as part of the SEA process.

6.3 Table 2 sets out the screening assessment for SANP to determine the likely significance of effects on the environment.

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<sup>2</sup> The identified theme and policy areas for St. Anne's on the Sea Neighbourhood Plan is provided in appendix 1.

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**Table 2: Assessment of likelihood of significant effects on the environment**

Screening Criteria (Annex II SEA Directive)	Screening Determination of the Likely significance of effects	
	Justification	Is the SANP likely to have a significant environmental impact
<b>1. The characteristics of plans and programmes, having regard, in particular to:</b>		
1(a) the degree to which the plan or programme <u>sets a framework</u> for projects and other activities, either with regard to the location, nature, size and operating conditions or by allocating resources.	<p>The overarching framework for planning policy is set in the National Planning Policy Framework and Planning Practice Guidance.</p> <p>The Neighbourhood Plan will set out a spatial vision and provide a development framework for St Annes on the Sea, based around the themes of the: environment; community &amp; health; design &amp; heritage; economy; transport &amp; movement and housing (plus implementation plan).</p> <p>The SANP does not seek to promote major new allocations, with the exception being the potential extension of and/or enhancement of the existing Lytham St Annes Dunes Nature reserve, in terms of visitor and interpretation facilities, including greater awareness of the wider beach and its environmental importance.</p> <p>Whilst the SANP sets the framework for other projects and activities, including the location, nature and size of the development, there are potential positive environmental effects resulting from the Plan.</p>	No
1(b) the degree to which the plan or programme <u>influences other plans and programmes</u> including those in a hierarchy.	<p>The NP sits at the lowest tier of the development plan system hierarchy. A NP must be in general conformity with the strategic policies of the development plan in force. In this respect, it does not set a framework for other plans and strategies and can only provide policies for the area it covers – it does not have a direct impact on other plans in neighbouring areas.</p> <p>If SANP is brought forward before the emerging Local Plan is adopted, the Town Council and local planning authority will have to ensure close working relationship to ensure general conformity, the NP could influence the emerging Local Plan.</p>	No
1(c) the relevance of the plan or programme for the integration of environmental considerations, in particular with a view	<p>A NP is required to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development and therefore the likelihood of significant effects on the environment is minimised.</p> <p>The draft Issues and Options (June 2014) document produced by the Town Council has undertaken a</p>	No

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<p>to <u>promoting sustainable development</u>.</p>	<p>specific appraisal of each option in terms of its potential contribution to meeting the requirements of the “Egan Sustainability Wheel”, which can be used for judging sustainable communities.</p> <p>It is considered that the NP will have a direct (positive) impact on the environment through the inclusion of a policy to protect/enhance the existing nature reserve and protect environmental assets. There will also be indirect (positive) impacts on the environment through the implementation of policies on topics such as green infrastructure, flood risk, renewable energy, recreation and leisure, improving public transport and design.</p>	
<p>1(d) <u>environmental problems</u> relevant to the plan or programme and;</p>	<p>Any existing environmental issues identified through the NP process could be mitigated/reduced through the implementation of the Plan.</p> <p>The NP does not seek to promote major new allocations, the only exception being a potential extension to an existing nature reserve. The environmental impact of proposals in the SANP are likely to be minimal due to the nature/ quantum and scale of development proposed.</p>	<p>No</p>
<p>1(e) the relevance of the plan or programme for the implementation of community legislation on the environment (for example, plans and programmes linked to waste management or water protection)</p>	<p>The NP will be in general conformity with the saved policies in the Fylde Borough Local Plan. The emerging Local Plan will take account of existing European and National legislative framework for environmental protection.</p> <p>If SANP is brought forward before the emerging Local Plan is adopted, the Town Council and local planning authority will have to ensure close working relationship to ensure general conformity.</p> <p>This NP will not impact on the implementation of European Community legislation on the environment.</p>	<p>No</p>
<p><b>2. Characteristics of the effects and of the area likely to be affected, having regard, in particular, to:</b></p>		
<p>2(a) the probability, duration, frequency and reversibility of effects.</p>	<p>It is highly unlikely that there will be irreversible environmental impacts associated with the NP. It is considered that the proposed policies in the NP overall seek to ensure that direct and indirect positive environmental effects are maximised and negative effects are minimised or avoided.</p>	<p>No</p>
<p>2(b) the cumulative nature of the effects</p>	<p>It is considered that the effect of this NP will be largely beneficial, therefore any cumulative impacts will also be beneficial and unlikely to be significant on the local environment.</p>	<p>No</p>
<p>2(c) the transboundary nature of the effects</p>	<p>The parish boundary for St Annes on the Sea is adjacent to the Borough boundary with Blackpool Council. Within Fylde, the parish boundary for St. Anne’s on the Sea borders the parish of Westby-</p>	<p>Potential</p>

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	<p>with-Plumpton and the non parished areas of Ansdell and Lytham. There may be the potential for localised transboundary impacts on neighbouring areas, this may be more prevalent for the urban conurbation.</p> <p>Proposal for the extension to/enhancement of the existing Lytham St Annes Dunes Nature Reserve may have the potential for positive transboundary effects.</p> <p>Due to the nature of the policies and the lack of any development allocations, it is not considered that proposals in the NP would have a significant environmental impact on European sites within or in the wider vicinity of the NP area, including the:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Morecambe Bay SPA and Ramsar site</li> <li>• Ribble &amp; Alt Estuaries SPA and Ramsar site</li> <li>• Bowland Fells SPA,</li> <li>• Martin Mere SPA,</li> <li>• Sefton Coast SAC</li> <li>• Liverpool Bay SAC</li> </ul> <p>A map of European sites within or in the wider vicinity of the NP area is available in appendix 4.</p>	
<p>2(d) the risks to human health or the environment (for example, due to accidents)</p>	<p>It is not envisaged that there will be significant risk to human health or the environment as a result of the development proposed in the NP.</p> <p>There are indirect (positive) benefits to health through proposed policies tackling social needs of the population. This includes policies to take account of the rising needs of the large population of older people, including provision for lifetime homes, facilitating retirement villages and supported housing products. There are proposed policies to encourage improvements to existing housing stock and thermal efficiency, promotion of health lifestyles through pedestrian and cycle networks and access to amenity space, improvement to bathing water quality and public transport links.</p>	<p>No</p>
<p>2(e) the magnitude and spatial extent of the effects (geographical area and size of the population likely to be affected)</p>	<p>The NP is for St Anne's on the Sea and covers the whole administrative area of the Town Council which is a predominately urban area. The proposals in the NP are concerned with development in the Neighbourhood Area only.</p> <p>The population of the parish in the 2011 census stood at 27,105, which comprised 35.7% of the total population of Fylde Borough.</p> <p>The over-riding aim of the NP is to ensure the area</p>	<p>No</p>

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	<p>remains a thriving, sustainable community. To further this, the aims and objectives are heavily focused on supporting all of the town's residents, visitors and people who work in it. The proposed themes and policy areas are not considered to provide a detrimental impact on residential amenity but provide positive impacts for the community.</p> <p>Whilst the policies proposed in the NP will provide localised benefits, due to the Town being a key service centre in the borough and a tourist destination, the positive effects could be provided for the wider community. This will be enhanced through policies on tourism offer.</p>	
<p>2(f) the value and vulnerability of the area likely to be affected due to;</p> <p>i. special natural characteristics or cultural heritage</p> <p>ii. exceeded environmental quality standards or limit values or</p> <p>iii. intensive land use</p> <p>2(g) the effects on areas or landscapes which have a recognised national, community or international protection status.</p>	<p>There are 19 grade II listed buildings, 3 Conservation Areas and 2 registered grade II listed Historic Park and Gardens within the Neighbourhood Area.</p> <p>Whilst the area is generally urban in nature, there are European, national and local environmental designations within the neighbourhood area.</p> <p>The NP is unlikely to affect the value and vulnerability of the areas of special natural characteristics or cultural heritage. The proposed policies are likely to provide direct (positive) benefits. This will be through policies to preserve and enhance heritage assets, high standards of design and enhancement of public realm, and protection of environmental assets within and adjoining the town.</p> <p>The borough has a number of important areas or landscapes which have national, community or international protection. These sites are protected by separate policies in the saved policies in the Fylde Borough and in the emerging Fylde Local Plan.</p> <p>The overall impact of the NP will be positive by maximising the positive environmental effects of development and minimising or avoiding negative effects.</p>	<p>No.</p>

6.4 On the basis of the SEA Screening Assessment as a set out in table 2, the conclusion is that the current proposals for St. Anne's on the Sea Neighbourhood Plan are unlikely to have a significant environmental effect and therefore do not need to be subject to a full SEA. The main reasons for this conclusion are:

- The SANP seeks to avoid or minimise negative environmental effects through the implementation of the NP. The NP is therefore likely to have both direct and

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indirect positive environmental effects. Therefore, any cumulative impacts will also be beneficial and unlikely to be significant on the local environment.

- The NP does not seek to promote major new allocations, the environmental impact of proposals in the SANP are likely to be minimal due to the nature/ quantum and scale of development proposed.
- The SANP sets a framework for projects and development, it is specific development which may come forward within the Neighbourhood Area that may result in environmental effects which will require appropriate environmental assessment by the applicant.
- The SANP represent a lower tier in the hierarchy of planning documents and continued close working relationships between the Town Council and local planning authority will ensure general conformity with the 'parent' emerging Local Plan in the event that the NP comes into legal force before the adoption of the emerging Local Plan.
- The SANP provides a further layer of policies to protect and enhance the environment rather than seeking to promote major new allocations.
- The proposal for a potential extension to/enhancement of the existing Lytham St Anne's Dunes Nature Reserve are considered to provide a direct positive impact on the local environment within St Anne's on the Sea and the wider catchment.

6.5 It is important to note that this conclusion is based on the information provided, as set out in section 5. If the issues addressed in the Neighbourhood Plan should change then a new screening opinion may be required to determine whether an SEA will be required.

### **7.0 Consultation with Statutory Bodies**

7.1 The three statutory consultation bodies for Strategic Environmental Assessment in England have been consulted to determine whether SANP required a full SEA. The Consultation Bodies defined in this report as 'statutory consultees' in England comprise:

- Historic England (formerly English Heritage);
- Environment Agency; and
- Natural England

7.2 The statutory consultees were initially consulted for three weeks in August/September 2014 to seek their views on the screening opinion request and information submitted. A summary of the consultation responses is provided in appendix 4.

7.3 Following a review of the statutory consultee comments and further discussions between the Town Council and local planning authority, the Town Council confirmed in their letter dated 21 November 2014, that the scope of the proposed NP would largely follow the 'Lite' approach, as set out in the Draft Issues and Options report. The only exception to this relates to a potential extension to/enhancement of the existing Lytham St Annes Dunes Nature Reserve and a potential new nature reserve at the area at Heyhouses, as identified in the SEA Determination Context Plan in appendix 2.

7.4 Following further ongoing discussion with Natural England, the Town Council have confirmed in an email dated 15 April 2015 that the proposal for a new nature reserve at the area at Heyhouses has been deleted from the emerging Neighbourhood Plan.

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Instead, the Biological Heritage Site (BHS) is to be taken forward as a local designation in the Neighbourhood Plan and that this should be considered instead of the proposed nature reserve as part of the SEA determination. A revised SEA Determination Context Plan is provided in appendix 3.

- 7.5 In light of the statutory consultee comments and Town Council's agreed scope, the local planning authority has drafted a screening assessment report which concludes that an SEA would not be required for this Neighbourhood Plan.
- 7.6 The local planning authority undertook a further three week consultation with the three statutory consultees in January/February 2015 to seek comments on the draft screening assessment and whether they agree with the conclusion of the screening opinion. A summary of the consultation responses are provided in table 3.

Table 3: **Summary of responses to the consultation January/ February 2015**

Statutory Consultee	Summary of response
Environment Agency	Satisfied with the finding of the screening opinion and agree that a SEA is not required.
Historic England (formerly English Heritage)	No comment
Natural England	<p><u>10 February 2015:</u></p> <p>Natural England is unable to make a judgement on the need for SEA at this time without information on the proposed Neighbourhood Plan policies relating to the Nature reserve. In particular, the purpose for its inclusion and what is to be proposed at the Nature Reserve through the Neighbourhood Plan. Given that we are aware of SPA birds species are using the proposed Nature Reserve and its association with the Queensway development, we also cannot conclude no likely significant effects.</p> <p>We also recommend that within the theme areas outlined in the SEA document that biodiversity be specifically included under the Environment section. There may be a requirement to rescreen once the policies are drafted.</p> <p><u>3 March 2015:</u></p> <p>It is important that the emerging Local Plan and Neighbourhood Plan are not conflicting in relation to the site the Town Council proposes for a nature reserve and Fylde Council Preferred Options proposes for development (site H2).</p> <p>Natural England would recommend site H2 is safeguarded area and protected from future development due to the presence of birds, which are functionally linked to the Ribble and Alt Estuaries SPA. If the site is selected for any form of alternative land use (than present) a Habitat Regulation Assessment will be required. <i>On 15 April, the Town Council confirmed the proposal for a new nature reserve have been deleted and the Biological Heritage Site is to be taken forward as a local designation (see para 7.4 above).</i></p>

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	<p><u>6 May 2015:</u> Natural England confirmed that they agreed with the approach to be taken forward.</p>
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**8.0 Summary Screening and conclusion**

Name of Neighbourhood Plan	St. Anne's on the Sea Neighbourhood Development Plan
Geographic Coverage of the Plan	St Anne's on the Sea Town Council Neighbourhood Area
Key topics/scope of Plan	<p>Eight theme and policy areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Environment;</li> <li>• Community &amp; Health;</li> <li>• Design &amp; Heritage;</li> <li>• Economy;</li> <li>• Transport &amp; Movement;</li> <li>• Housing;</li> <li>• Sustainability; and</li> <li>• Implementation Plan</li> </ul>

Name and job title of officer undertaking Screening Assessment	Fiona Riley Planning Policy Officer
Date of assessment	January and April 2015
Name and job title of officer approving the Screening Determination	  Mark Evans Head of Planning and Regeneration
Date of approval	May 2015
Date of final Screening determination	May 2015

**Conclusion of assessment:**  
 The proposals for St. Anne's on the Sea Neighbourhood Plan will result in positive direct and indirect environmental effects, therefore any cumulative impacts will also be beneficial. The Plan does not promote major new allocations, the environmental impact of the proposals are likely to be minimal due to the nature/ quantum and scale of the development proposed. Therefore, the current proposals are unlikely to have a significant environmental effect and therefore do not need to be subject to a full SEA.

The three statutory consultees have agreed the conclusion of the screening determination.

**APPENDIX 1: IDENTIFIED THEME AND POLICY AREAS FOR ST. ANNE'S ON THE SEA  
NEIGHBOURHOOD AREA**

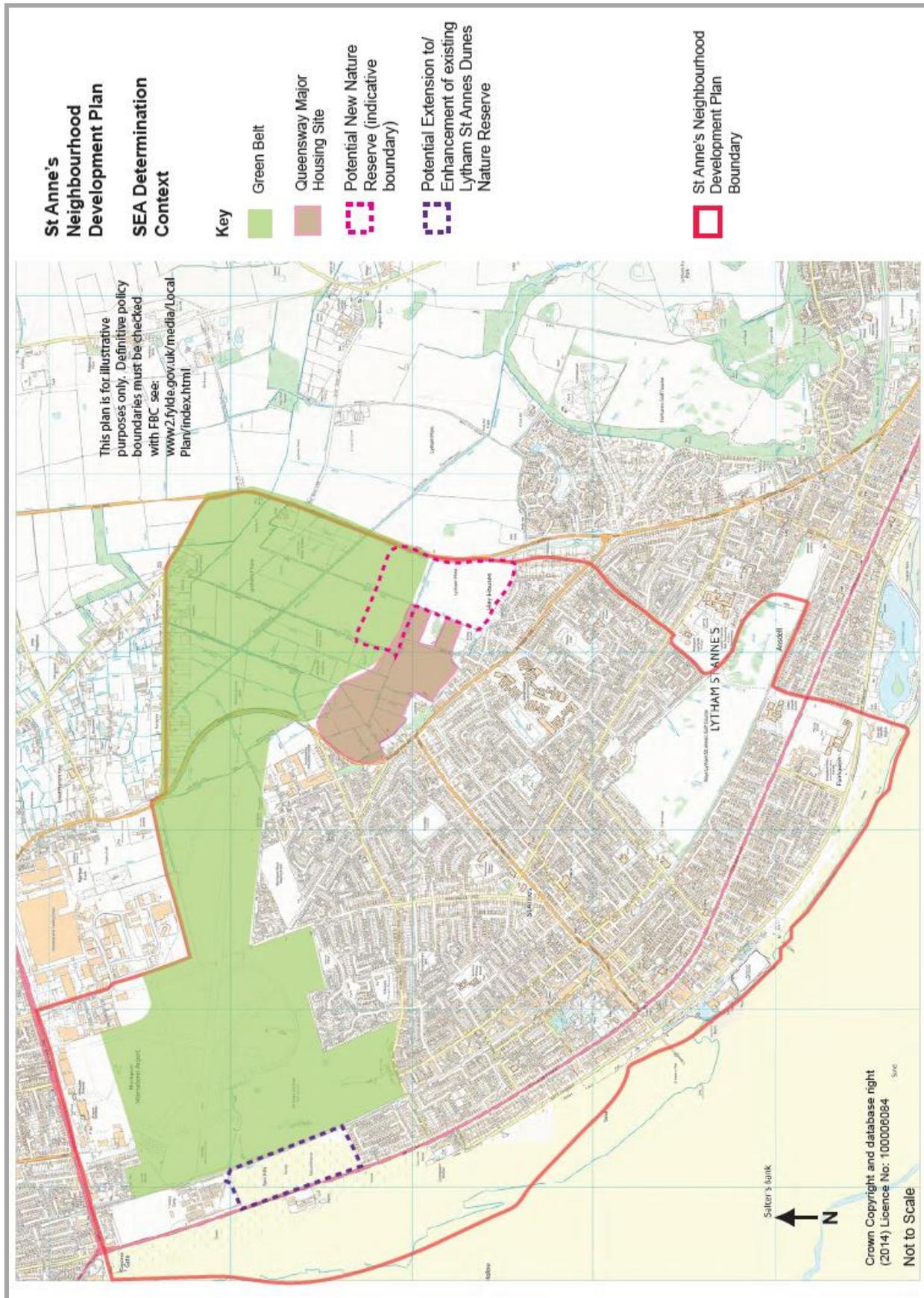
No	THEME	SUGGESTED POLICY AREA	ACTIONS
1	ENVIRONMENT	<p><b>Pedestrian and cycle network</b> – <i>ensure links across town</i></p> <p><b>Open space, recreation and leisure</b> – <i>see green infrastructure/corridor exercise</i></p> <p><b>Protecting open countryside</b> – <i>country side park, public rights of way</i></p> <p><b>Local green space</b></p> <p><b>Beach and sea</b></p>	<p><i>Mark Green Infrastructure / Corridor on location map.</i></p> <p><i>Ensure policies are clearly for St. Anne's.</i></p> <p><i>Provide bullet points.</i></p>
2	COMMUNITY & HEALTH	<p><b>Community facilities</b></p> <p><b>Community assets</b></p> <p><b>Secondary school?</b> – <i>can we influence this?</i></p> <p><b>Needs of elderly population</b></p>	<p><i>Make sure that policies are things we can do something about.</i></p> <p><i>Provide bullet points.</i></p>
3	DESIGN & HERITAGE	<p><b>Gateways into town</b> - <i>important</i></p> <p><b>Towns heritage</b> - <i>important</i></p> <p><b>Historic town study</b> – <i>character</i></p> <p><b>Building for UFE 12</b></p> <p><b>Design quality</b> – <i>separate design guide produced after plan?</i></p>	<p><i>Review photographs of good and bad design, mark on map?</i></p> <p><i>Provide bullet points.</i></p>
4	ECONOMY	<p><b>Tourism</b></p> <p><b>Office accommodation</b></p> <p><b>Loss of employment land</b></p> <p><b>Town centre</b></p>	<p><i>How to encourage tourism.</i></p> <p><i>St. Anne's is a traditional seaside town.</i></p> <p><i>Provide bullet points</i></p> <p><i>Mapping exercise?</i></p>
		<b>South Fylde Railway</b>	<i>Provide bullet</i>

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5	<b>TRANSPORT &amp; MOVEMENT</b>	<b>Improving public transport</b> <b>Car parking</b>	<i>points.</i>
6	<b>HOUSING</b>	<b>Affordable housing</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Shared ownership</li> <li>• Low cost market</li> </ul> <b>Types/tenure</b> <b>Specialist needs</b>	<i>Provide bullet points.</i>
7	<b>SUSTAINABILITY</b>	<b>Renewable energy</b> <b>Green infrastructure (GI)</b>	<i>Links with Environment and Green Corridor.</i> <i>Provide bullet points,</i>
8	<b>IMPLEMENTATION PLAN</b>		<i>Town Council cannot deliver all actions.</i> <i>Will need to identify who is responsible for delivery of each action.</i> <i>Provide bullet points.</i>

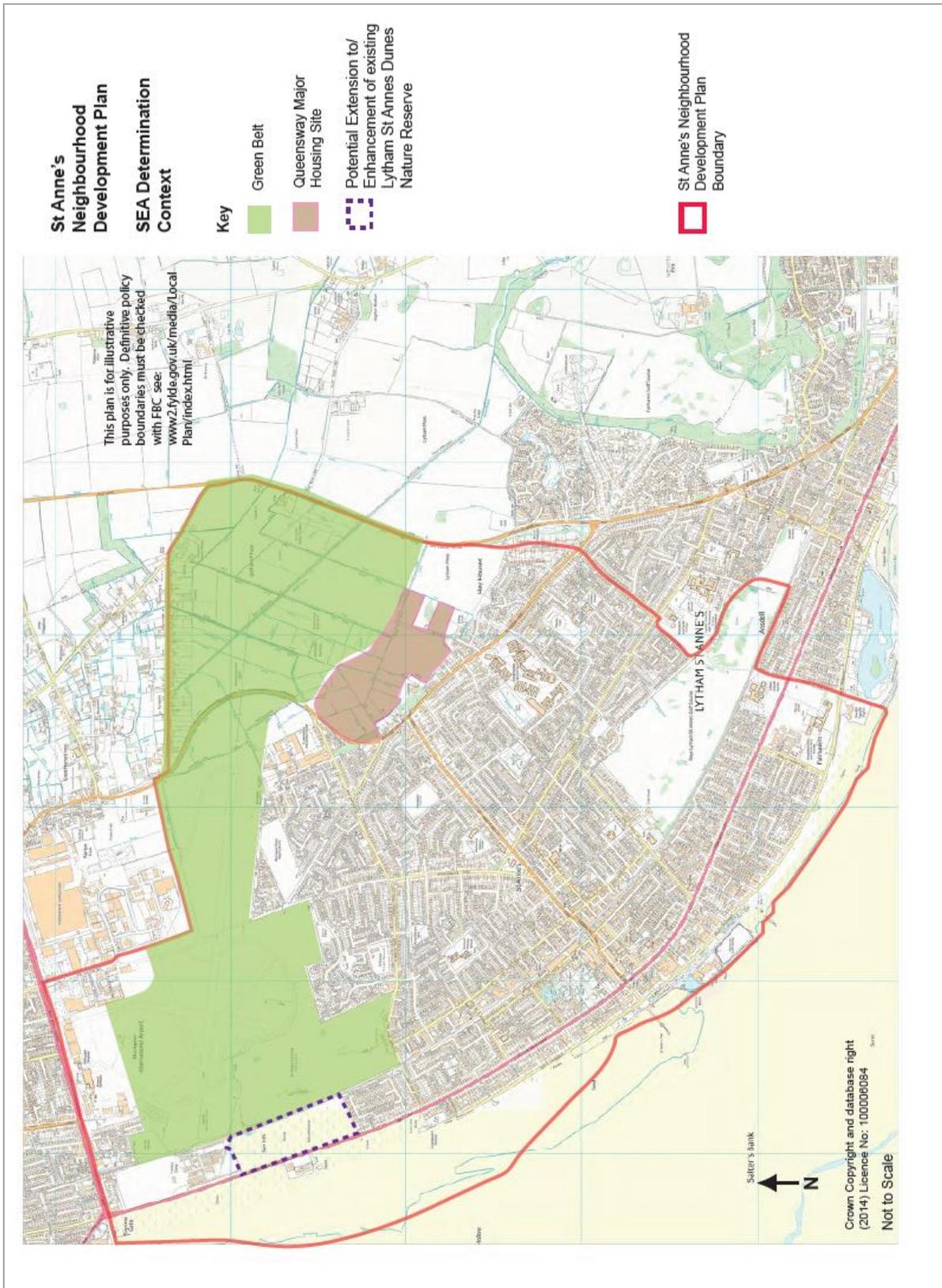
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**APPENDIX 2: SEA DETERMINATION CONTEXT PLAN**

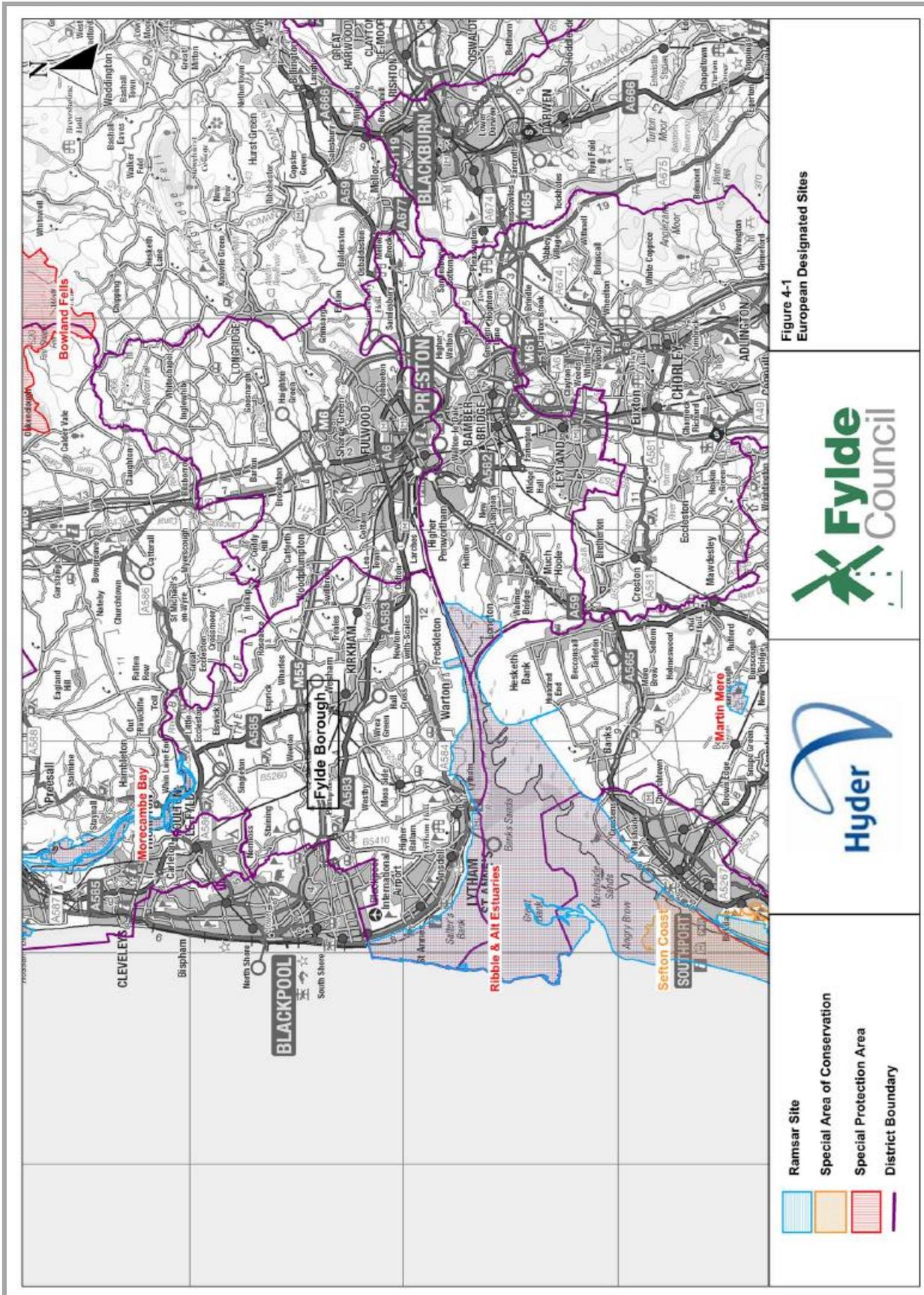


Strategic Environmental Assessment Screening Opinion of  
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**APPENDIX 3: REVISED SEA DETERMINATION CONTEXT PLAN (May 2015)**



**APPENDIX 4: EUROPEAN DESIGNATED SITES WITHIN OR IN THE WIDER VICINITY OF THE ST. ANNE'S ON THE SEA NEIGHBOURHOOD AREA**



Source: Fylde Local Plan to 2030 Habitat Regulations Assessment Screening Report

Strategic Environmental Assessment Screening Opinion of  
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**APPENDIX 5: SUMMARY OF RESPONSE TO THE INITIAL CONSULTATION (28 August to 19 September 2014)**

<b>Statutory Consultee</b>	<b>Summary of response</b>
Environment Agency (Dated 10/09/14)	We feel that if the Town Council chooses to undertake a comprehensive NDP then further work to ensure the requirements of Strategic Environmental Assessment / Sustainability Appraisal SEA/SA will be required. If the "lite" approach is taken we would recommend that an up-to-date scoping of the issues is undertaken to establish if further SEA/SA work is necessary. The existing SA Scoping Report produced by Fylde BC (updated in 2010) will soon require a review as 5 years is generally considered the 'shelf life' of evidence base documents. Therefore, a light review of the issues of relevance to St Anne's would establish if any further SA would be required if the NDP "lite" approach was taken.
English Heritage (Dated 17/09/14)	The evidence accompany the consultation is vague in that it proposes a number of different options that may allocate sites for development but there is no confirmation of the preferred option. In view of this, it is determined that the Plan will allocate sites and put forward policies that will not have been covered in the appraisal of the 'parent' document and therefore will require an SA/SEA
Natural England (Dated 16/09/14)	<p>As the Fylde Local Plan is still emerging Natural England considers that further appraisal of the Neighbourhood Plan is required with respect to Strategic Environment Assessment (SEA) but also Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA).</p> <p>Before doing so, the Town Council needs to take a clear view as to how it wishes to approach the key strategic issues e.g. housing land allocation.</p> <p>There are some uncertainties, listed below, which are likely to require further assessment with regards to SEA and HRA:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Strategic, Making better use of the beach and the sea</li> <li>• Housing</li> <li>• The Natural Environment Beach and Dunes</li> <li>• Culture and Community Infrastructure</li> </ul>

## Appendix 2: Strategic Environmental Assessment Screening Opinion by Fylde Council



**Habitat Regulations Assessment  
Screening Opinion of**

**St. Annes on the Sea Neighbourhood Development Plan**

**Prepared by Fylde Council**

**August 2015  
Issued December 2015**

Habitat Regulations Assessment Screening Opinion of  
St. Annes on the Sea Neighbourhood Plan

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Appendix 1: Identified theme and policy areas for St. Anne's on the Sea Neighbourhood Area

Appendix 2: Revised SEA determination context plan

Appendix 3: European designated sites within or in the wider vicinity of the St. Anne's on the Sea Neighbourhood Plan

Habitat Regulations Assessment Screening Opinion of  
St. Annes on the Sea Neighbourhood Plan

**1.0 Introduction**

- 1.1 This report is the first stage in the Habitat Regulations Assessment (HRA) process, commonly referred to as Screening.
- 1.2 This Screening Opinion is designed to determine whether or not the proposed content of the St. Annes on the Sea Neighbourhood Plan (hereafter known as 'SANP') is likely to result in significant effects upon one or more European sites, either alone or in combination with other plans or programmes, and subsequently whether or not an Appropriate Assessment will be required.
- 1.3 In relation to neighbourhood plans, the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012 (as amended 2015) require the Submission neighbourhood plan to include a statement explaining how the proposed neighbourhood development plan meets the basic conditions, as set out in paragraph 8 of Schedule 4B of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990. One of these basic conditions requires the neighbourhood plan to be compatible with EU Obligations and should demonstrate that it is not likely to have a significant effect on a European site. Amendments to the Neighbourhood Planning Regulations now require the Submission Plan to include either an environmental report prepared in accordance with paragraph (2) and (3) of regulation 12 of the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004(a) or, a statement explaining that the plan proposal is unlikely to have significant environmental effects and the reasons for this determination.
- 1.4 This screening assessment should be read alongside the Strategic Environmental Assessment Screening Opinion of the SANP that was issued by Fylde Council in May 2015.
- 1.5 The legislative background set out in the following section outlines the regulations that require the need for this screening exercise. Section 3 provides a summary of the HRA screening process and section 4 – 7 provides the screening assessment.

**2.0 Legislation**

- 2.1 Under Article 6 of the Habitats Directive, an assessment is required where a plan or project may give rise to significant effects upon any Natura 2000 sites (also known as 'European sites').
- 2.2 Natura 2000 is a network of areas designated to conserve natural habitats and species that are rare, endangered, vulnerable or endemic within the European Community. This includes Special Areas of Conservation (SAC), designated under the Habitats Directive for their habitats and/or species of European importance, and Special Protection Areas (SPA), classified under Directive 2009/147/EC on the Conservation of Wild Birds (the codified version of Directive 79/409/EEC as amended) for rare, vulnerable and regularly occurring migratory bird species and internationally important wetlands. Candidate SACs (cSACs) and Sites of Community Importance (SCI) are considered in this process; furthermore, it is Government Policy that sites designated under the 1971 Ramsar Convention for their internationally important wetlands (Ramsar sites) and potential SPAs (pSPAs) should also be considered.
- 2.3 The requirements of the Habitats Directive are transposed into English and Welsh law by means of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010 (as amended).

Habitat Regulations Assessment Screening Opinion of  
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- 2.4 Where a local planning authority determines that the plan is unlikely to have a significant effect, and does not require an Appropriate Assessment, a statement of its reasons for the determination should be provided to the 'qualifying body'<sup>1</sup>.
- 2.5 If the Screening (the first stage of the process) concludes that significant adverse effects are likely, then an Appropriate Assessment will be required. It will be the responsibility of the 'qualifying body' to prepare the Appropriate Assessment. The local planning authority may be able to offer relevant support and assistance.
- 3.0 **Habitat Regulations Assessment Process**
- 3.1 This Screening Report takes into account the requirements of the Habitat Directive and relevant guidance produced by David Tyldesley Associates for Natural England<sup>2</sup> and the Countryside Council for Wales (now Natural Resources Wales)<sup>3</sup>.
- 3.2 Figure 1 outlines the stages involved in HRA and the specific methods that have been used in preparing this report, to determine whether an Appropriate Assessment is required.

<p><b>Figure1: Habitat Regulations Assessment Stages</b></p>
<p><b>Screening</b></p> <p>This is the process which initially identifies the likely impacts upon a European site of a project or plan, either alone or in-combination with other projects or plans, and considers whether these impacts may have a significant effect on the integrity of the site's qualifying habitats and/or species. It is important to note that the burden of evidence is to show, on the basis of objective information, that there will be no significant effect; if the effect may be significant, or is not known, that would trigger the need for an Appropriate Assessment. There is European Court of Justice case law to the effect that unless the likelihood of a significant effect can be ruled out on the basis of objective information, and adopting the precautionary principle, then an Appropriate Assessment must be made.</p>
<p><b>Appropriate Assessment</b></p> <p>This is the detailed consideration of the impact on the integrity of the European site of the project or plan, either alone or in combination with other projects or plans, with respect to the site's conservation objectives and its structure and function. This is to determine whether or not there will be adverse effects on the integrity of the site. This stage also includes the development of mitigation measures to avoid or reduce any possible impacts.</p>
<p><b>Assessment of alternative solutions</b></p> <p>This is the process which examines alternative ways of achieving the objectives of the</p>

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<sup>1</sup> A town or parish council is the 'qualifying body' for producing a Neighbourhood Plan. In an area not covered by a town or parish council, a designated Neighbourhood Forum is the qualifying body.

<sup>2</sup> The Habitats Regulations Assessment of Local Plan Documents, David Tyldesley and Associates for Natural England (2009)

<sup>3</sup> Guidance for Plan Making Authorities in Wales – The Appraisal of Plans under the Habitats Directive. David Tyldesley and Associates for Countryside Council for Wales (CCW) Bangor (November 2009, revised April 2010 and September 2012)

Habitat Regulations Assessment Screening Opinion of  
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project or plan that would avoid adverse impacts on the integrity of the European site, should avoidance or mitigation measures be unable to cancel out adverse effects.

**Assessment where no alternative solutions exist and where adverse impacts remain.**

At this stage, an assessment is made with regard to whether or not the development is necessary for imperative reasons of overriding public interest (IROPI). If it is, this stage also involves detailed assessment of the compensatory measures needed to protect and maintain the overall coherence of the Natura 2000 network.

Source: Fylde Local Plan HRA Screening Report (2013)

- 3.3 Much of the information used for this screening opinion has been developed from the HRA screening for the emerging Fylde Local Plan. The Preferred Options version of the Fylde Local Plan was published in June 2013 and the associated Screening Report was completed in June 2013. Whilst the Local Plan is not yet adopted, it is considered however that the background information in the borough wide HRA can be used for the SANP screening opinion. The emerging Local Plan HRA screening report should be read in conjunction with this screening opinion and is available to view at: [www.fylde.gov.uk/localplan/](http://www.fylde.gov.uk/localplan/).

#### **4.0 St. Anne's on the Sea Neighbourhood Plan Context**

- 4.1 The parish of St. Anne's on the Sea is located in Fylde, Lancashire. To the north, the town is bounded by the A5230, Squires Gate, and includes Blackpool International Airport. Blackpool is four miles to the north. To the southeast it abuts the townships of Ansdell and Lytham. Its Irish Sea coastline lies at the northern edge of the estuary of the River Ribble, whilst inland the town includes part of the agricultural Lytham Moss. The population of the parish is 27,105, which comprised 35.7% of the total population of Fylde Borough (2011 Census).
- 4.2 The St. Anne's on the Sea Neighbourhood Area was designated on the 11 April 2013 covering the whole of the administrative area of the Town Council. Work on SANP commenced in February 2014 by the Town Council, in collaboration with other stakeholders. The following background documents have been produced following evidence gathering and initial consultation with the community, stakeholders and statutory consultees:
- Issues and Options (draft June 2014)
  - Report of Consultation (draft June 2014)
  - Neighbourhood Profile (July 2014)
  - Identified Theme and Policy Areas (received 21 November 2014)
  - 'Lite' Options Appraisal Matrix (received 21 November 2014)
- 4.3 The Town Council have formally requested a HRA screening opinion of its emerging NP, which was received by Fylde Council on 27 May 2015. This screening determination has been undertaken by Fylde Council on behalf of the Town Council. The documents referred to in para 4.2 have been used for undertaking this screening assessment.
- 4.4 The purpose of the SANP is to ensure St. Anne's on the Sea is and remains a thriving, sustainable community. The NP has the following draft aims which it seeks to achieve, these being:

## Habitat Regulations Assessment Screening Opinion of St. Annes on the Sea Neighbourhood Plan

- Identify the future development proposals for St. Anne's on the Sea and how these can be enhanced to support the vision of the town as a 'Garden town by the Sea'
- Bring forward proposals which will support the quality of life in St. Anne's on the Sea in the years to come;
- Protect and enhance the distinctive architectural design and the historic environment within the Town.

4.5 To further these aims, the Plan sets out the following objectives:

1. Set out a positive vision for the future of the town, ensuring that it reflects the aspirations of its residents, who will be involved in making the plan, monitoring its progress and delivering development;
2. Ensure a high quality of life for all the town's residents;
3. Ensure that the town will have a sustainable and prosperous local economy into the future;
4. Support sustainable development meeting local needs;
5. Secure high quality sensitive design which prioritises local distinctiveness and enriches the landscape and built environment;
6. Enjoy and utilise our natural landscape and assets whilst protecting it for future generations;
7. Support the transition to a low carbon future taking full account of climate change, flood risk and coastal change, encourage the reuse of existing resources and the use of renewable resources;
8. Deliver high quality housing development that meets the town's needs;
9. Seek improvements to transport, to utility infrastructure and to digital connectivity;
10. Ensure that St. Anne's remains a high quality year round visitor resort;
11. Ensure that the town is safe, accessible and attractive to all its residents, visitors and people who work in it;
12. Protect the town's heritage assets whilst encouraging appropriate high quality contemporary architecture; and
13. Improve health, social and cultural wellbeing for all residents, encouraging and providing opportunities for an active lifestyle, and ensuring high quality local facilities for existing and new residents.

4.6 The policies within the plan are to be based on six topic themes<sup>4</sup> which are considered key to achieve the over-riding aim of the Town Council, these being:

- Environment;
- Community & Health;
- Design & Heritage;
- Economy;
- Transport & Movement; and
- Housing

4.7 The Town Council in a letter dated 21 November 2014, indicated that the scope of the proposed NP would largely follow the 'Lite' approach, as set out in the Draft Issues and Options report. The only exception to this related to a potential extension/enhancement of the existing Lytham St Annes Dune Nature Reserve. The Town Council confirmed in

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<sup>4</sup> The identified theme and policy areas for St. Anne's on the Sea Neighbourhood Plan is provided in appendix 1.

## Habitat Regulations Assessment Screening Opinion of St. Annes on the Sea Neighbourhood Plan

an email dated 15 April 2015 that the proposals in the Draft Issues and Options report for a new nature reserve at Heyhouses had been deleted from the emerging Neighbourhood Plan and that the Biological Heritage Site is to be taken forward as a local designation. In all other respects, the SANP does not seek to promote major new allocations, in the sense of designating land for new 'hard' development uses, such as housing and/or employment.

- 4.8 Following the letter dated 21 November 2014 and ongoing discussions with Natural England concerning SEA Screening Opinion, the Town Council confirmed in an email dated 15 April 2015, that the proposal for a new nature reserve at the area at Heyhouses has been deleted from the emerging Neighbourhood Plan. Instead, the Biological Heritage Site (BHS) is to be taken forward as a local designation in the Neighbourhood Plan and this should be considered instead of the proposed nature reserve as part of the SEA determination.
- 4.9 The revised SEA Determination Context Plan, which is also of relevant to the HRA Screening, is provided in appendix 2.
- 4.10 In an email dated 17 December 2015, the Town Council confirmed that they are no longer proposing to extend the Local Nature Reserve at Lytham St Annes and are only looking at environmentally compatible enhancements.

### 5.0 **European Site Information**

5.1 The first stage in the screening process is the identification of all European sites potentially affected. The screening for the borough Local Plan identified that there are four European sites within Fylde or partially within Fylde, that could be affected by the Plan:

- Morecambe Bay SPA
- Morecambe Bay Ramsar Site
- Ribble and Alt Estuaries SPA
- Ribble and Alt Estuaries Ramsar Site

5.2 However, it is considered there are also a further five sites which form part of the Natura 2000 network that could potentially be affected:

- Morecambe Bay SAC
- Sefton Coast SAC
- Martin Mere SPA
- Martin Mere Ramsar Site
- Bowland Fells SPA

5.3 Environmental details regarding the European sites, including conservation status, threats and the results of condition assessment can be found in chapter 4 of the Local Plan HRA. The Conservation objectives for the European sites can also be found in appendix B of the Local Plan HRA.

### 6.0 **Habitats Regulations Assessment for the Fylde Local Plan**

6.1 The Fylde Local Plan Preferred Options was reviewed, and the following potential impacts were identified that may have some effect on European sites and their qualifying species. The potential effects considered included the following:

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- Direct habitat and species loss;
- Habitat degradation as a result of increase air pollution and increase recreational pressure;
- Loss of habitat functionally linked to a European site (i.e used by overwintering birds for foraging);
- Disturbance to species through increased recreational activity during construction and operational stages;
- Hydrological changes and water pollution.

6.2 It should be noted that the Local Plan has not yet been adopted, and therefore the borough HRA screening has not been examined. However, the borough HRA can be used as background information for HRAs for neighbourhood plans.

**7.0 Habitat Regulations Assessment Screening Determination for the St. Annes on the Sea Neighbourhood Development Plan**

7.1 The screening assessment has had regard to the conservation objectives of the relevant European sites potentially affected. The assessment has also considered other plans and projects, that being the emerging Fylde Local Plan and other emerging Neighbourhood Plans within the borough. The section below outlines the key considerations and screening assessment to establish whether an Appropriate Assessment is required.

7.2 The following table illustrate the finding of the screening assessment for each of the policy themes proposed within the SANP. This assessment determines whether there is a likely significant effect from these policy themes on the European sites as set out above.

**Table 1: Screening of the Proposed Policy theme on European sites within and outside of Fylde**

Proposed SANP policy theme	Screening Determination of the Likely significance of effects	
	Justification	Is the SANP likely to have a significant effect on a European site
Environment	<p>The proposed policies seek to conserve and enhance the natural environment. There will be indirect (positive) impacts on the environment through the implementation of policies on topics such as green infrastructure, flood risk, renewable energy, recreation and leisure, improving public transport and design. Policies on SuDs may also provide positive benefits to water quality.</p> <p>The SANP does not seek to promote major new allocations, with the only exceptions being:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Biological Heritage Site is to be taken forward as a local designation at Heyhouses; and</li> <li>• Environmental compatible enhancements to the existing Lytham</li> </ul>	No significant effect

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	<p>St Annes Dunes Nature reserve, in terms of visitor and interpretation facilities, including greater awareness of the wider beach and its environmental importance.</p> <p>It is considered that this will have a direct (positive) impact.</p> <p>Proposed policies to incorporate renewable and sustainable green provision in new and existing developments and encourage uptake in domestic and commercial small scale schemes will have positive (indirect) benefits on the environment.</p> <p>Any existing environmental issues identified through the NP process could be mitigated/reduced through the implementation of the Plan.</p> <p>The environmental impact of proposals in the SANP are likely to be minimal due to the nature/ quantum and scale of development proposed, therefore it is considered that the policies will not lead to a significant effect alone or in-combination on a European site.</p> <p>HRAs of future development proposals, such as wind farm or solar farm developments, are likely to be required.</p>	
Community & Health	<p>The proposed policies seek to protect and enhance community facilities, including the protection and enhanced provision of open space. The policies support improvements to coastal defences and multi-functional use of this infrastructure.</p> <p>The policies may have indirect (positive) benefits on the environment through the protection and provision of open space.</p> <p>The policies will not lead to development, but ensure suitable contributions are sought for provision of community and health infrastructure, therefore the policies will not lead to a significant effect alone or in-combination on a European site.</p> <p>HRAs of future development proposals, such as coastal defences are likely to be required.</p>	No significant effect
Design & Heritage	The proposed polices seek to protect and enhance the town's heritage and assets and	No significant effect

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	<p>promote high quality design of developments.</p> <p>The policies will not lead to development, but set criteria for the appropriate design of the development, therefore the policies will not lead to a significant effect alone or in-combination on a European site.</p>	
Economy	<p>The proposed policies seek to promote and improve tourism and the town centre. The policies seek to protect office accommodation and existing employment land. They also seek to secure the continuation and new public realm in the town centre and improve the quality of the Blackpool Airport setting.</p> <p>The Fylde Local Plan will allocate land for employment development in St Anne's and this will be accompanied by an appropriate Habitat Regulation Assessment. The SANP does not seek to allocate land for employment development, therefore the policies will not lead to a significant effect alone or in-combination on a European site.</p> <p>HRAs of future development proposals, such as tourism development near to the SPA or future development at Blackpool Airport, are likely to be required.</p>	No significant effect
Transport & Movement	<p>The proposed policies seek to improve the transport system, including public transport and pedestrian and cycle routes. The policies also seek to ensure adequate car parking provision to support the prosperity of the town centre and office accommodation. They also propose a policy to control the future operation at Blackpool Airport. The proposed policies also support improving gateways into the town. This will not lead to development, but set criteria for the appropriate design of the development.</p> <p>The policies may have indirect (positive) benefits on the environment through improvements to public transport and pedestrian and cycle routes.</p> <p>The policies will not lead to development, therefore the policies will not lead to a significant effect alone or in-combination on a European Site.</p> <p>HRAs of future development proposals such as, major road development near SPA, is</p>	No significant effect

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	likely to be required.	
Housing	<p>The proposed policies seek to ensure that new homes will contribute towards meeting the identified needs for St Annes, including affordable housing provision, specialist housing, housing mix and tenure.</p> <p>The Fylde Local Plan will allocate land for housing development in St Annes and this will be accompanied by an appropriate Habitat Regulation Assessment. The SANP does not seek to allocate land for housing development and this Plan will not lead to housing development. Therefore, the policies will not lead to a significant effect alone or in-combination on a European site.</p>	No significant effect

7.3 On the basis of the HRA Screening Assessment as set out in table 1, together with the findings of the assessment of the emerging Local Plan, it is considered that none of the proposed policy themes in the SANP are likely to have a significant effect along or in-combination with the European sites as set out in paragraph 5.1-5.2. The main reasons for this conclusion are:

- The SANP seeks to avoid or minimise negative environmental effects through the implementation of the NP. The NP is therefore likely to have both direct and indirect positive environmental effects. Therefore, any cumulative impacts will also be beneficial and unlikely to be significant on the local environment.
- The NP does not seek to promote major new allocations, the environmental impact of proposals in the SANP are likely to be minimal due to the nature/ quantum and scale of development proposed.
- The SANP sets a framework for projects and development, it is specific development which may come forward within the Neighbourhood Area that may result in environmental effects which will require appropriate Habitat Regulation Assessment by the applicant.
- The SANP represent a lower tier in the hierarchy of planning documents and continued close working relationships between the Town Council and local planning authority will ensure general conformity with the ‘parent’ emerging Local Plan in the event that the NP comes into legal force before the adoption of the emerging Local Plan.
- The SANP provides a further layer of policies to protect and enhance the environment rather than seeking to promote major new allocations to the detriment of European designations and functionally linked habitats.
- The proposal to enhancement the existing Lytham St Anne’s Dunes Nature Reserve which is currently unfavourable – recovering is considered to provide a direct positive impact on the local environment within St Anne’s on the Sea and the wider catchment.

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- 7.4 Since none of the policies in the SANP are considered to have a negative effect, it is considered that there is unlikely to be an in combination effect from all of the policies in the emerging SANP. In conclusion, an Appropriate Assessment is not required.
- 7.5 It is important to note that this conclusion is based on the information provided, as set out in section 5. If the issues addressed in the Neighbourhood Plan should change then a new screening opinion may be required to determine whether an Appropriate Assessment will be required.

**8.0 Consultation with Statutory Bodies**

- 8.1 The local planning authority undertook consultation on the draft screening assessment report with Natural England during August/September 2015 to seek comments on the draft screening assessment and whether they agree with the conclusion of the screening opinion. A summary of the consultation responses is provided in table 3.

Table 3: **Summary of responses to the consultation August/September 2015**

Statutory Consultee	Summary of response
Natural England	<p>2 October 2015</p> <p>Natural England agrees with the conclusions reached that the St Anne’s Neighbourhood Plan does not require a Habitat Regulations Assessment, however this agreement is subject to amendments to the maps and some additional text regarding the Biological Heritage Site, this is explained in more detail below. These conclusions reached are based on an emerging Local Plan, and although we agree in principle we advise that you consider the scenario if development emerges/there is any changes in Neighbourhood Plan before the Fylde Local Plan is formally adopted.</p> <p>In order to ensure consistency with the recent SEA screening it would be helpful to include some additional wording, the screening mentions the Town Council has confirmed the proposal for a new nature reserve has been deleted, we recommend the text includes that the Biological Heritage Site is to be taken forward as a local designation.</p> <p>This additional wording will clarify the position with site H2, which is to be a Biological Heritage Site and therefore protected from future development due to the presence of birds, which are functionally linked to the Ribble and Alt Estuaries SPA.</p> <p>Comments were also provided in relation to the maps included in the HRA screening.</p>

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**9.0 Summary Screening and conclusion**

Name of Neighbourhood Plan	St. Anne's on the Sea Neighbourhood Development Plan
Geographic Coverage of the Plan	St Anne's on the Sea Town Council Neighbourhood Area
Key topics/scope of Plan	<p>Eight theme and policy areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Environment;</li> <li>• Community &amp; Health;</li> <li>• Design &amp; Heritage;</li> <li>• Economy;</li> <li>• Transport &amp; Movement;</li> <li>• Housing;</li> <li>• Sustainability; and</li> <li>• Implementation Plan</li> </ul>

Name and job title of officer undertaking Screening Assessment	Fiona Riley Planning Policy Officer
Date of assessment	August 2015
Name and job title of officer approving the Screening Determination	 Mark Evans Head of Planning and Regeneration
Date of approval	December 2015
Date of final Screening determination	December 2015

**Conclusion of assessment:**

The proposals for St. Anne's on the Sea Neighbourhood Plan will result in positive direct and indirect environmental effects. The Plan does not promote major new allocations, the environmental impact of the proposals are likely to be minimal due to the nature/ quantum and scale of the development proposed. It is considered that there is unlikely to be an in combination effect from all of the policies in the emerging SANP. Therefore, the current proposals are unlikely to have a significant environmental effect and therefore do not need to be subject to a full Appropriate Assessment.

Natural England have agreed the screening determination conclusion.

**APPENDIX 1: IDENTIFIED THEME AND POLICY AREAS FOR ST. ANNE'S ON THE SEA  
NEIGHBOURHOOD AREA**

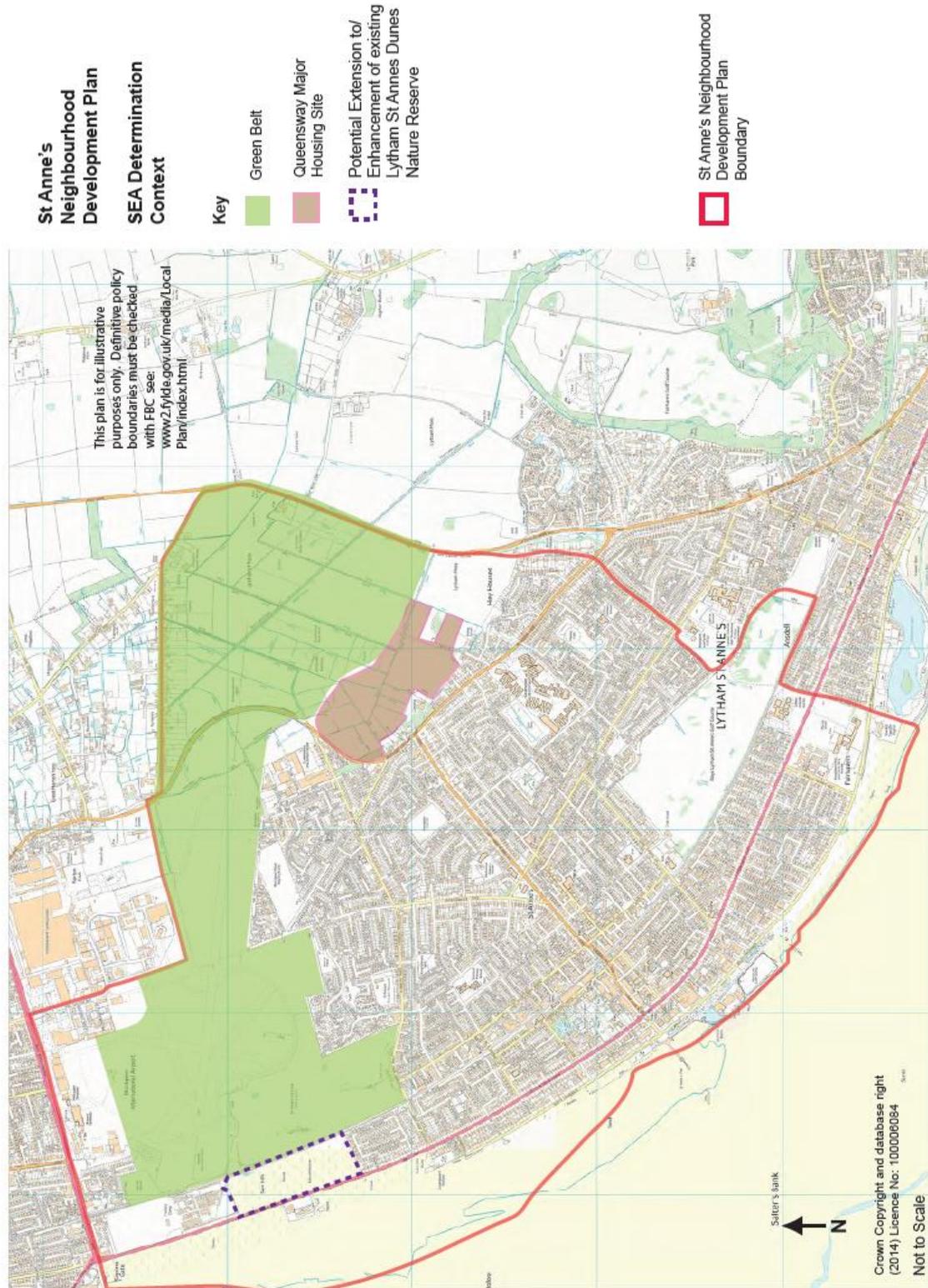
No	THEME	SUGGESTED POLICY AREA	ACTIONS
1	ENVIRONMENT	<p><b>Pedestrian and cycle network</b> – <i>ensure links across town</i></p> <p><b>Open space, recreation and leisure</b> – <i>see green infrastructure/corridor exercise</i></p> <p><b>Protecting open countryside</b> – <i>country side park, public rights of way</i></p> <p><b>Local green space</b></p> <p><b>Beach and sea</b></p>	<p><i>Mark Green Infrastructure / Corridor on location map.</i></p> <p><i>Ensure policies are clearly for St. Anne's.</i></p> <p><i>Provide bullet points.</i></p>
2	COMMUNITY & HEALTH	<p><b>Community facilities</b></p> <p><b>Community assets</b></p> <p><b>Secondary school?</b> – <i>can we influence this?</i></p> <p><b>Needs of elderly population</b></p>	<p><i>Make sure that policies are things we can do something about.</i></p> <p><i>Provide bullet points.</i></p>
3	DESIGN & HERITAGE	<p><b>Gateways into town</b> - <i>important</i></p> <p><b>Towns heritage</b> - <i>important</i></p> <p><b>Historic town study</b> – <i>character</i></p> <p><b>Building for UFE 12</b></p> <p><b>Design quality</b> – <i>separate design guide produced after plan?</i></p>	<p><i>Review photographs of good and bad design, mark on map?</i></p> <p><i>Provide bullet points.</i></p>
4	ECONOMY	<p><b>Tourism</b></p> <p><b>Office accommodation</b></p> <p><b>Loss of employment land</b></p> <p><b>Town centre</b></p>	<p><i>How to encourage tourism.</i></p> <p><i>St. Anne's is a traditional seaside town.</i></p> <p><i>Provide bullet points</i></p> <p><i>Mapping exercise?</i></p>
		<b>South Fylde Railway</b>	<i>Provide bullet</i>

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St. Annes on the Sea Neighbourhood Plan

5	<b>TRANSPORT &amp; MOVEMENT</b>	<b>Improving public transport</b> <b>Car parking</b>	<i>points.</i>
6	<b>HOUSING</b>	<b>Affordable housing</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Shared ownership</li> <li>• Low cost market</li> </ul> <b>Types/tenure</b> <b>Specialist needs</b>	<i>Provide bullet points.</i>
7	<b>SUSTAINABILITY</b>	<b>Renewable energy</b> <b>Green infrastructure (GI)</b>	<i>Links with Environment and Green Corridor.</i> <i>Provide bullet points,</i>
8	<b>IMPLEMENTATION PLAN</b>		<i>Town Council cannot deliver all actions.</i> <i>Will need to identify who is responsible for delivery of each action.</i> <i>Provide bullet points.</i>

Habitat Regulations Assessment Screening Opinion of  
St. Annes on the Sea Neighbourhood Plan

APPENDIX 2: REVISED SEA DETERMINATION CONTEXT PLAN (May 2015)



**APPENDIX 3: EUROPEAN DESIGNATED SITES WITHIN OR IN THE WIDER VICINITY OF THE ST. ANNE'S ON THE SEA NEIGHBOURHOOD AREA**

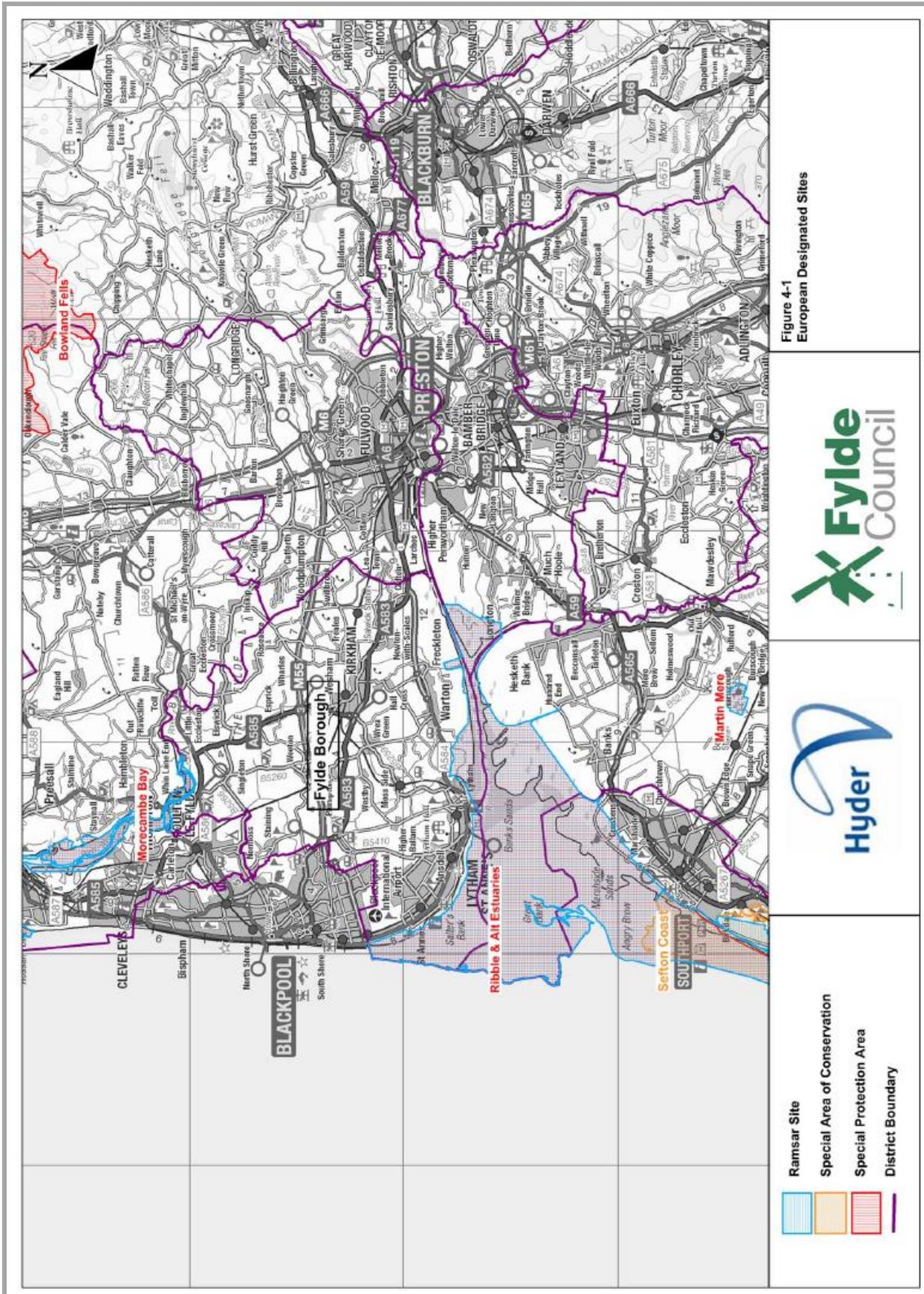


Figure 4-1  
European Designated Sites



Source: Fylde Local Plan to 2030 Habitat Regulations Assessment Screening Report