

Fylde Council
and West Lancashire Borough Council
Statement of Common Ground
Plan-Making for Strategic Cross-Boundary Matters

October 2020

Contents		
1	Introduction	2
2	Areas covered	4
3	Key strategic matters	6
4	Governance arrangements	7
5	Strategic matters: the timing of plan-making, revision and review	8
6	Strategic matters: housing needs	10
7	Strategic matters: housing requirements	12
8	Record of engagement on key strategic matters	13
9	Other strategic matters and how they will be addressed	14
10	The signatories	15

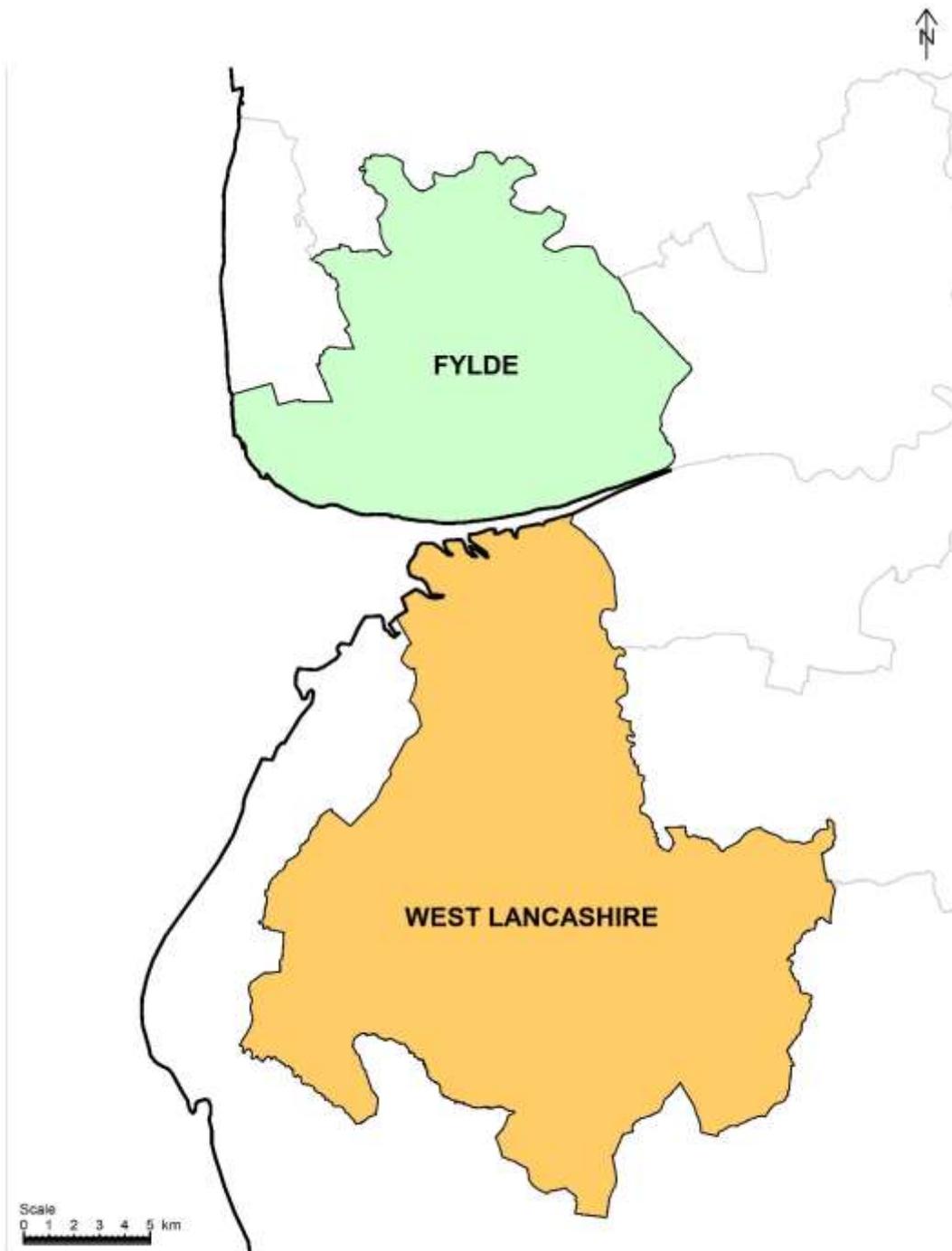
1. Introduction

- 1.1 This Statement of Common Ground has been produced in support of the Partial Review of the Fylde Local Plan to 2032. It provides an explanation of the strategic position of Fylde and neighbouring councils in relation to those cross-boundary strategic matters which fall within the extent of the revisions made by the Partial Review of the Fylde Local Plan to 2032, and explains engagement in relation to these matters to demonstrate compliance with the Duty to Co-Operate.
- 1.2 The Duty to Co-operate was introduced by the Localism Act 2011 as an amendment to the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, to ensure that local planning authorities continued to take a strategic approach to planning for issues that extend across boundaries, following the abolition of regional planning. The Duty applies to all local planning authorities, county councils in England and to a number of other ‘prescribed’ bodies requiring them to co-operate with each other to address strategic planning matters relevant to their areas in the preparation of a development plan document (DPD). The duty requires ongoing constructive and active engagement on the preparation of DPDs and other activities relating to the sustainable development and use of land.
- 1.3 The Duty:
- relates to sustainable development or use of land that would have a significant impact on at least two local planning areas or on a planning matter that falls within the remit of a county council;
 - requires that councils set out planning policies to address such issues;
 - requires that councils and other bodies engage constructively, actively and on an ongoing basis to develop strategic policies in the preparation of Local Plans and any documents and activities that can reasonably be considered to prepare the way for such plans;
 - requires councils to consider joint approaches to plan-making.
- 1.4 The Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) published by the Government explains the purpose of a statement of common ground:
- A statement of common ground is a written record of the progress made by strategic policy-making authorities during the process of planning for strategic cross-boundary matters. It documents where effective co-operation is and is not happening throughout the plan-making process, and is a way of demonstrating at examination that plans are deliverable over the plan period, and based on effective joint working across local authority boundaries. In the case of local planning authorities, it also forms part of the evidence required to demonstrate that they have complied with the duty to cooperate.*
- 1.5 This document follows the broad structure advocated by the PPG. The strategic matters considered are restricted to those directly relating to changes proposed in the Partial Review of the Fylde Local Plan to 2032.

- 1.6 The authorities have not identified any areas of disagreement relating to the strategic cross-boundary matters covered by this statement. Therefore, this statement does not record any matters of disagreement over the strategic matters covered.
- 1.7 This statement does not speculate on the effects of possible changes that may occur through draft changes to national planning policy and guidance or through indicative proposals for legislative change.

2. Areas covered

- 2.1 This statement covers the area of Fylde Council and the adjoining authority of West Lancashire Borough Council. The area covered is shown on the map below:



Fylde and West Lancashire Authorities

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- 2.2 The West Lancashire area occupies a broad rural area stretching southwards from the Ribble Estuary, with the Irish Sea to the west. The Borough of Fylde adjoins to the immediate north, on the north side of the Ribble Estuary occupying a broad rural area within the Fylde Coast sub-region.
- 2.3 Fylde is part of the Fylde Coast sub-region with Blackpool and Wyre Councils, and which forms a single housing market area and has a high level of self-containment in travel to work patterns and economic functionality. West Lancashire, although within the county of Lancashire, is part of the Liverpool City Region: its strongest cross-boundary functional links are with Sefton (in the Liverpool City Region) and Wigan (in the Manchester City Region); it also has links to the Central Lancashire City Region.
- 2.4 Fylde and West Lancashire have limited economic functional linkages due to the physical barrier of the Ribble Estuary. Connectivity is available via Central Lancashire (through Preston and South Ribble) through road and rail connections, but travel to work patterns show only small numbers of journeys between the boroughs.
- 2.5 The Ribble Estuary between the boroughs is designated as a Special Protection Area (SPA) for birds under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981, and is a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI).
- 2.6 The area adjoins the Irish Sea to the west, under the planning jurisdiction of the Marine Management Organisation, and the local planning authorities of Blackpool, Wyre, Preston, South Ribble, Chorley, Sefton, Knowsley, St. Helens and Wigan.
- 2.7 Fylde Council has produced separate Statements of Common Ground with its other immediate neighbours in relation to strategic matters relevant to the Partial Review of the Fylde Local Plan to 2032.

3. Key strategic matters

3.1 The strategic matters considered in this statement are the following:

The timing of plan-making, revision and review

Housing needs

Housing requirements

3.2 These strategic matters are those relevant to the Partial Review of the Fylde Local Plan to 2032. All other strategic matters will be dealt with, where necessary, through separate or subsequent statements.

4. Governance arrangements

- 4.1 This Statement of Common Ground has been developed for the purpose of ensuring that the requirements of the statutory Duty to Co-operate are met.
- 4.2 If considered necessary in order to agree the contents of this Statement of Common Ground, it will be subject to discussion leading to agreement between the councils' officers, including meetings if required.

5. Strategic matters: the timing of plan-making, revision and review

- 5.1 The plan-making stages of Fylde and West Lancashire boroughs have not been closely aligned.

Fylde

- 5.2 The Fylde local Plan to 2032 is a complete local plan containing strategic and non-strategic policies. It was submitted for examination in December 2016, prior to the publication of the National Planning Policy Framework (July 2018) (NPPF18). Following the publication of NPPF18, as the examination had not concluded, the examination continued and concluded and the adoption of the plan took place under the transitional arrangements of paragraph 214 of NPPF18, whereby the policies of the earlier National Planning Policy Framework of 2012 (NPPF12) continued to apply.

- 5.3 The Fylde Local Plan to 2032 was adopted on 22nd October 2018.

- 5.4 The Fylde Local Plan to 2032 paragraph 1.27 includes the following text reflecting the uncertainty during the examination as to the position in Wyre:

Fylde Council recognises that Wyre Council have identified difficulties in planning to meet its objectively-assessed need for housing. Any need that remains unmet following the adoption of Wyre's Local Plan will need to be addressed. Fylde Council will undertake an early review of the Fylde Local Plan (whether full or partial) to examine this issue, working with other authorities adjoining Wyre under the Duty to Co-Operate. The objective of this process would be to ensure that any unmet need is met within the Housing Market Area and/or in other appropriate locations, where consistent with the achievement of sustainable development.

The Wyre Local Plan (2011-2031) was adopted on 22nd February 2019 with unmet need. Therefore, the review mechanism contained within paragraph 1.27 of the Fylde Local Plan has been triggered.

- 5.5 The Fylde Council Local Development Scheme includes the Partial Review of the Local Plan. It states:

A Partial Review of the Fylde Local Plan to 2032 will bring the Local Plan in line with Paragraph 212 of the National Planning Policy Framework 2019. It will also consider the unmet housing need in Wyre in accordance with Paragraph 1.27 of the Fylde Local Plan to 2032.

- 5.6 The indicative timetable for the production and examination of the Partial Review was initially set out in the November 2019 LDS. Fylde Council has produced an update (September 2020) which has taken into account the effects of Covid-19. The updated timetable is:

- The consideration of responses to the scoping consultation and its presentation to Planning Committee are provisionally scheduled for the period up to January 2020;
- the Schedule of Revisions for presentation to Planning Committee in January 2020;
- the production of technical assessments between January and March 2020;
- the presentation of the Publication Version to Planning Committee in March 2020;

- publication for public consultation between July and September 2020;
- submission in October 2020; examination in February-March 2021; and
- adoption in July 2021.

5.7 The Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2017 requires that local planning authorities review local plans such that the review is completed within 5 years from the adoption date of the local plan. NPPF18 and the revised version of it published in February 2019 (NPPF19) include this requirement to review within 5 years and include policy as to which plan policies will need updating. Fylde Council will carry out a full review of the Local Plan within the five-year statutory period. There is therefore no need for the Partial Review of the Fylde Local Plan to 2032 to extend wider than the remit intended.

West Lancashire

5.8 The current adopted Local Plan for West Lancashire is the Local Plan 2012-2027, but national policy requires regular assessment of the Plan, and where necessary for it to be updated.

5.9 West Lancashire Borough Council has commenced work on preparing a new Local Plan 2023-2038. The Local Development Scheme (January 2020) provides a timetable for the preparation of the new Local Plan. Timescales are:

- Regulation 18 consultation: September - November 2020
- Publication: September - November 2021
- Adoption: February 2023

5.10 Local Plan preparation has been affected by Covid-19. The Council's website states:

Work on the new Local Plan, whilst continuing, has been delayed owing to the effects of Covid 19 (staff seconded to other services, and restrictions on the types of consultation we can do), and uncertainty over the Government's Planning White Paper. We will provide a revised timetable for preparing the new Local Plan once the Council returns to more normal working arrangements.

5.11 Therefore, the Partial Review of the Fylde Local Plan to 2032 is likely to be adopted during the earliest stages of the preparation of the West Lancashire Local Plan 2023-2038.

6. Strategic matters: housing needs

Fylde:

- 6.1 The adopted Fylde Local Plan to 2032 evidence base was provided by the Fylde Coast SHMA (2014) and its three Addenda, the last of which (Fylde Addendum 3: Analysis of the OAN in light of the 2014-based SNPP and SNHP (Turley, May 2017), accompanied by the Independent Assessment of the Economic Prospects of Fylde (Amion Consulting, May 2017)) gave an Objectively Assessed Need (OAN) for housing as a range of 410-430 dwellings per annum. This evidence was produced in accordance with NPPF12 and PPG dating from 2014. Following the Examination of the FLP32, the Inspector concluded that the housing requirement figure of 415 dwellings per annum was sound and appropriate to meet needs.
- 6.2 Fylde Council is to carry out a Partial Review of the Fylde Local Plan to 2032. The Partial Review develops necessary changes to the Local Plan to accord with NPPF19, as required by paragraph 212 of NPPF19. In addition, it considers the issue of unmet need in Wyre, as required by paragraph 1.27 of the Fylde Local Plan to 2032. This requires that Fylde Council undertakes a review whether full or partial if the Wyre Local Plan is adopted with unmet housing need. This has occurred (see below).
- 6.3 The Partial Review includes an update of Housing Needs. It is informed by a Local Housing Need assessment, calculated using the standard methodology in accordance with PPG, as specified in paragraph 60 of NPPF19. It also considers the implications of the PPG and the identified needs figure from the SHMA Fylde Addendum 3 and the recently-adopted Local Plan.
- 6.4 The adopted Fylde Local Plan to 2032 allocates sites for 8,819 homes within the plan period. This meets the needs that were identified in the Local Plan. The Partial Review of the Fylde Local Plan to 2032 demonstrates that the local housing need figure requires updating to 275 dwellings per annum. The Fylde Local Plan to 2032 provides allocations within Fylde that exceed this figure for the plan period. Therefore, the Fylde Local Plan to 2032 meets needs in Fylde identified in the Partial Review of the Fylde Local Plan to 2032.
- 6.5 The Partial Review of the Local Plan needs to take account of any need that cannot be met in neighbouring areas, in accordance with paragraph 65 of NPPF19. However, the adopted Wyre Local Plan commits Wyre Council to bringing forward a Partial Review, with the objective of meeting in full the Objectively Assessed Housing Needs, and including a review of the local housing needs figure. Matters of agreement with Wyre Council are included in a separate statement of common ground.

West Lancashire

- 6.6 The West Lancashire Local Plan 2012-2027 Policy SP1 identifies a housing need figure of 4,860 net dwellings over the plan period. The Local Plan provides for sufficient allocations and allowances to provide for this level of need. West Lancashire Borough Council has not requested assistance from Fylde Council in meeting the housing need identified in the West Lancashire Local Plan.
- 6.7 As part of the initial preparation of the West Lancashire local Plan 2023-2038, West Lancashire Borough Council has prepared an Assessment of Adopted West Lancashire Local

Plan 2012-2027. This identifies parts of the plan which will need reviewing. It notes that the SHELMA identifies a need figure of 221 dwellings per annum and the standard methodology local housing needs figure is 198 dwellings per annum. It notes that these figures are substantially below the adopted local plan annual requirement.

- 6.8 At the time of preparing this SoCG, West Lancashire is still at a very early stage of Plan production, and so has not identified what its future development needs will be or whether it will be able to meet all its own development needs in any future Local Plan. Therefore, the Partial Review of the Fylde Local Plan to 2032 will not need to consider meeting unmet needs from West Lancashire.

7. Strategic matters: housing requirements

Fylde:

- 7.1 The Fylde Local Plan to 2032 Policy H1 sets out a minimum net housing requirement of 415 homes per annum for the plan period 2011 to 2032, equating to 8,715 net homes for the period.
- 7.2 The Fylde Local Plan to 2032 was adopted on 22nd October 2018. Therefore, the strategic policy that sets out the housing requirement is less than 5 years old for the purpose of the assessment of five-year housing land supply as required by paragraph 73 of NPPF19.
- 7.3 The Partial Review includes a review of the housing requirement figure in the light of the updated minimum housing need figure above. The Partial Review will set a housing requirement figure of 275-415 dwellings per annum.

West Lancashire

- 7.4 The West Lancashire Local Plan 2012-2027 sets out the adopted housing requirement as 4,860 dwellings over the 15 year plan period, phased at 302 dwellings per annum between 2012 and 2017 and 335 dwellings per annum thereafter. The Local Plan was adopted on 16th October 2013. No request was made by West Lancashire Borough Council for assistance to meet unmet need. The Local Plan met needs that were identified in West Lancashire.
- 7.5 The West Lancashire Local Plan 2012-2027 housing requirement is now more than 5 years old. Accordingly, West Lancashire Borough Council is required by national policy to identify a supply of deliverable sites to provide a 5 years' supply of housing against the standard method figure for assessing local housing need, and to deliver homes to meet this figure. As the local housing need figure is significantly below the adopted housing requirement figure, the adopted local plan delivers sufficient housing to meet national policy, and there are no ramifications for the Partial Review of the Fylde Local Plan to 2032.

8. Record of engagement on key strategic matters

- 8.1 The Duty to Co-operate applies to all local planning authorities (LPAs), county councils in England and to a number of other 'prescribed' bodies requiring them to co-operate with each other to address strategic planning matters relevant to their areas in the preparation of a development plan document (DPD). The duty requires ongoing constructive and active engagement on the preparation of DPDs and other activities relating to the sustainable development and use of land.
- 8.2 West Lancashire Borough Council is a prescribed body with whom engagement is required under the Duty to Co-Operate. It has been consulted on the scope of the Partial Review of the Fylde Local Plan to 2032. In addition, it was consulted on the draft of the Schedule of Revisions and the contents of this Statement of Common Ground prior to the full publication for consultation, in order to undertake engagement to resolve any issues arising; however, no such issues arose. Given the limited extent of the proposed revisions, this level of engagement is considered proportionate and reflects ongoing co-operation. The outcomes of the engagement are demonstrated by the agreement to the content of this document by the signatories.
- 8.3 Fylde Council has also co-operated with the other prescribed bodies. These are:
- Blackpool Council (as a neighbouring authority)
 - Wyre Council (as a neighbouring authority)
 - South Ribble Borough Council (as a neighbouring authority)
 - Preston City Council (as a neighbouring authority)
 - Lancashire County Council (as transport authority, highway authority, education authority, public health authority and as waste and minerals authority)
 - Highways England
 - Environment Agency
 - Historic England
 - Natural England
 - Marine Management Organisation (the MMO)
 - Homes and Communities Agency (HCA)
 - Fylde and Wyre Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG)
 - The National Health Service Commissioning Board (NHS England)
 - Civil Aviation Authority (CAA)
 - Lancashire Local Enterprise Partnership (including Transport for Lancashire)
 - The Office of Rail and Road

9. Other strategic matters and how they will be addressed

- 9.1 This Statement of Common Ground has been produced to support the Partial Review of the Fylde Local Plan to 2032. The Partial Review has a limited remit: this is defined by the proposed revisions to the Fylde Local Plan to 2032 contained within the Schedule of Revisions. The strategic matters considered by this statement are limited to those which have direct impact upon the policies and text which are proposed for revision by the Partial Review.
- 9.2 Strategic matters that are not being considered for revision in the Partial Review of the Fylde Local Plan for 2032 will be subject to one or more separate Statements of Common Ground that will inform preparation of the future full review of the Fylde Local Plan as prescribed by paragraph 33 of NPPF19.

10. The signatories

Plan-Making Authorities

The plan-making authorities that are signatories to this statement are as follows:

Fylde Council

Signed:



Dated: 19th October 2020

Mark Evans, Head of Planning and Housing

West Lancashire Borough Council

Signed:

Ian Gill

Dated: 19 October 2020

Ian Gill, Head of Growth and Development Services

