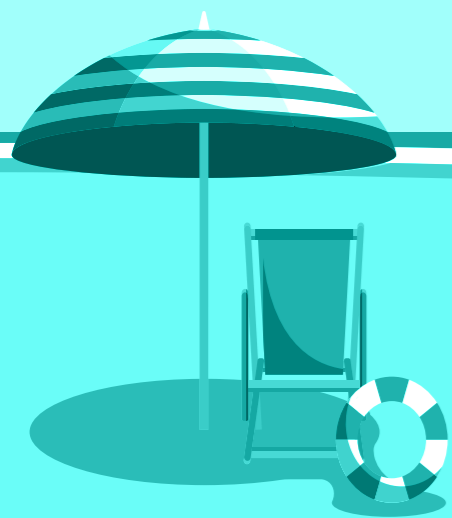


ST-ANNE'S-ON-THE-SEA

TOWN CENTRE MASTERPLAN: STAGE 1
PLANNING, DESIGN AND MOVEMENT



BDP
SEPTEMBER 2022

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1.0 INTRODUCTION



1.1

STUDY OVERVIEW

The St Anne's Regeneration Town Centre Strategy and Masterplan is being prepared for Fylde Council (FC) by a BDP led team.

The purpose of the study is to prepare a 'Town Centre Strategy' for St Anne's which will guide future investment and development in St Anne's Town Centre including the Island Site. It is intended that the study will inform and guide proposals for intervention aimed at rejuvenating the town to the benefit of residents and visitors. Furthermore it is expected that the town centre strategy and the underpinning evidence base will inform the Council's business case submissions for government funding as well as the council's own capital investment programme.

Town centres are constantly evolving in response to economic and other challenges, with seaside towns particularly susceptible to changing holiday patterns in addition to the general challenges to high street retail. FC and partners have been responding positively to these challenges over the last 20-30 years. Whilst a range of improvements have been delivered including those to the public realm, many key priorities remain unchanged from over twenty years ago, notably the need for greater connectivity between the Town Centre and the Island Site.

The present context presents a range of unique circumstances including the impact of the pandemic and the increasing threat of climate change which both require adaptation but may give rise to the renaissance of traditional seaside resort towns due to a shift in lifestyles. Furthermore, St Anne's is in the midst of significant local change with the ongoing Sea Wall project which will see the replacing and raising of the current defences.

The masterplan provides a significant opportunity to build upon past interventions and create new approaches to proactively drive development and revitalise the town.



1.2

PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

This report forms one of a suite of study reports and as such should be read alongside the accompanying Socio-Economic Context, the Property Market Review, Fylde Healthcheck and Centres Study and and the Visitor Economy reports.

The purpose of the report is to summarise the baseline work carried out by the BDP Team. In order to inform the baseline review, the project team has undertaken site visits, document and data reviews and stakeholder consultations.

The remainder of this report is structured as follows:

Section 2: The Character of St Anne's – this section analyses the character of St Anne's from its historic development to the quality and sense of place as experienced today.

Section 3: Regeneration and Planning – this section considers wider patterns of change across high streets and seaside towns along with a summary of relevant planning policy and strategies for St Anne's.

Section 4: Movement and Access – this section analyses the pedestrian, cyclist, public transport and private vehicle accessibility across St Anne's for residents and visitors.

Section 5: Conclusions and Next Steps – A summary of the tasks and activities to follow, including Options Testing stage, Public Consultation and Business Case Development – all of which will inform the progression of the Masterplan Options.



2.0

THE CHARACTER OF ST ANNE'S



2.1

INTRODUCING ST ANNE'S

This section provides a detailed introduction to St Anne's and its wider geographic context.

St Anne's is situated on the North West coast of England, approximately four miles south of Blackpool. To the South East lie the townships of Andsell and Lytham at a distance of approximately two and three miles respectively. St Anne's is within the Fylde Borough which sits within the Lancashire County.

St Anne's is an historic 19th century planned town, one of a handful in the UK built on a grid system. Regarded as a genteel Victorian/Edwardian seaside resort attracting, in the main, young families, those with a mid-salary range backgrounds and empty nesters. It offers up-market hotels, bed and breakfasts and holiday apartments, an attractive sandy beach and traditional seaside attractions including promenade gardens, pitch and putt and a small pleasure pier. Traditional beach huts can be rented during the season, whilst the town has an excellent, but little-known sand dune nature reserve and very good floral displays.

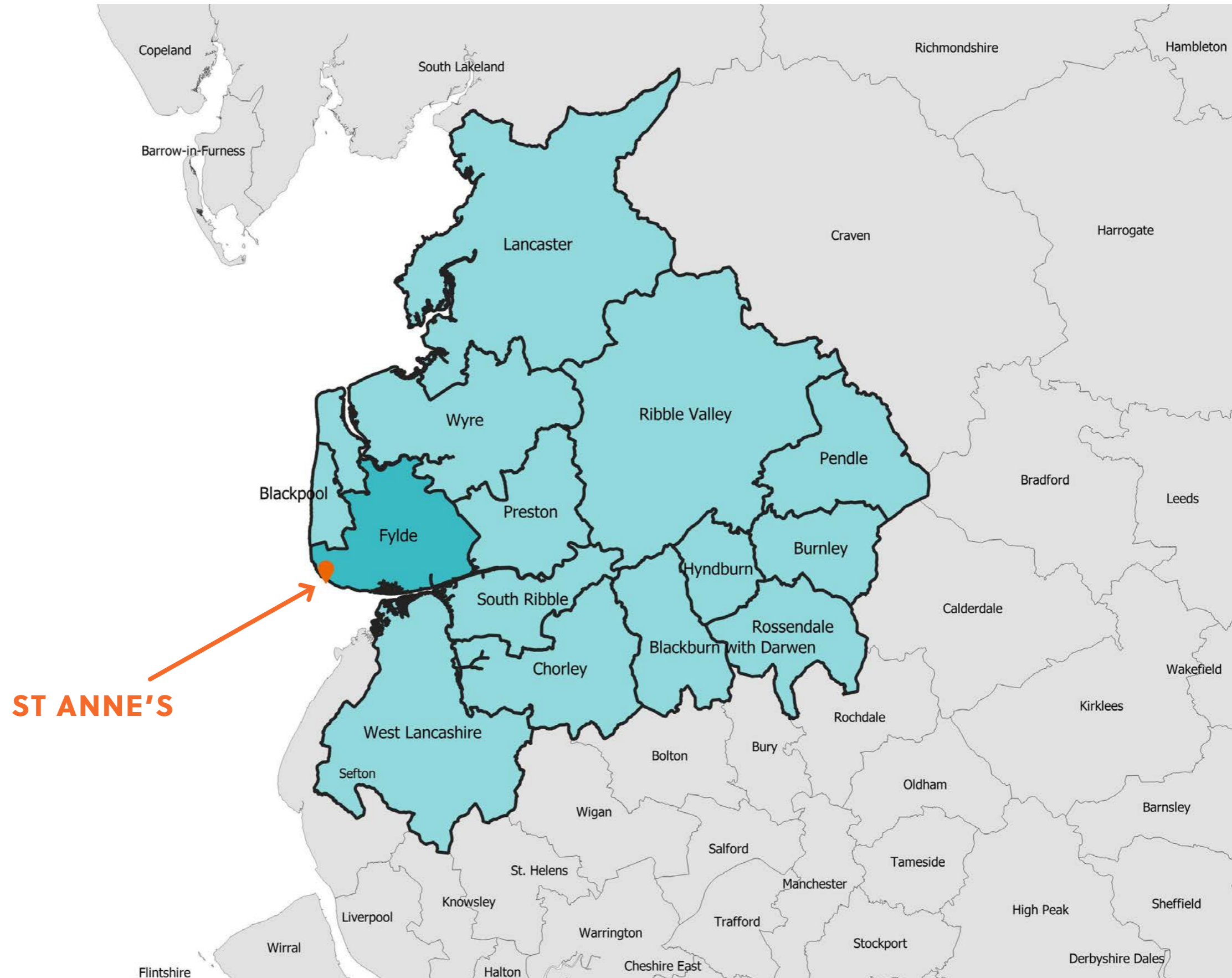
St Anne's is one of three town centres in Fylde alongside the seaside town of Lytham and the market town, Kirkham. The town centre boasts a large square, cut centrally by the B5233 (St Anne's Road West) with high street retail, coffee shops, seating, parking and planted areas on both sides. Amongst a few major retailers such as M&S

Food, WH Smith, Sainsburys, TESCO Express and Aldi, independent shops and charity shops are dispersed around the centre. The town has a good offer of hospitality, cafes, sandwich shops and bars, however, over the years as some major retailers ceased trading nationally, and now in line with wider economic trends, exacerbated by the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic, St Anne's, like many high streets, is experiencing an increase in voids within the commercial frontage. There is also potential to explore the repurposing of underused upper floor space to widen the diversity of offer within many of the town's buildings, including the potential to introduce mixed uses.

The town has many assets from Fairhaven Lake conservation area, natural dunes, historic buildings and formal gardens. It sits adjacent to the Ribble Estuary, an area of international wildlife importance.

The Island, a focus for leisure activity located on the promenade to the south of the town centre, is viewed as a key asset that has greater potential than its current use following the improvements to the coastal defences and associated public spaces.

St Anne's has a flourishing community spirit. Various business and community groups work in close liaison with Fylde Council. The Council's main office is located within St Anne's Town Hall and is one of the town's larger employers.



2.1.1 Map of Lancashire Local Authorities showing St Anne's Location

2.2

HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT

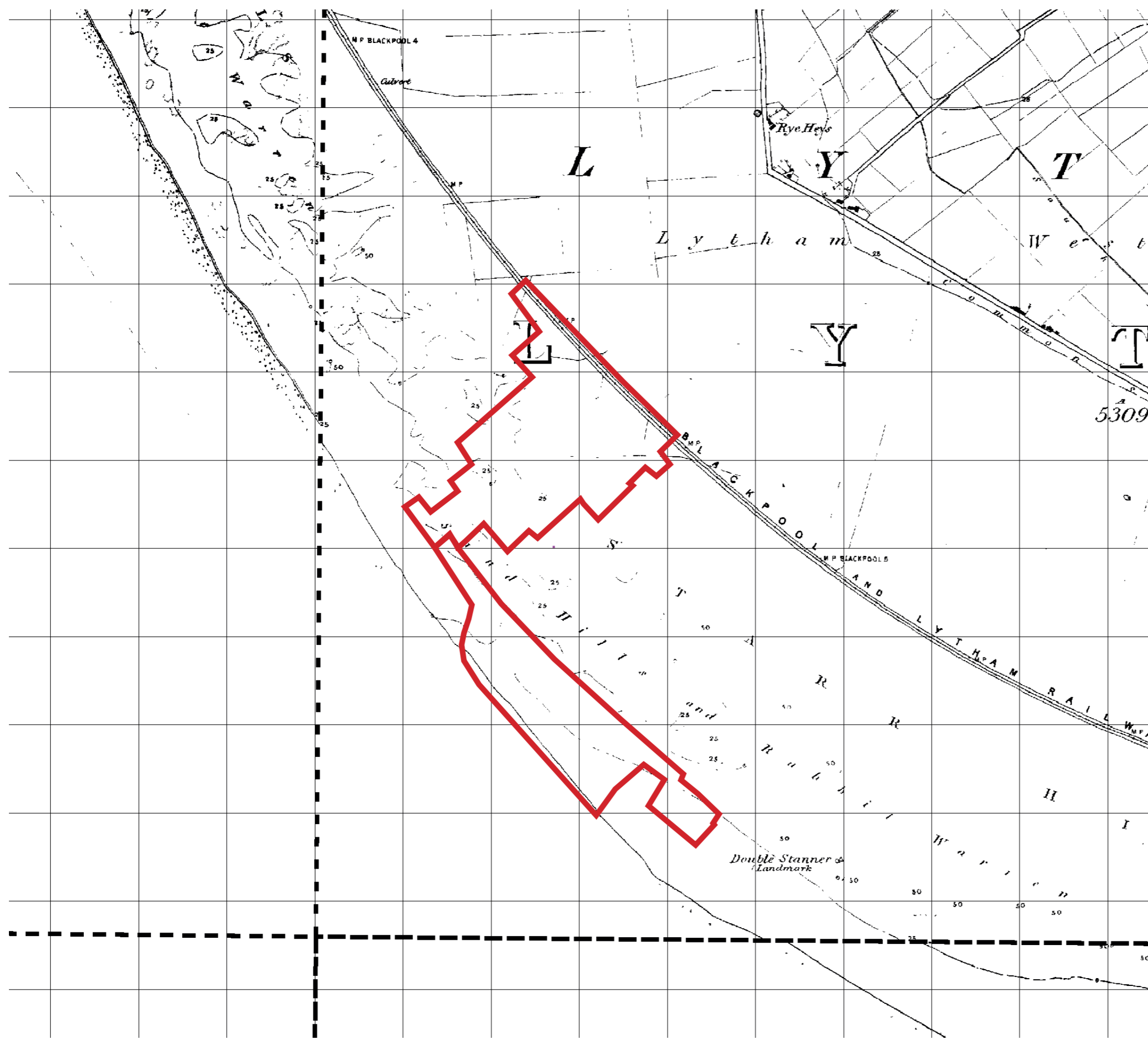
This section provides an overview of the historical development of the town, highlighting the legacy of the built heritage which remains central in many ways to the unique character of St Anne's today.

In the 1840s, St Anne's was a vast tract of sand dunes extending from Lytham to Blackpool, with a mere smattering of rural development. This is illustrated on the historical map overleaf, where the only visible development is the Blackpool and Lytham Railway line, which at this time did not yet have a station stop in St Anne's. This is illustrated on the historical map of 1847-50 (overleaf), where the only visible development is the Blackpool and Lytham Railway line, which at this time did not yet have a station stop in St Annes, but which was key to the later establishment of the town.

St Anne's saw its first development in 1875 by developers from Lancashire who saw the potential of the coastal resort as a high-quality holiday destination for the Victorian middle classes. The entire town was planned to be a 'garden town by the sea' and the development followed a gridded pattern. Within twenty years the promenade, pier, train station, central town centre roads and Ashton Gardens had all been developed.



The Crescent, 1920s



2.2.1 St Anne's 1847 map

By the 1930s, the wider area surrounding the town centre had been developed, which was largely residential development surrounding the Town Centre and Seafront attraction sites. The promenade had been extended to form the Island Site, housing a boating lake, lido, and miniature golf.

During the early and mid twentieth century, St Anne's was enjoying its prime years as a flourishing destination. It was well known for its attractive seafront, pier and gardens along with the quality shopping experience. Throughout these times, the pier accomodated theatres hosting performers, comedians and children's shows.

However the 1970s saw the start of a decline in popularity for the traditional seaside resort. In 1974, a fire destroyed the seaward end of the pier including the pavillion, whilst the front of the pier and enclosed amusements remained. During these years, the lido was removed and the Island site was redesigned to accomodate a substantial amount of car parking. A central commercial building was erected to house the indoor swimming pool, casino and amusements - which still exist today, albeit the casino is non-operational.



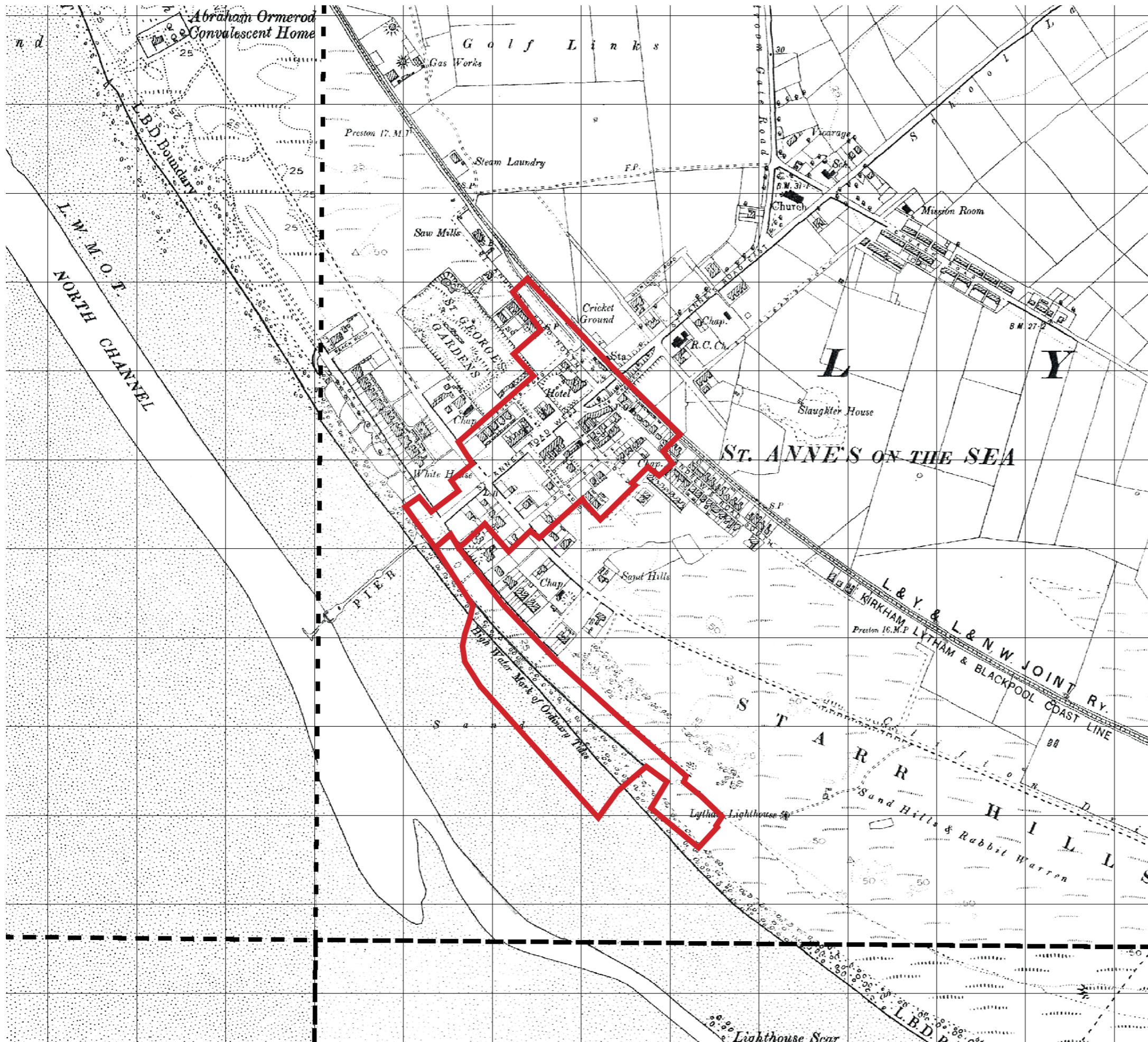
St Anne's Road West, 1930s



St Annes Pier, 1907



St Annes Square, 1950s



2.2.2 St Anne's 1894 map

2.3

CURRENT CONTEXT

St Anne's remains a popular destination, particularly enjoyed by day trippers and repeat visitors coming to the seafront and the associated attractions of the Island. These consist of the promenade gardens, miniature railway and golf, the cinema, swimming pool, restaurant / pub, trampoline park, amusements, and pier, amongst others.

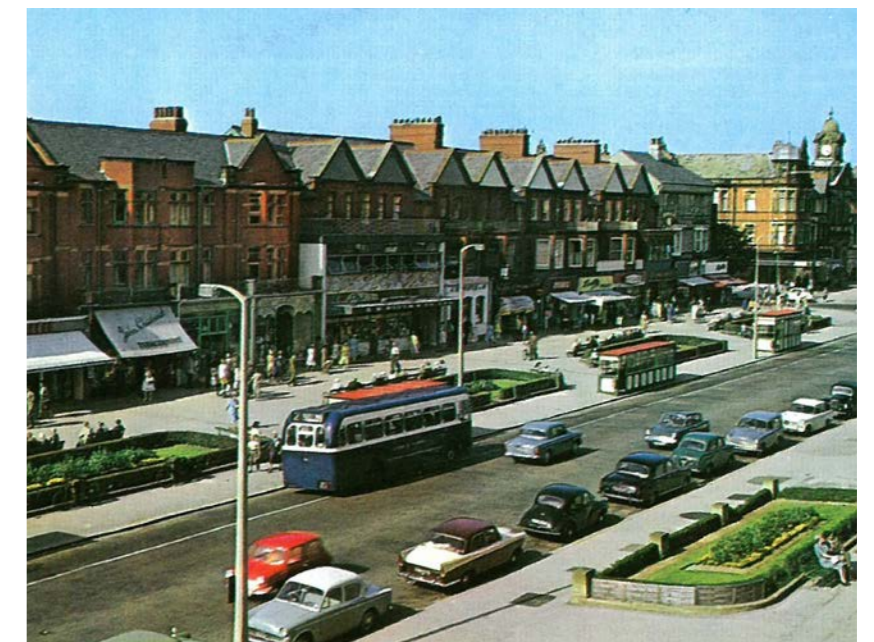
It has been recognised that the Island site has greater potential than its current use following improvements to the coastal defences and associated public spaces. Therefore, the council are seeking to regenerate this area, focussing on leisure activity and enhancing the historic buildings, formal gardens and natural assets such as the sand dunes.

The Town Centre serves the wider residential community with a mixture of high street retail, seating, parking and planted areas. There is a mix of major retailers and independent traders along with an offer of hospitality, cafes, and restaurants. However, St Anne's has not been exempt from wider trends of high street decline, experiencing lower footfall and vacant units over the years. There is potential to explore the repurposing of underused upper floor space to widen the diversity of offer within many of the town's buildings, including the potential to introduce mixed uses.

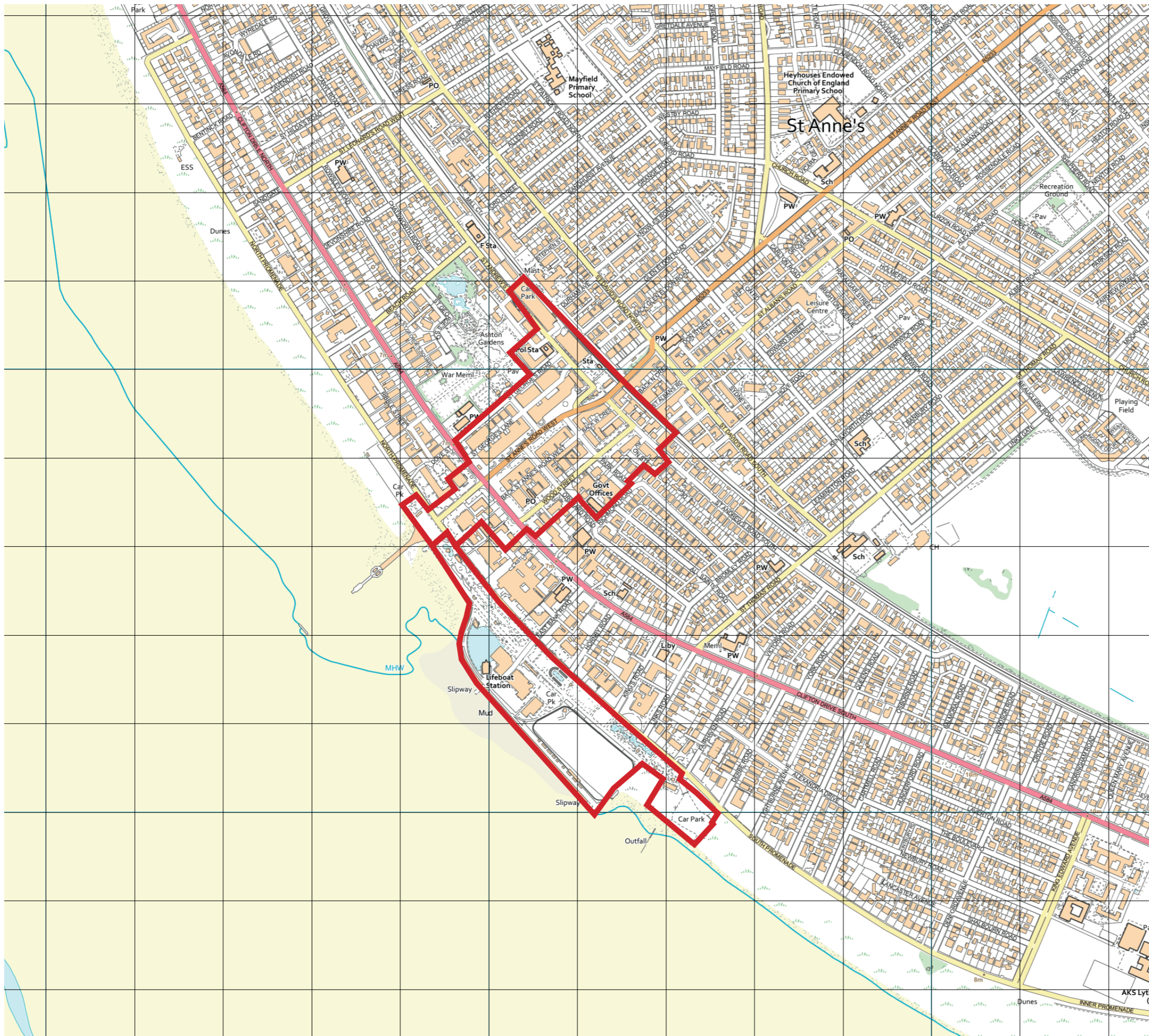
Whilst the island site and town centre are geographically close, there is a feeling of disconnect between the two. This has long affected the town's potential to capitalise on the large number of visitors arriving throughout the summer months, who largely do not venture beyond the seafront. Accordingly, FC are seeking to ensure that the two areas act as an integrated whole to maximise the economic potential across the resort as a whole.



St Anne's Square, 1930s



St Anne's Square, 1960s



2.2.3 St Anne's 2021 map

2.4

HERITAGE ASSETS

The historic and architectural value of St Anne's town centre is recognised by a significant amount of the built fabric being designated as assets of heritage significance. This includes much of the Town Centre being designated as a conservation area and a number of nationally and locally listed buildings.

Conservation Areas

St Anne's on Sea (Town Centre)

This area covers the primary commercial centre of St Anne's including The Square and Wood Street. No conservation area appraisal exists.

St Anne's (Ashton Gardens)

This conservation area primarily covers Ashton Gardens and the Porritt Houses, located on St George's Square. No conservation area appraisal exists.

Grade II Listed (Historic England)

St Anne's Pier

Pier. 1885, with additions of 1904 and 1910; altered, and now reduced to about half its original length following a fire c.1978. Cast-iron with wooden deck; shelters and pavilions of cast-iron, wood and glass with metal-clad roofs; entrance pavilion (1910) of red brick with some mock half-timbering and red tiled roof.

Grand Hotel

Hotel. Dated 1897 on parapet to centre. Red brick with some red tile-hanging, dressings of red sandstone, some terracotta, some pargetting, and red tiled roofs.

Public Offices

Public Offices. 1902, extended 1907, and with late C20 alterations and additions. Accrington red brick with ashlar sandstone dressings and detailing, gable and eaves chimney stacks with moulded caps, coped gables and a slate roof covering.

Burlington's Bar

Public house, formerly the basement bar of the St Anne's Hotel, 1890s. Architectural interest: a good example of a late-C19 hotel bar interior, with a rusticated sandstone exterior. Rarity: Burlingtons Bar incorporates a very rare example of a tiled bar front of which there are thought to be only eighteen in Britain.

Midland Bank

Bank. Probably early C20. Sandstone ashlar (roof concealed but probably slate). Narrow rectangular plan at right angles to street. Classical style. Two-and-a-half storeys, 3 bays, symmetrical; channelled rustication to ground floor, Ionic colonnade at 1st floor with modillioned open pediment, parapet with central clock turret, the clock set in an architrave with open pediment, the whole surmounted by a bell-shaped cupola with finial.

Promenade Gardens

A series of Grade II listed structures within the

listed park and garden include Victorian shelters, a bandstand, pavilions, fountains and a lifeboat monument.

Locally Listed

Fylde Borough Council keeps an index of 'Locally Listed' Buildings, which are of significant importance to the council but do not possess an official listed status. Some of these buildings are listed below:

- Fylde Town Hall
- Post Office
- RBS Building
- Dormy House
- St Anne's Grammar School
- St Anne's Baptist Church
- Imperial Hydro Wall
- 7-9 Park Road
- 54 All Saints Road
- 192-198 Clifton Drive South
- 24 St Thomas Road
- Matlock House
- Old Yorkshire Bank
- Joflor Mount
- Police Station
- Kismet, Croyde Road
- St Anne's Lifeboat House
- Victorian Post Box
- Tram Shelters
- United Reformed Church



- GRADE II LISTED BUILDINGS
- GRADE LISTED PARK & GARDENS
- LOCALLY LISTED BUILDINGS
- CONSERVATION AREAS

2.4.1 Heritage Assets

2.5

TOWNSCAPE APPRAISAL

St Anne's is a planned town based on a grid pattern that developed rapidly between the late Victorian period and early twentieth century. This resulted in the town centre developing a strong sense of place and a cohesive character, which has held up particularly well despite modern development. Key characteristics of the town centre are its broad streets and long straight vistas, as well the consistent scale of buildings.

The historic townscape character of St Anne's can still be appreciated today in much of the town centre's commercial architecture. Indeed, regeneration initiatives in recent years have resulted in the reinstatement of historic decorative features and shop fronts that had previously been lost. Notwithstanding this, however, there are still some examples where modern alterations, shop fronts and signage clash with the original character of the town centre. Examples include the garish vinyls and signage on the B&M store and the modern alterations to the upper floors of the stores housing Tesco and W H Smith.

Modern day buildings in the town centre are generally from the post-war era and typical of their time are resolutely modern. Contemporary developments have mostly taken a more traditional approach with the recent Aldi store, successfully incorporating a modern store format

and upper floor apartments within the historic grain of the town. Some stronger examples of contemporary architecture are the RNLI lifeboat station and The View Fish & Chip shop but the rest of the Island site has a very 'municipal' and dated image for what is a key destination.

Key issues to consider in the masterplan include:

- Insensitive alterations to historic commercial buildings, particularly shop fronts and signage. Examples include the WH Smith and Tesco stores, which have been poorly altered at first floor level.
- J R Taylor store – once a key retail anchor, vacant since 2015, but with plans for its refurbishment and reuse.
- Empty property at ground and upper floor levels – these create opportunities to bring in new uses and repair historic frontages. Particular opportunities are the vacant Prezzo and M&Co units.
- The Lord Derby Public House – a modern intervention that poorly relates to the scale of surrounding buildings at a key interface between the seafront and town centre.
- The pier – a building of historic and communal significance but reduced in length and its overall offer since a series of demolitions following irreparable fire damage.
- The swimming pool – a key facility located in an interesting setting on the boating lake, but appears dated and inward looking.
- Pleasure Island (including the Salters Wharf) – a major destination but the building appears dated and uninviting with limited active frontage.



Traditional Architecture



Insensitive Development (W H Smith)



Contemporary Architecture (RNLI Station)



Contextually Sensitive Modern Development (Aldi)



Modern Shopfront in a Traditional Style



Heritage Assets (St Anne's Pier)



Lord Derby Public House



YMCA Swimming Pool & Gymnasium



Pleasure Island

2.6

PUBLIC REALM APPRAISAL

The planned nature of St Anne's as a resort town ensured that generous public realm and open space was designed into the fabric of the town. A good example of this is the magnificent Grade II listed Ashton Gardens, which have recently benefited from improvement works, restoring the gardens to their former glory. Other noticeable improvements to the public realm have included the phased landscape works to the Square and surrounding streets, which have introduced more generous spaces for promenading and outdoor dining, high quality complementary materials and green infrastructure.

Whilst St Anne's original plan provided generous open streets such as St Anne's Road West (otherwise known as the Square), the scale of this space can feel quite overwhelming. The wide distance between the two sides of the street and the carriageway that crosses through the space, effectively bisects the area in two, frustrating connectivity across the space, which itself can feel quite barren at times. Various structures and landscaping have been added to animate the space but this can also have the effect of blocking visibility and frustrating connectivity through a number of obstacles to movement.

Away from the town centre and towards the seafront the quality of the public realm diminishes. The pier approach, which occupies

a key desire line and vista from the town centre is no more than a surface car park. The adjacent Town Hall itself sits in a car park, as does Pleasure Island. The Grade II listed Promenade Gardens provides some relief, but the gardens are looking somewhat tired and in need of rejuvenation.

St Anne's benefits from a wide sandy beach but this does mean that the sea is often out some distance from the promenade. The boating lake is therefore a positive feature, providing an accessible water body that is used for aquatic sports and activities such as kayaking, canoeing and waterballing. A new planned sea defence will need to be approximately 2 metres higher than the existing promenade, together with a 1 metre high set back wall. This is a significant height increase and will alter the character of the existing frontage.

Key issues to consider in the masterplan include:

- The station approach does not create a strong sense of arrival – there is a need to better integrate the station into the town to encourage people to utilise this key asset.
- Access to the St George's Road car park is formed through a foreboding walkway – it would be better for users of the car park to access it from adjacent overlooked streets.
- Connectivity and legibility across the Square can be challenging – working with the existing public realm there will be opportunities to introduce some subtle improvements.
- Back St Anne's Street is an interesting space and includes an arts trail – more could be made to celebrate and expand this feature.
- The Pier approach and link are not a people centred place – as a key destination this could be a much more interesting and vibrant space.
- Town Hall sits within a sea of car parking and lacks interaction with the public realm – as an important civic building it deserves a better setting.
- The Promenade Gardens are looking tired – these should be proud and vibrant asset for the town.
- Pleasure Island (including the Salters Wharf) – the development is surrounded by vehicular routes and car parking and lacks any form of public realm.
- Sea wall improvements - the challenge is to integrate this elevated sea defence into the Island site.



Abundance of on-street car parking



Station Public Realm



Back St Anne's Road West



Promenade Gardens



Ashton Gardens



Car Parking concealing heritage assets



Boating Lake



Beachfront



Island Site Public Realm



3.0

REGENERATION AND PLANNING



3.1

LOCAL REGENERATION CONTEXT

Since the late 1990s there has been a range of strategies to regenerate St Anne's. Many of the themes identified in these initiatives still resonate today. A brief review of these documents illustrates progress to date, recurring priorities and outstanding challenges.

St Anne's Seafront Masterplan (2008)

In 2008 RPS, commissioned by FC, produced a masterplan for the Island Site. This masterplan identified a range of opportunities for the site, many of which are still pertinent to this day. A major theme throughout was the need to simplify and reconnect the Island site with the town centre and its wider landscape setting. This remains a key priority in today's context.

The masterplan highlighted the dominance of car parking across the seafront and noted that this was detracting from the setting of the site and hindering key visitor gateways – for example, at both the North and South end of the promenade and in front of the pier. RPS suggested relocating the car parking to emphasise pedestrian priority, public realm and enhance the pier as a landmark location. Despite this, these car parks remain unchanged as major features on the seafront.

RPS identified the swimming pool as a key site for redevelopment into a mixed-use facility including a hotel, cinema, casino and health and fitness provision. It was recognised that the current 1970s building for the swimming pool is unattractive, poorly integrated with its surroundings and lacks active frontages. The masterplan recommended a new development should include vistas to the seafront and a strong

integration with surrounding public realm which could include new focal points such as public art. It was suggested that this building could be more strongly linked to the boating pool which was considered an attractive asset.

Lytham St Anne's 2020 Vision (2009)

The 2020 Vision was first published in 2009 and presents six strategic projects to be delivered by 2020, with a clear focus of positioning Lytham St Anne's as the jewel of the Northwest Coast. The proposals aim to enhance the visitor offer, particularly for the 2012 Open Golf Championship. Project A of this vision focused on St Anne's Resort Area, with priorities to complete St Anne's Town Centre as the "classic resort town" including the refurbishment of the historic Promenade Gardens and the redevelopment of the island site by the private sector. The vision was inspired by the 2008 Visitor Economy Pilot which recommended that Lytham St Anne's should differentiate the visitor offer from the rest of the Fylde coast and be promoted as a '4 star seafront' and a classic boutique resort.

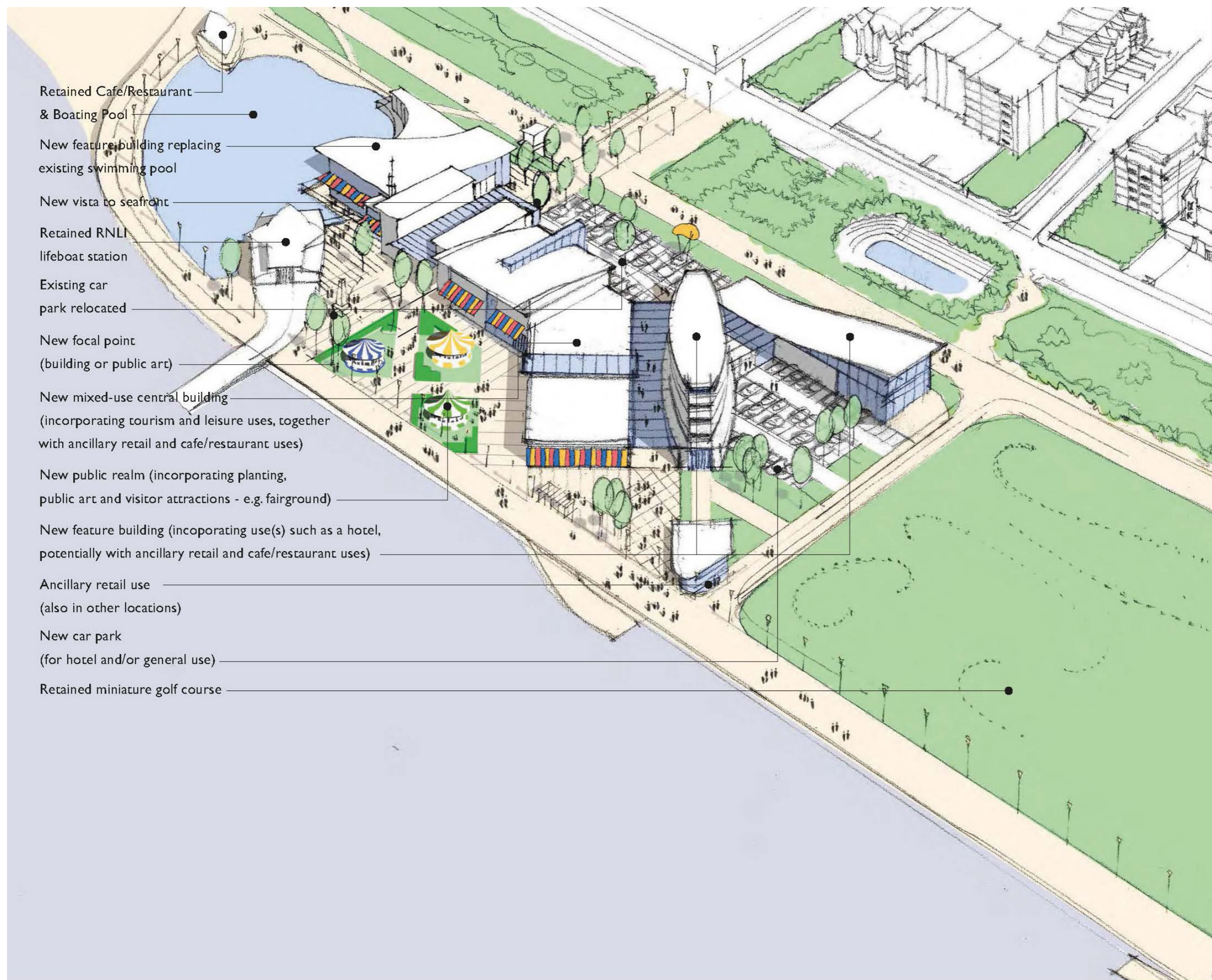
Fylde Economic Development Strategy and Action Plan 2012-2030

The Fylde Economic Development Strategy

presented a series of strategic themes which form the basis of the economic strategy for Fylde. Theme 2 is Town Centres, which sets out a range of policy statements to support the vitality and viability of town centres. Theme 3 is the Visitor Economy which aims to develop the Island site and restore the Promenade Gardens. Other deliverables were the enhancement of visitor information and the promotion of attractions nationally and internationally.

Fylde Coastal Strategy 2015 – 2032

The coastal strategy sets out a vision to "to create a unique, high quality visitor destination for residents and visitors, which is based on the conservation and enhancement of the natural landscape and heritage assets of the coastal area of the Borough of Fylde". Within the strategy there is a key action, which is to 'seek to develop the Island site to maximise its potential including developing a Gateway project fronting St Anne's swimming pool'.



2.2.1 Sketch concept from St Anne's on the Sea Masterplan (2008)

3.2

NATIONAL REGENERATION CONTEXT

St Anne's has not been alone in its challenges; from the 1970s onwards many coastal resorts across the nation have suffered decline brought on by a proliferation of low-cost foreign holidays. The traditional seaside resorts that were used to hosting vast numbers of holidaymakers for two-week-long vacations over the summer suddenly saw visitor numbers dwindling. The local economies of these resorts were fundamentally undermined, resulting in stagnation and disinvestment. Consequently, many resorts became trapped in a cycle of decline with increasingly dilapidated amusements and insensitive redevelopment.

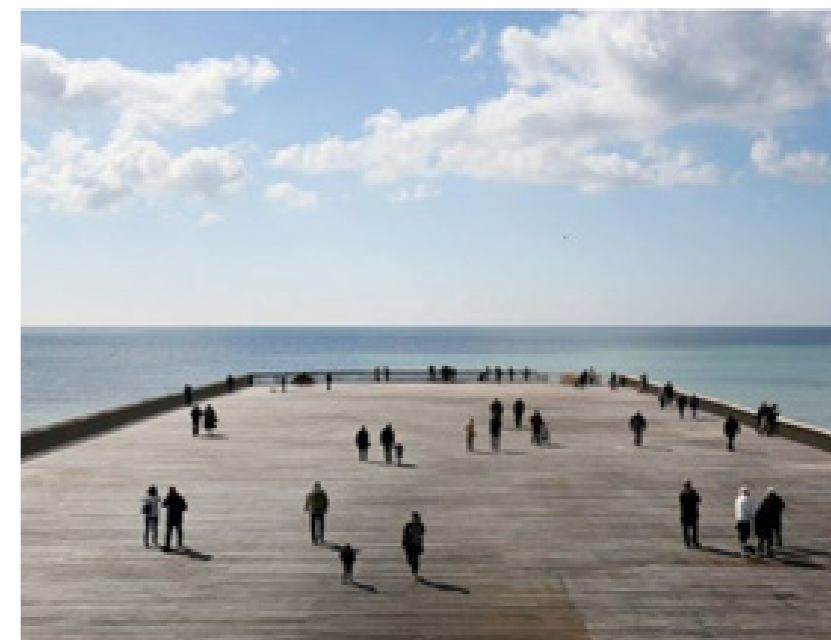
Some authors have referred to seaside towns as 'the least understood of Britain's "problem" areas'. They are, on average, more deprived than other areas of England, have a lower-than-average employment rate, an above average share of working age adults on benefits, lower average earnings and are more affected by seasonal employment than the rest of England. Furthermore, their relative remoteness can exacerbate the challenges of regeneration.

Despite the unique set of challenges facing seaside towns, there are a number of opportunities for renewal and redevelopment. The recent decade has seen evidence of increasing domestic tourism, with numbers of people taking 'staycations' increasing by more

than 25% in 2014 compared with 2010. This trend, coupled with a host of seaside regeneration projects, has led to suggestions of a renaissance of traditional coastal resorts.

The rejuvenation of seaside resorts has been exemplified by places such as Hastings which has been rapidly transformed with a cultural focus and strong community spirit – epitomised in the community-funded pier. Key to this regeneration was enhancing the old town and diversifying the retail offer with independent shops and artistic spaces.

Another example is North Shields Fish Quay – the historic place for the fishing industry in Tynemouth which became an area of dereliction and dismay at the start of the 21st century. A creative community-led vision championed the regeneration based upon the traditional fishing industry complemented by eateries and drinking establishments along with some small to medium sized businesses. This has made for a thriving and characterful place which is proud of its roots. The street scene is lively due to al-fresco dining (when the weather permits) and the sense of local quality and community spirit remains strong as there are no national chains in Fish Quay which is seen as a key to its success.



Hastings Pier



North Shields Fish Quay

Whilst coastal towns have previously struggled to attract businesses due to their peripheral location, it is possible they may be able to use this to thrive in the new digital economy. Bournemouth has become increasingly attractive to digital companies such as those in the tech industry or start-up businesses where employees can often work remotely. In Bournemouth's case, the university and football club have been positive in both attracting and retaining young residents.

Having a specific catalyst for regeneration can be successful, for example in Margate, the opening of the Turner Contemporary Art Gallery sparked a series of wider investments including hotels, restaurants and shops which all profited from the art-led regeneration effect. Exmouth have used a similar strategy with water-sports led regeneration.

In a 2017 study by the National Coastal Tourism Academy, it was identified that the most popular type of resort for visitors of all ages was the 'harbour towns' or 'coastal retreats' where cultural activities, local shops, traditional events, scenery and walks are key reasons to visit. They found that the 'traditional resort' was only popular with young families, and it was recognised that this demographic holds the least disposable income and are restricted to school holidays. The 'lively resort' was seen to be the

least popular amongst any age group, having limited appeal and longevity. The millennial market was characterized as a key demographic to target, generally having greater disposable income and a willingness to spend money on unique and quality experiences. This group are generally more health conscious and looking for different experiences which provide an escape from urban life.

A common theme was respondents expressing interest in visiting coastal destinations, but they just "haven't got round to it". This suggests that destinations could benefit from stronger marketing and compelling reasons to visit now, for example events or festivals.

The current context may provide a unique opportunity to capitalise on these trends with substantial shifts in the way people live, for example, more people working from home, people travelling less and spending more time in their local area, a greater emphasis on healthy and active lifestyles including more walking and cycling and a change in tourism choices. Travel restrictions and uncertain times may lead to more people choosing 'staycations' over international travel, providing a catalyst for both new and returning visitors. Flexible working patterns could be a factor in people choosing to relocate away from the city, resulting in an increase in home-buying by the sea.

In addition to the unique issues facing seaside resorts, there have been a range of broader challenges affecting town centres across the nation. High street retailers are being hit hard by online competition, increasing rent prices, and high maintenance costs, and therefore, many local centres are suffering with low footfall and rising vacancies. Increasingly there is an expectation from consumers of a diversity of attractions in town centres including food and drink and alternative experiences. This presents an opportunity to reimagine town centres into spaces for local people to work, eat, shop and socialise close to their homes.

3.3

NATIONAL PLANNING CONTEXT

National Planning Policy Framework

The NPPF 2021 and the Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) set out the Government's planning policies for England and define the purpose of the planning system as to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development – summarised as meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. Achieving sustainable development means meeting three overarching objectives:

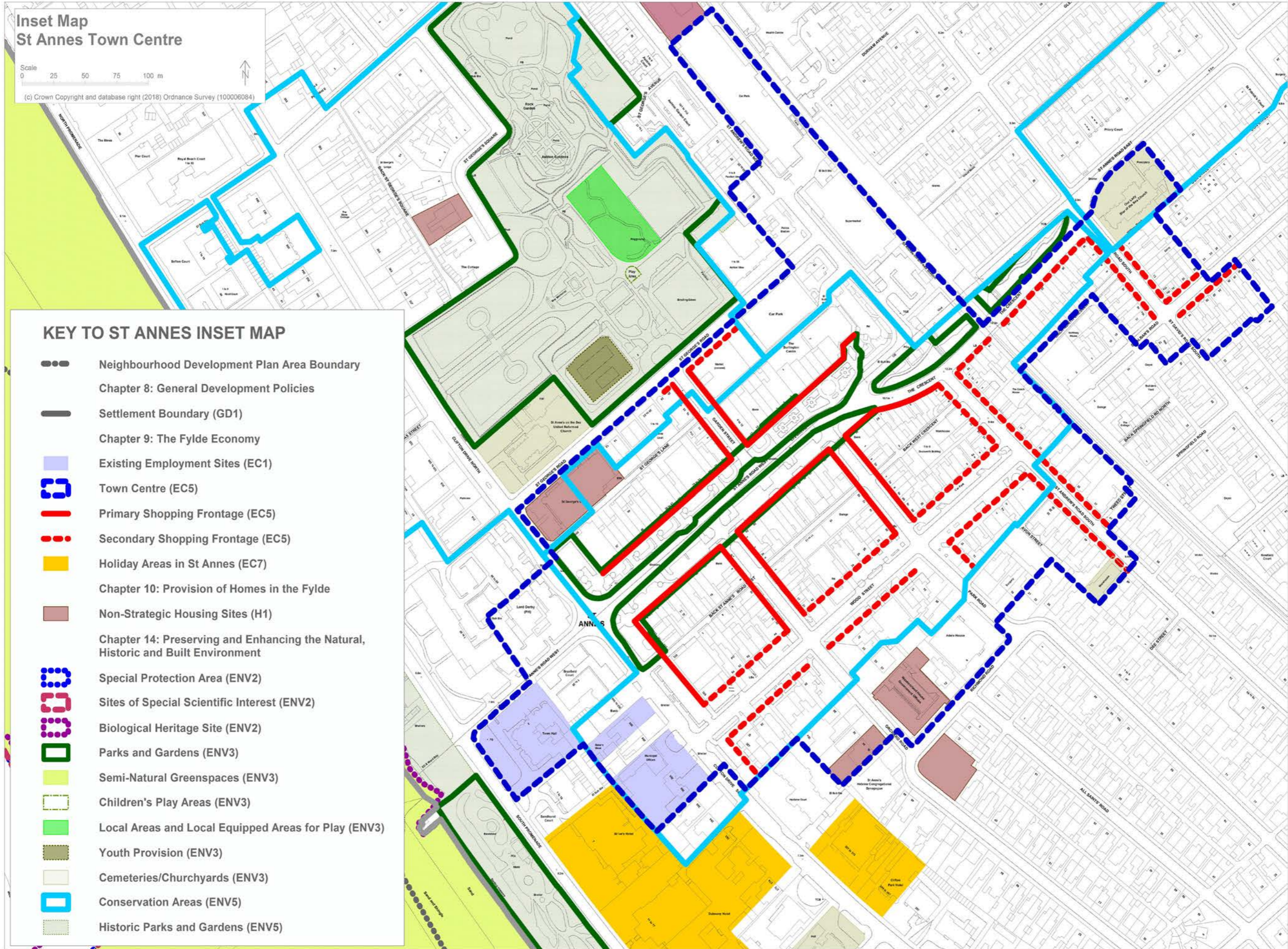
- a) an economic objective – to help build a strong, responsive and competitive economy, by ensuring that sufficient land of the right types is available in the right places and at the right time to support growth, innovation and improved productivity; and by identifying and coordinating the provision of infrastructure;
- b) a social objective – to support strong, vibrant and healthy communities, by ensuring that a sufficient number and range of homes can be provided to meet the needs of present and future generations; and by fostering well-designed, beautiful and safe places, with accessible services and open spaces that reflect current and future needs and support communities' health, social and cultural well-being; and

- c) an environmental objective – to protect and enhance our natural, built and historic environment; including making effective use of land, improving biodiversity, using natural resources prudently, minimising waste and pollution, and mitigating and adapting to climate change, including moving to a low carbon economy.

The creation of high quality buildings and places is fundamental to what the planning and development process should achieve. Good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, creates better places in which to live and work and helps make development acceptable to communities.

The national planning policy context for town centres advocates for the long-term vitality and viability of town centres and high streets, by allowing them to grow and diversify in a way that can respond to rapid changes in the retail and leisure industries, and by allowing a suitable mix of uses including housing that also reflects their distinctive character.

Planning should also support the transition to a low carbon future in a changing climate taking full account of flood risk and coastal change. It should help to shape places in ways that contribute to radical reductions in greenhouse gas emissions, minimise vulnerability and improve resilience, encourage the reuse of existing resources, including the conversion of existing buildings; and support renewable and low carbon energy and associated infrastructure.



2.3. 1 Fylde Local Plan (St Anne's inset map)

3.4

LOCAL PLANNING CONTEXT

The Fylde Local Plan to 2032 (incorporating partial review)

The Fylde Local Plan was originally adopted in 2018 and adopted again in 2021 incorporating partial review. The plan sets out the long-term vision, objectives, and policies until 2032. The vision intends to enhance St Anne's' position as a classic resort with increased visitor numbers, quality specialist shops and the regeneration of the Island Sea Front and Promenade Gardens. On the latter, the plan identifies the importance of delivering an improved range of year-round attractions and new uses, whilst maintaining and promoting the site as a focus for leisure and tourism.

Policy EC5: Vibrant Town, District and Local Centres

This dictates the uses which will be encouraged within town centres, including: financial and professional services, restaurants and cafes, drinking establishments, hot food takeaways, business, hotels, non-residential instutions, assembly and leisure. On Primary Shopping Frontages, uses are required to retain a pedestrian-level shop front with windows and display and have operational hours including at least part of traditional opening times (9am-5pm).

Ashton Gardens.

Policy EC7: Holiday areas in St Anne's

High quality serviced tourism accommodation (e.g. hotels) will be encouraged in the Holiday Areas in St Anne's. The loss of serviced tourism accomodation to other uses in these areas will be resisted.

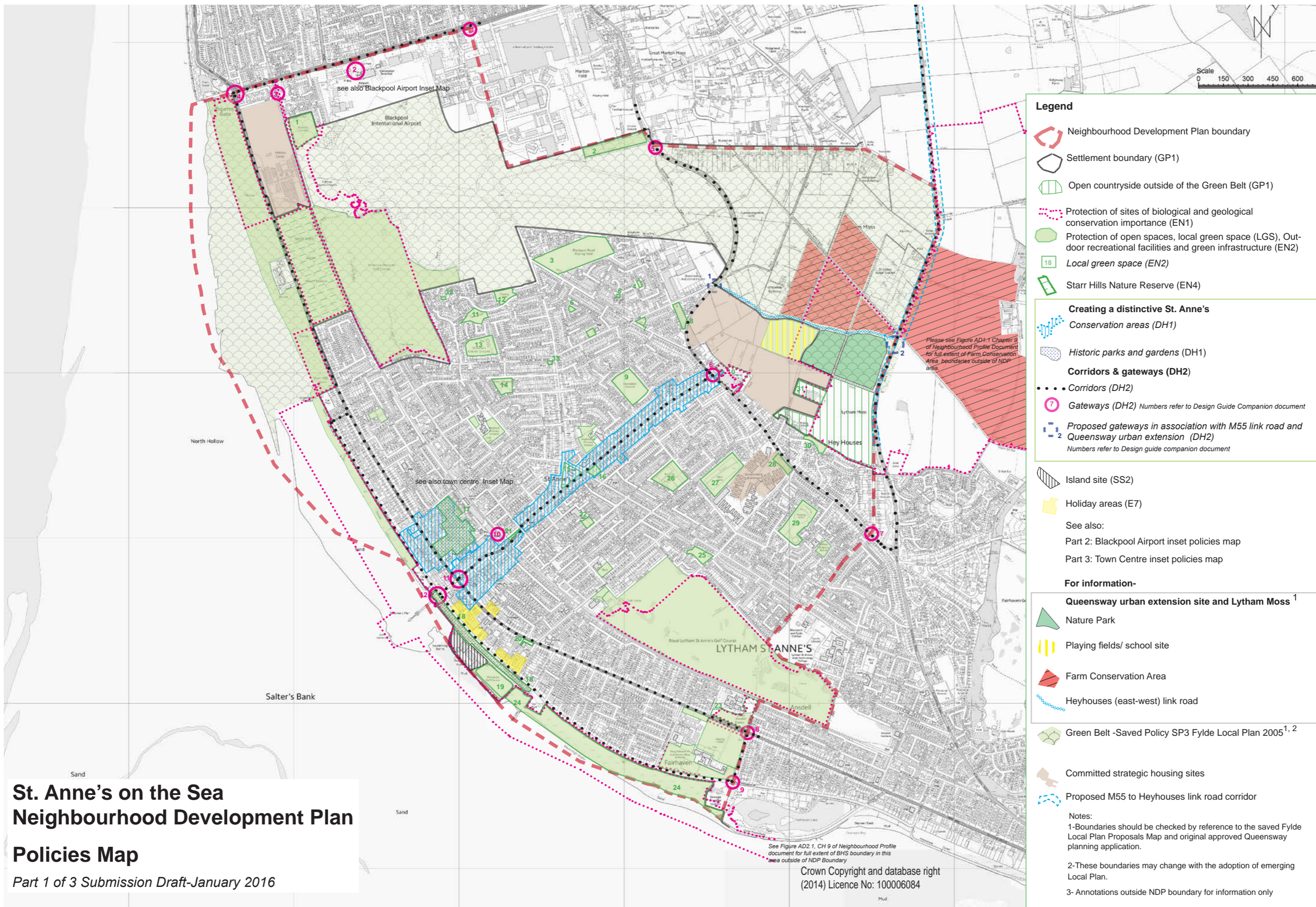
Policy ENV3: Protecting Existing Open Space

Existing Open Space will be protected from inappropriate development. Fylde's Public Rights of Way network will be protected and opportunities to extend will be safeguarded from development and supported.

Policy ENV5: Historic Environment

Proposals for development should conserve, protect and, where appropriate, enhance the character, appearance, significance and historic value of Fylde's designated and undesignated heritage assets, in particular:

- The classic seaside resort of St Anne's with its seafront, Victorian and Edwardian architecture and pier, together with the Promenade and



3.5

NEIGHBOURHOOD PLANNING CONTEXT

The neighbourhood planning context comprises of the Neighbourhood Development Plan and the Design Guide (a supplementary neighbourhood plan document), adopted by FC in 2017.

The St Anne's on Sea Neighbourhood Development Plan 2016-2031

The St Anne's on the Sea Neighbourhood Development Plan (NDP) was adopted in 2017 and sits alongside the Local Plan with compliant policies. The purpose of the plan is to "realise our vision of creating a unique 'Garden Town by the Sea' reflecting the distinct character of our town". The plan summarises key issues that the plan has sought to address including the need to make better use of the beach, improve gateways to the town and to connect green infrastructure.

Policy DH2: Corridors and Gateways

This policy refers to St Anne's Corridor and the intention to develop a strategy for creating distinct high quality access corridors and gateways to the town, along with landmarks and areas of design character and quality of land and neighbourhoods adjoining these routes.

Policy SS2: Island Site Development

This stipulates that any development on the Island Site must be of the highest design quality and must enhance and make a positive contribution to this seafront location. Non leisure, culture and tourism uses will be resisted.

Policy E1: the Town Centre and Town Centre Development

A diversity of uses that support the vitality and vi-

ability of the centre will be supported, to encourage an evening economy and improve safety and security by increasing the natural surveillance of the area.

Policy E6: Leisure, Culture and Tourism

This policy states that the Town Council will encourage, support and promote the town's leisure, culture and tourism offer. This includes realising the potential of heritage assets including Promenade Gardens, Ashton Gardens and St Anne's Pier. The policy also supports the high quality physical regeneration of the Island Site and the protection of the seaside resort facilities. Daytime and evening tourism facilities will be encouraged in the town centre.

Policy E7: Tourism accomodation

High quality serviced tourism accomodation (e.g. hotels) will be encouraged in the Holiday Areas, as defined on the polivies map, provided that they: respect the character of the area and do not prejudice amenities of nearby properties.

The St Anne's on Sea Design Guide

The purpose of the Design Guide is to assist in realising the vision of the NDP plan by:

- providing supplementary design guidance to policies in the NDP with the intention of achieving the highest possible quality of design in the town
- Identifying key corridors and gateways where specific design interventions could assist in enhancing the distinctiveness of the town
- Identifying potential supplementary actions which the town council could pursue through the delivery strategy
- Providing an aspirational prospectus of exemplar ideas to inform and challenge the public and private sector bodies involved in the development of St Anne's.

Key Design Criteria

A range of design criteria are set out for developers and designers to consider, including:

Connections

The discouragement of bland new 'identikit' architecture, connections as an afterthought, and poor mixed signage. Connections which respond to adjoining land uses and key corridors will be encouraged, along with those which link to the existing and proposed footpath network.

Public transport

Schemes within walking distance to existing public transport, those which facilitate bus access in layout, and those which improve routes to and from existing public transport will be encouraged.

Character

The scheme should create a place with a locally inspired or otherwise distinctive character.

Working with the site and its context

Incorporating existing topography landscape features, trees, plants, wildlife habitats, existing buildings, site orientation and microclimate are all encouraged.

Creating well defined streets and spaces

Buildings should be designed and positioned with landscaping to define and enhance streets and spaces and turn corners well.

Easy to find your way around

Development should be designed to make it easy to find your way around, including clear signage, public art, lighting, and the encouragement of a pedestrian friendly environment.

Corridors and Gateways Companion Prospectus

A companion prospectus for the specific enhancement of corridors and gateways across St Anne's accompanies the Design Guide.

Town centre commercial core

The town centre would benefit from feature lighting to create nightscape and atmosphere. Furthermore, the design solutions suggest a review of the street furniture and signage is required to remove clutter; temporary street structures to hold markets and events; further protection from inclement weather; and the promotion of street cafes.

Gateway to the sea

This refers to the link between Clifton Drive and Promenade Road which is identified as a key visual and pedestrian link between the town centre and the promenade / beach. Design issues identified are tall imposing apartment blocks which detract from the key location and busy roads are a barrier to movement. Key solutions recommended are improvements to the pedestrian environment, public realm, landscape and consider lighting, public art and the potential for improvements to forecourt areas of the Town Hall. It is noted that this corridor is subject to particularly strong winds which should be considered in any design.

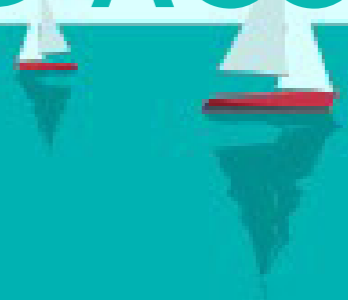
Classic resort core

This corridor comprises the main resort frontage including the pier and promenade gardens. The key design solutions comprise the refurbishment of promenade gardens and the enhancement of the public realm.



4.0

MOVEMENT AND ACCESS



4.0

INTRODUCTION

This movement and access analysis has been prepared by Vectos Transport Planning Consultants who are working alongside BDP to develop the Town Centre Strategy and Masterplan. The existing transport options along with issues and opportunities are outlined in this section.

St. Anne's is a community that suits active travel. It is compact and has a flat topography, making it feasible and attractive for pedestrians and cyclists to make local trips without needing to use a car. It is also well provided by public transport services, with regular buses running along the coast to key destinations including Blackpool, Lytham and Preston. The train service, which currently operates every hour between Preston and Blackpool South, has a funding bid to increase the frequency of service to every 30 minutes, making it more attractive to residents and visitors.

Long stay car parking is in demand during the holiday season, with pressure being placed on parking along the seafront and drivers having to search out available spaces. Short stay parking, particularly along St. Anne's Road West, is in demand all year round.

The Heyhouses Link Road, currently under construction and providing a new route between St. Anne's and the M55, could influence how people drive around St. Anne's and where they want to park. There may be an opportunity to influence this if it brings added benefits to the town centre and visitors' experience.



St Anne's Road West



Car Park on the Island Site

4.1

WALKING IN ST ANNE'S

Walking in St.Anne's

There are two key pedestrian routes within the study area. These routes consist of St Anne's Road West, which provides connections from the station via the Town Centre to the Promenade, and the Promenade itself, which provides connections to the seafront and the Island site as well as a strong leisure function.

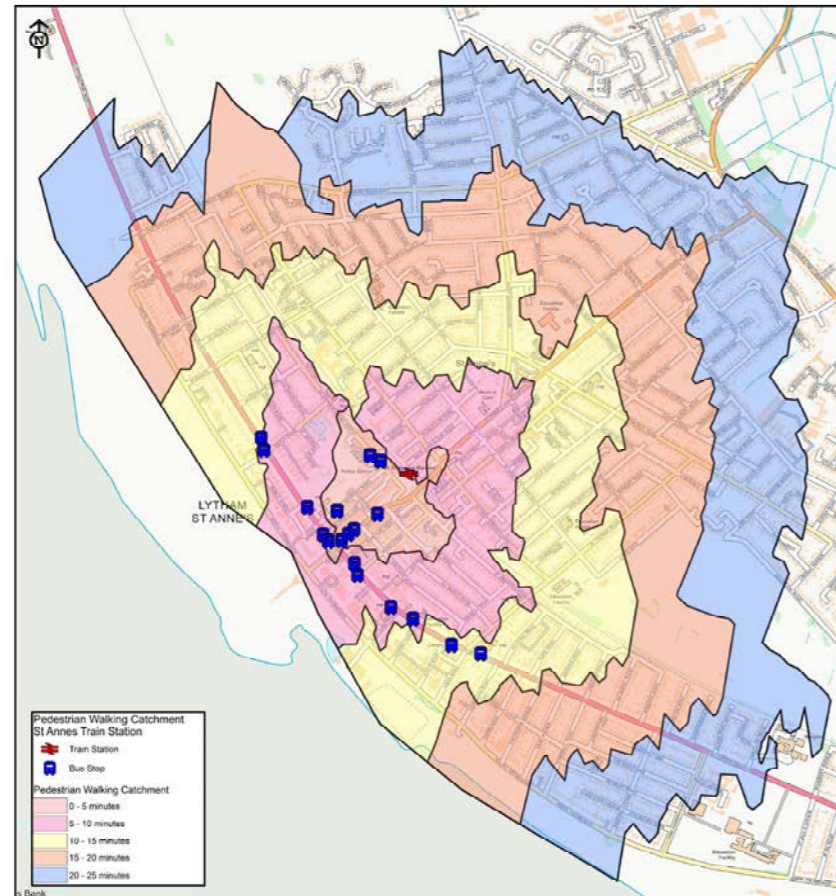
Along the western side of St Anne's Road West between the Square and Clifton Road North a wide pedestrian path with landscaping and seating is provided. Footway connections are provided between the station and the Square and between Clifton Road North and the Promenade however the path narrows to support vehicular movements in these locations.

St Anne's Square Car Park is located along the eastern side of St Anne's Road West between Park Road and Clifton Road North with the pedestrian path narrower in this location to accommodate this parking.

Currently there are three zebra crossing facilities provided on St Anne's Road West; one near the Square and Park Road and two located near the junction of St Anne's Road West and Orchard Road. Signalised crossing facilities are provided at the St Anne's Road West / Clifton Road North junction. Despite these facilities, St Anne's Road West and Clifton Road North act as barriers to pedestrian and cycle movements.

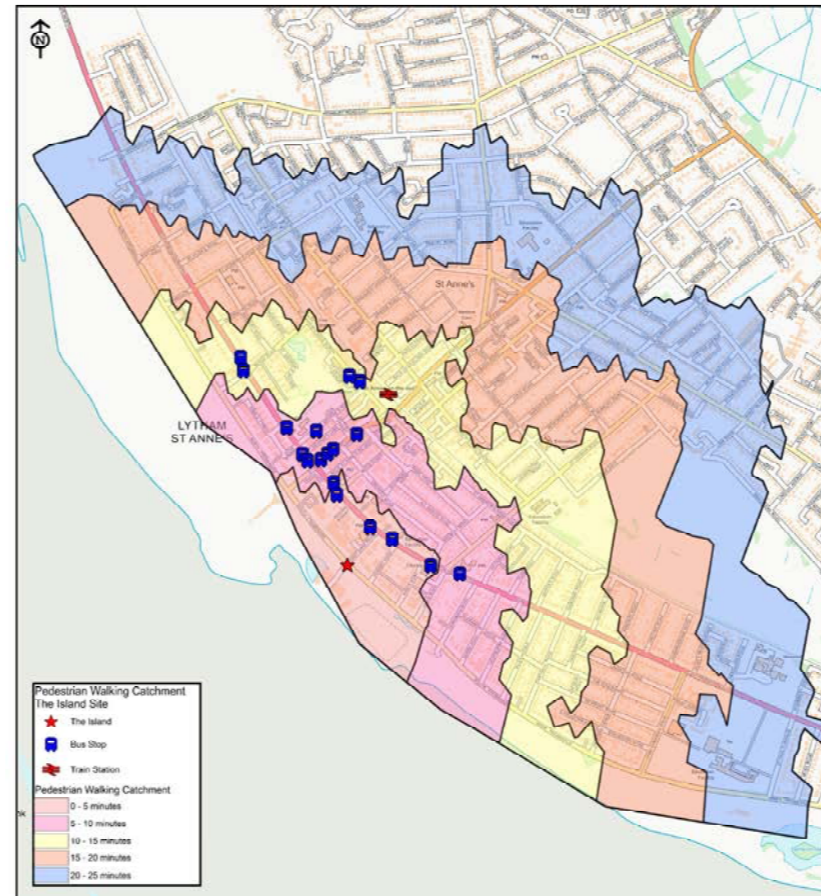
There are footway connections including pedestrianised routes and garden walks along North Promenade and South Promenade providing connections to the Pier, North Promenade Car Park, St Anne's Swimming Pool and Fairhaven Road Car Park.

Currently there is only one zebra crossing facility provided at the junction of St Anne's Road West and the Promenade on South Promenade with a pedestrian guard rail provided around the corner to direct pedestrians to this crossing



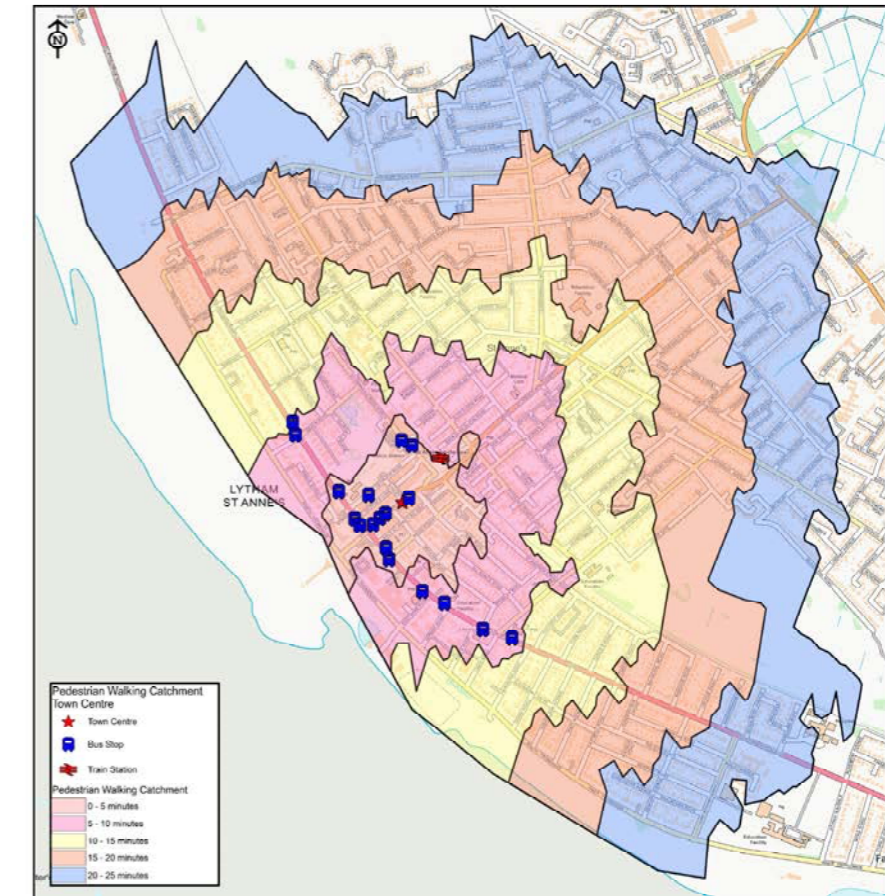
4.1.1 Pedestrian Walking Catchment from St Anne's Train Station

Plan 4.1.1 illustrates the areas which can be reached within a 5, 10, 15, 20 and 25 minute walk from St Anne's Railway Station. Plan 4.1.2 illustrates these catchment measured from the centre of the Island Site; and Plan 4.1.3 illustrates these catchments measured from St Anne's Town Centre.



4.1.2 Pedestrian Walking Catchment from The Island Site

These plans highlight that the core town centre and tourist destinations are within a 10 to 15 minutes' walk, making it very practical for visitors to arrive at the station, walk through the Town Centre and then visit the seafront, before returning on the train.



4.1.3 Pedestrian Walking Catchment from St Anne's Town Square

It should be noted that while pedestrian infrastructure is provided, the dominance of vehicular traffic and the quality of the pedestrian environment including along the Promenade can make walking an unattractive option.

4.2

CYCLING IN ST ANNE'S

St. Anne's should be a haven for cyclists, being compact, with a flat topography and some car free routes particularly along the coast.

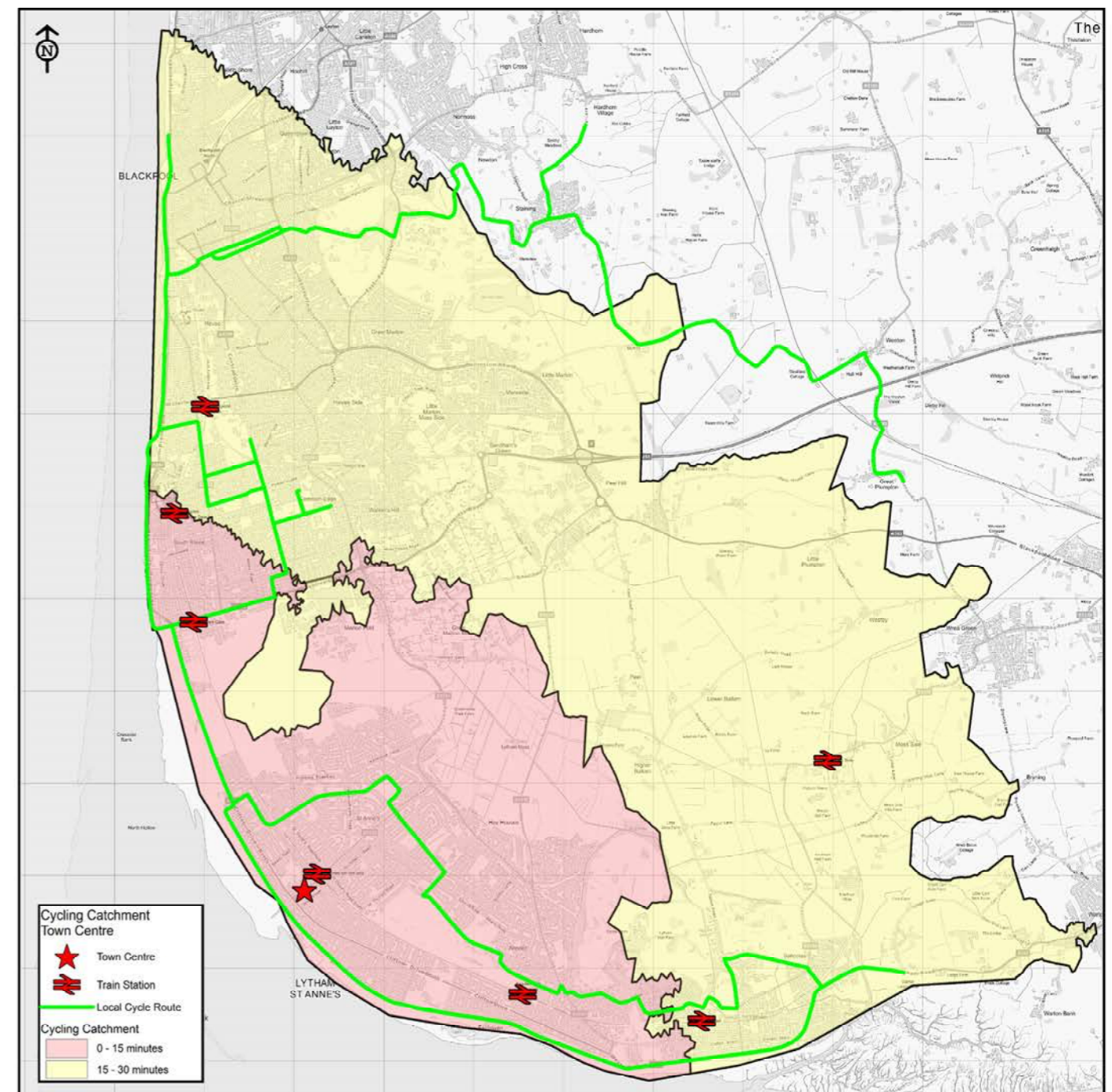
Plan 4.2.1 illustrates the areas that can be reached within a 15 minute and 30 minute cycle from the centre of St Anne's. This area includes all of the built-up area of St Anne's and Lytham and also includes the southern areas of Blackpool.

The Local Cycle Network is also shown on this plan. This network includes a traffic-free route along the Promenade and a collection of quieter residential roads where cyclists share the road with other road users.

Currently there is a lack of cycle infrastructure within the Town Centre with no cycle route provided along St Anne's Road West, which would connect the Promenade with St Anne's Station. There is also limited cycle parking facilities provided within the Town Centre, and nowhere to hire a bicycle and cycling equipment. There are a number of leisure cycle routes within

St Anne's including;

- St Anne's Loop which is a nine and a half mile route which explores Lytham, St Anne's and Blackpool Promenade. This route uses the traffic-free promenade and suburban roads; and,
- Blackpool to Lytham Loop, which is a 20 mile route that starts and finishes at the Solaris Centre on Blackpool's South Shore. This route continues south along the Promenade passing Lytham St Anne's and follows the path of the Ribble estuary.



4.2.1 Cycling Catchment from St Anne's Town Centre

4.3

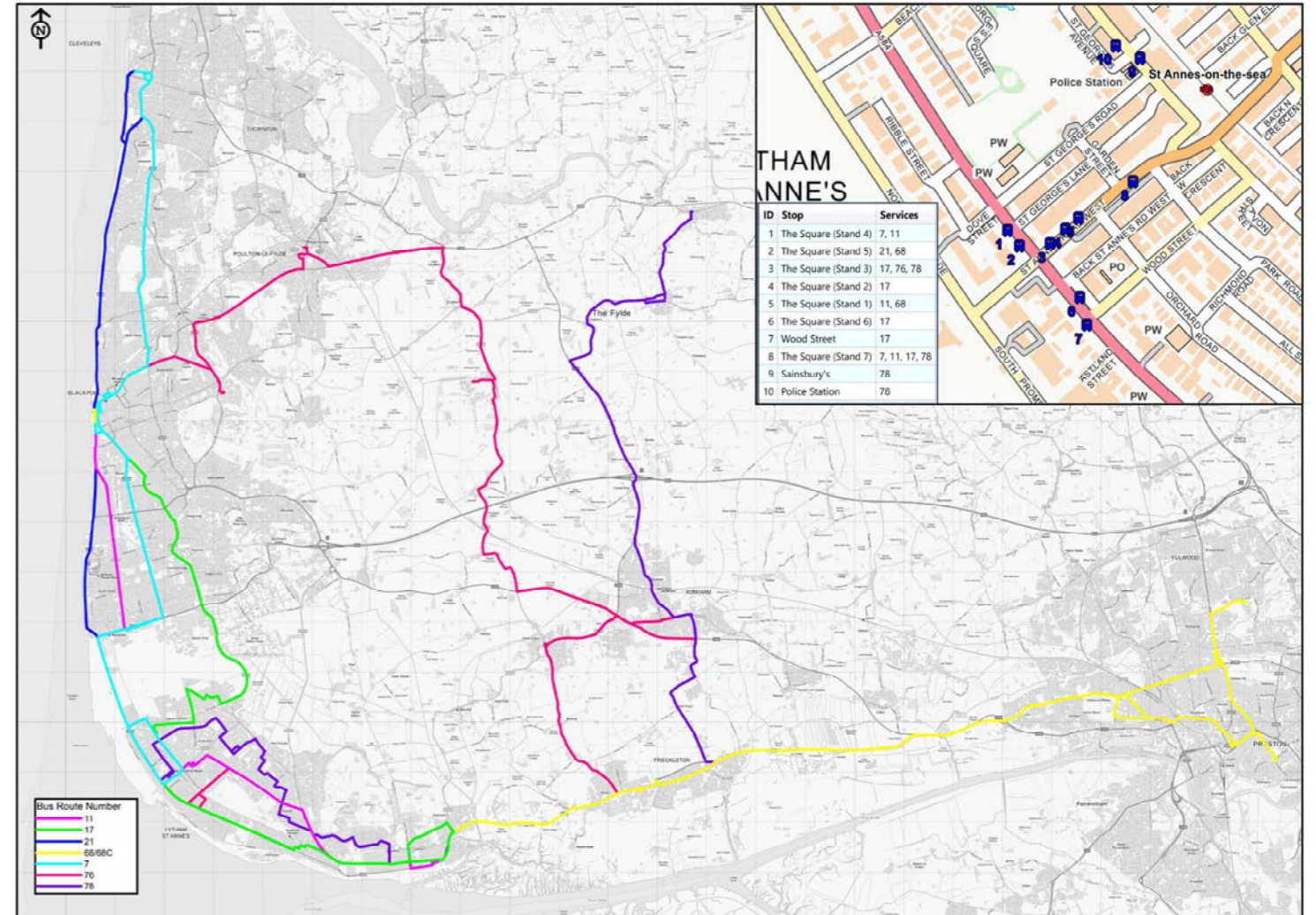
PUBLIC TRANSPORT

Getting the bus in St. Anne's

There are ten bus stops within the Town Centre as shown in the inset image of 4.3.1. The majority of these bus stops are clustered around the St Anne's Road West / Clifton Drive intersection with two bus stops provided near the train station outside of Sainsbury's and the Police Station.

Plan 4.3.1 also illustrates the routes of the bus services that travel through St Anne's and summarises which stops are served by each route. As illustrated there are a number of bus services that operate through the Town Centre to key destinations including Blackpool and Preston.

A summary of the bus routes and frequencies is provided in table below. It highlights that St. Anne's has excellent bus provision including frequent services through the Town Centre to a variety of locations including Lytham, Blackpool, Cleveleys and Preston.



Route	Destinations	Average Frequency per Hour			
		Daytime	Evening	Saturday	Sunday
7	Cleveleys - Blackpool - St Anne's	2	1	2	2
11	Lytham - St Anne's - Blackpool	3	2	2	2
17	Blackpool - Lytham Saltcotes Road	2	1	1	1
21*	St Anne's - Cleveleys via Clifton Drive - Promenade	2	0	2	0
68	Preston - Blackpool	3	1	3	2
76	St Anne's - Blackpool via Warton, Wrea Green, Weeton, Singleton, Victoria Hospital	1	1	1	0
78	St Anne's - Great Eccleston via Warton, Freckleton, Wesham, Elswick	1	1	1	0

*only operates on Wednesday, Thursday and Saturday

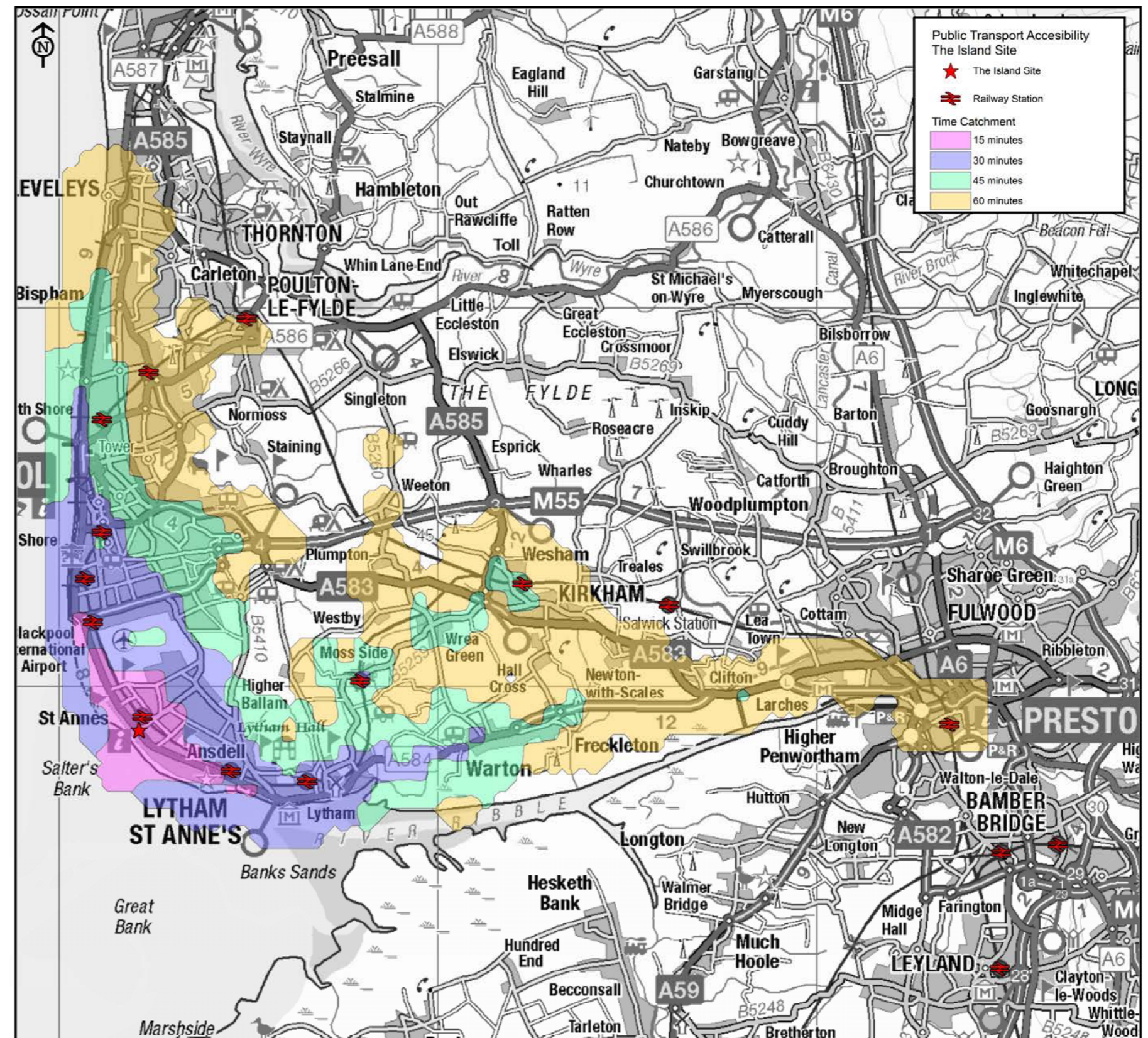
4.3.1 Bus Routes and Key Stops within St Anne's

Getting the train in St. Anne's

St Anne's (St Anne's-on-the-Sea) Railway Station is located on the northern side of St Anne's Town Centre. The station is operated by Northern Trains and currently offers an hourly service between Preston and Blackpool South. St Anne's is a one platform station with services arriving and departing from the same platform.

Connections can be made at Kirkham and Wesham Station to Blackpool North, Poulton-le-Fylde and Leyton Stations. Preston serves a major interchange for services on the West Coast Mainline with regional connections provided to a wide variety of destinations including Manchester and Liverpool.

A business case has been submitted that seeks to increase the frequency of services to provide a train every 30 minutes. This would help to make rail more attractive when compared to car travel. Currently the station feels disconnected from the rest of the Town Centre with no active frontage to the street and limited way finding provided for pedestrians.

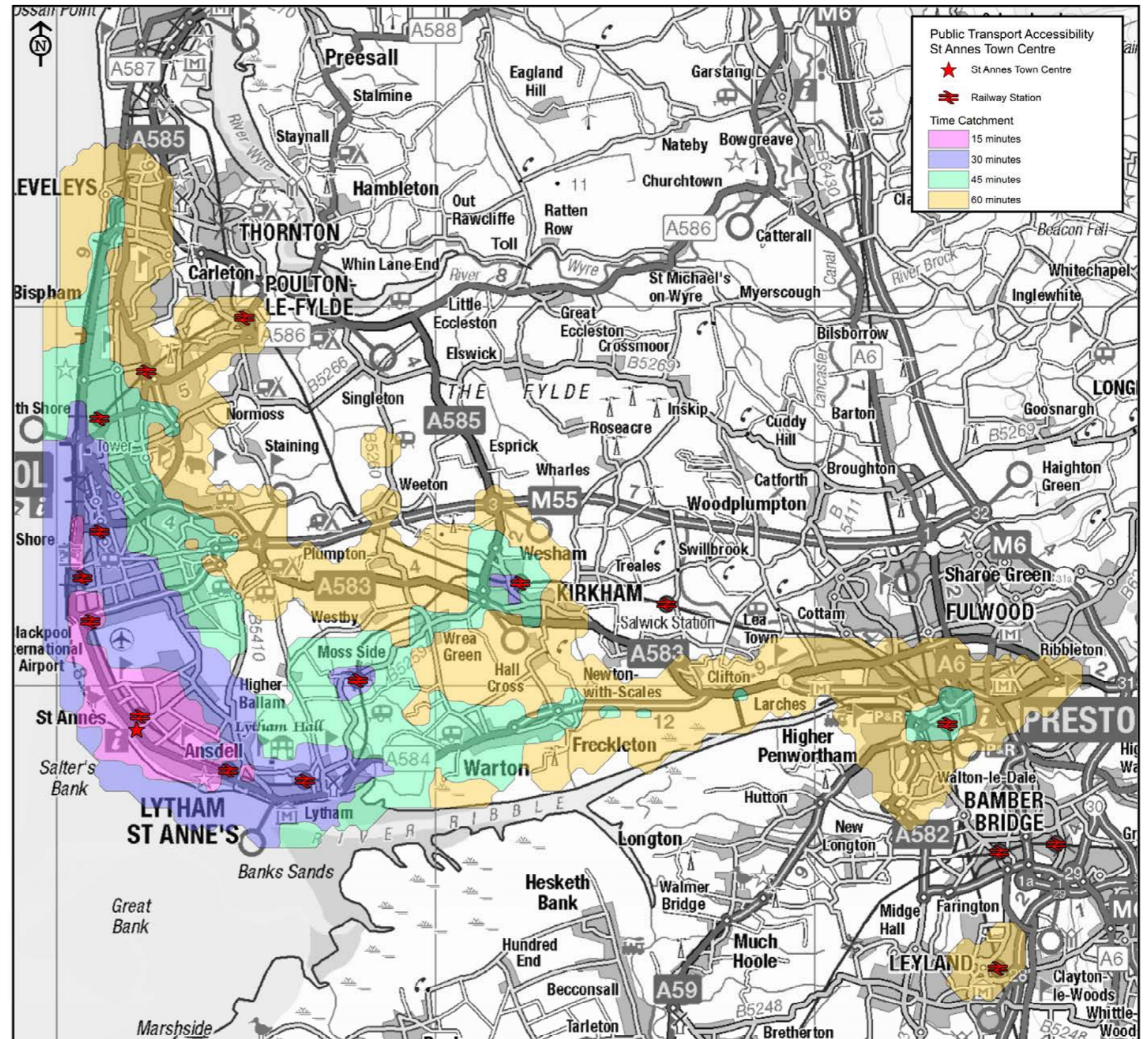


4.3.2 TRACC Assessment – The Island Site

Combined Public Transport Accessibility

Consideration has been given to the accessibility of the town centre by combined modes of travel. A public transport accessibility assessment (TRACC) has been undertaken to consider the areas that can be reached within a 15, 30, 45 and 60 minute journey time. Plan 4.3.2 provides a summary of this catchment from the Island site. Plan 4.3.3 provides a summary of this information from the Town Centre.

This analysis highlights that the Fylde Coast is accessible from St. Anne's using public transport, as are destinations inland such as Kirkham, Preston and Leyland. The Town Centre has a slightly wider catchment, due to its proximity to the Railway Station. However, this is marginal.



4.3.3 TRACC Assessment – St Anne's Town Centre

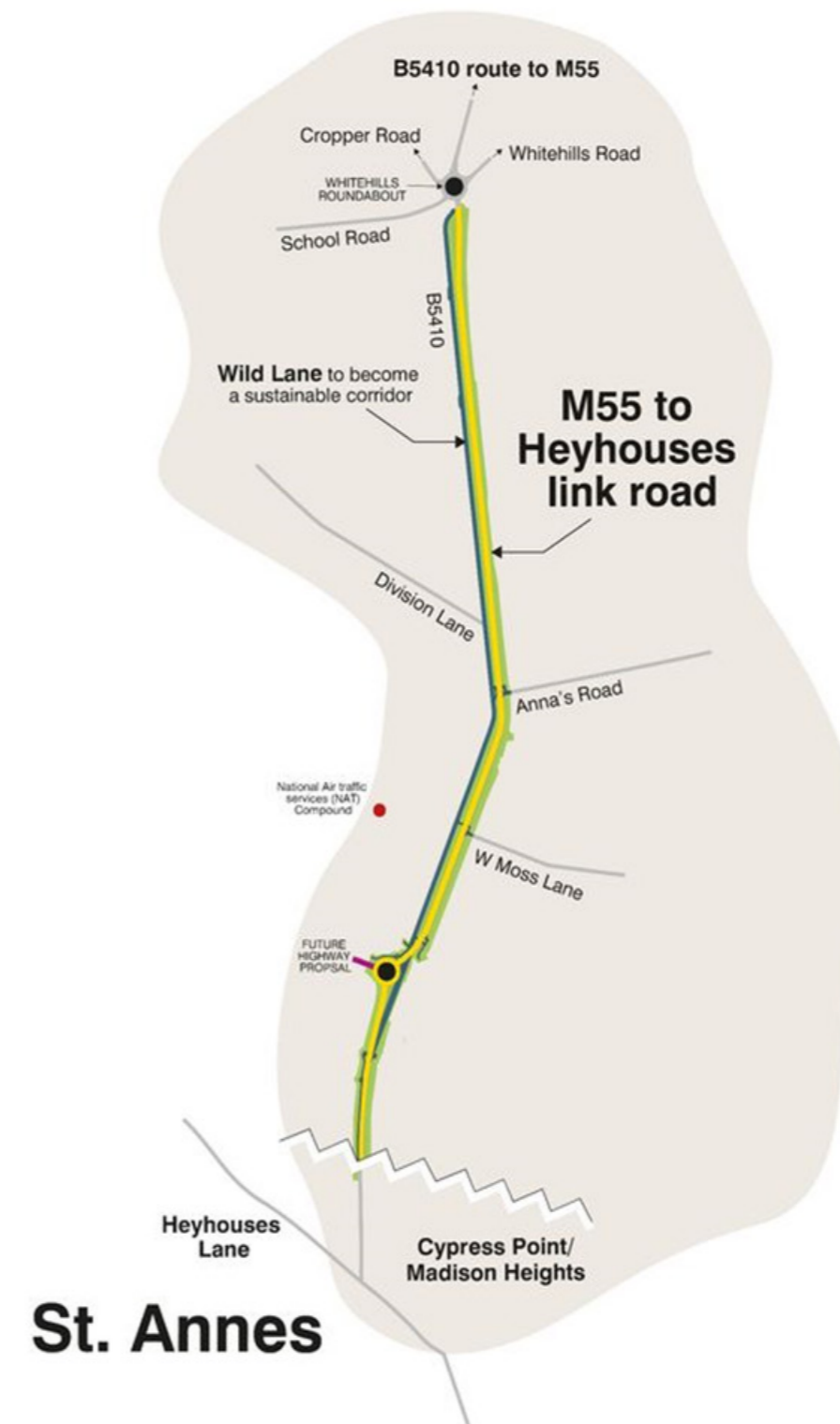
4.4

HEYHOUSES LINK ROAD

The Heyhouses Link Road, which is currently under construction, will provide a more convenient link between Junction 4 of the M55 and Heyhouses Lane. In addition, it will allow development to come forward to the north east of the town. It is expected to complete in early 2024.

There are currently a number of vehicular routes that can be taken to reach St. Anne's, via the Promenade, Clifton Drive or via the B5261 and St. Anne's Road East.

The creation of the Heyhouses Link Road and an associated signage strategy provides an opportunity to reroute traffic through St. Anne's in a manner that meets the Council's objectives for the town. This signage strategy could divide traffic between those wishing to access the town centre, seafront, long or short stay car parking. It would also seem to be a good opportunity to consider variable message signage to assist with the demand for car parking at peak periods.



4.4.1 Heyhouses Link Road

4.5

CAR PARKING

There are several long-stay and short-stay car parks located within St Anne's, with a number being operated by FC. The majority of the long-stay car parks are located along the Promenade near the seafront with the short-stay car parks located around the town centre. These car parks include;

- Fairhaven Road – Long-stay, operated by FC
- North Promenade – Long-stay, operated by FC
- St Anne's Swimming Pool – Long-stay, operated by FC
- Town Hall Car Park – Long-stay, operated by FC. Only available to the public on Weekends and Bank Holidays.
- St Anne's Square Car Park – Long-stay, operated by FC
- Wood Street Car Park – Long-stay, operated by FC

The Council car parks operate a charged ticketed system between the hours of 09:00 – 18:00 with overnight motorhome parking provided in the car park located behind the swimming pool. The short stay car parks allow parking up to 3 hours. The Pier, St George's Road and the Sainsbury's

car parks are privately operated. Ticket information for the Council operated car parks has been provided by FC officers. This data indicates that during the peak summer months the car parks along the Promenade are well utilised by visitors to St Anne's. Table 2 below provides a summary of the ticket sales information for the busiest day of the year.

Table 2 indicates that the car parks operated by the Council have a high turnover of spaces on the busiest day of the year. The information available for the Pier suggests that this car park is also well utilised as it occupies a central location on the Promenade and is in front of the Pier.

The information available for the St George's Road and Sainsbury's car parks suggests that these car parks are underutilised. This is for a number of reasons as follows:

- There are no lifts provided within the car parks reducing their attractiveness for people with mobility issues;
- The car parks are located away from the Promenade and the main Town Centre;
- The existing routes to these car parks are unattractive; and
- There isn't signage provided within the Town Centre to alert drivers to these alternative parking locations.

The locations of these car parks are shown in plan 2.7.9, which also indicates where existing barriers to permeability across the study area exist.

Car Park	No. of Spaces	No. of Tickets Sold	Length of Stay
Fairhaven Road	97	275	53% of tickets were over 3 hours
North Promenade	186	418	63% of tickets were over 3 hours
St Anne's Swimming Pool	81	221	37% of tickets were over 3 hours
Town Hall	35	93	59% of tickets were over 3 hours
St Anne's Square	29	182	73% of tickets were up to 1 hour
Wood Street	13	67	61% of tickets were up to 1 hour

Table 2: Summary of number of tickets sold

4.6

PERMEABILITY

Barriers to Permeability

As mentioned previously, overall St Anne's is an attractive proposition for pedestrians and cyclists. However, the car can dominate, with on street car parking and busy roads dominating the street scene. Poor crossing infrastructure within the Town Centre also contributes to a lack of permeability for pedestrian and cyclists.

Figure 4.6.1 provides a summary of the main barriers to permeability within St Anne's and can be summarised as follows;

- While a key link for active travel, the existing train station lacks a distinct presence within the Town Centre and appears hidden away in spite of it being within an easy walk of the Town Centre and seafront. There is a poor service frequency and lack of facilities at the station.
- There are three key instances of severance within the Town Centre, namely, the railway line, Clifton Road North and North and South Promenade. The routing of traffic along these routes within the Town Centre and along the seafront creates barriers to permeability for pedestrians and cyclists.
- While providing a route between the station and the seafront, St Anne's Road West could also be considered as a point of severance as

it currently serves a key route for vehicles with well utilised car parking located along the eastern side of the road.

- St Anne's Road West gives priority to cars with no formal cycling infrastructure provided, connecting the station to the seafront.
- These instances of severance are further complicated by poor pedestrian crossing infrastructure which makes crossing these routes more challenging for pedestrians and cyclists. These points include outside the main railway station, along St Anne's Road West, at the St Anne's Road West / Clifton Road North junction and at the St Anne's Road West / the Promenade junction.
- As shown in Image 8 the popularity of the car parks along the seafront, on St Anne's Road West and on Wood Street further intensify the dominance of the car within the Town Centre and along the seafront as drivers wish to access these car parks. Image 8 also illustrates that there two underutilised multi-storey car parks located near the train station.
- The bus laybys create pinch points for pedestrians and give priority to cars along Clifton Road North and St Anne's Road West.
- The carriageway alignment of St Anne's Road West between Clifton Road North and

the Promenade gives priority to vehicles wishing to access the seafront and creates a pinch point for pedestrians by narrowing the footways along this section of road.

Opportunities to Improve Permeability

The barriers to permeability within St Anne's provide a baseline to consider what improvements could be made to increase pedestrian and cyclist accessibility and make the Town Centre more attractive. By improving the permeability of St Anne's, it will be possible to make better use of the Town Centre, the railway station and the seafront.

The wider ambition for the redevelopment of St Anne's is to provide a direct, safe, and convenient route from station to seafront, by removing the existing barriers to permeability. Using Image 8 as the baseline, the opportunities to improve permeability can be summarised as follows;

Improve the gateway to the station by reducing and redesigning the station car park to create a pedestrian environment that opens up the front of the station and provides better facilities.

Create better facilities along St Anne's Road West for pedestrians and reduce the speed limit to 20mph.

Provide better crossing facilities along the route from the station to the seafront at the station, along St Anne's Road West, at the Clifton Road North / St Anne's Road junction, and at the St Anne's Road West / the Promenade junction. These crossing facilities would provide a raised table and pedestrian priority signage.

Improve the environment for pedestrians on side roads including Garden Street – linking the Town Centre with Ashton Gardens, on Park Street and Orchard Street – linking St Anne's Road West with Wood Street and on Wood Street.

Improve the environment for cycling by introducing segregated cycle routes and cycle parking along St Anne's Road West and the Promenade. It is anticipated that these measures will encourage more people to cycle within St Anne's. A cycle hire scheme could also be introduced to encourage people travelling to the town to cycle while in St Anne's.

Improve the bus stops by moving their locations to provide better accessibility and interchange facilities and remove the bus laybys to enhance priority for pedestrians, which will in turn improve the pedestrian environment within St Anne's.

Remove car parking around the Pier and seafront to provide a better environment for pedestrians and cyclists. Additional parking could be provided to the north of the Pier and the use of the multi-storey car parks should be encouraged.

Introduce way finding within St Anne's for pedestrians and cyclists to highlight the best routes to access the different areas within the Town Centre.

Introduce way finding signage within St Anne's which can be used as a strategy to re-route vehicles to key destinations in St Anne's including parking.



4.6.1 Car Park Locations & Barriers to Permeability Plan



5.0

NEXT STEPS



5.1

NEXT STEPS

Development of masterplan proposals

- Identify a short list of areas for potential development opportunities, informed by the baseline research, discussions with the steering group (FC) and engagement with key stakeholders
- Develop an emerging vision for the masterplan with a set of objectives to be fulfilled by the masterplan proposals
- Produce a range of options for development which will address the emerging vision and brief for the project
- Engage with key stakeholders to gauge support for the emerging vision, proposed project sites and for alternative uses and levels of intervention at those sites. This includes:
 - Local Businesses
 - Town Council
 - Members

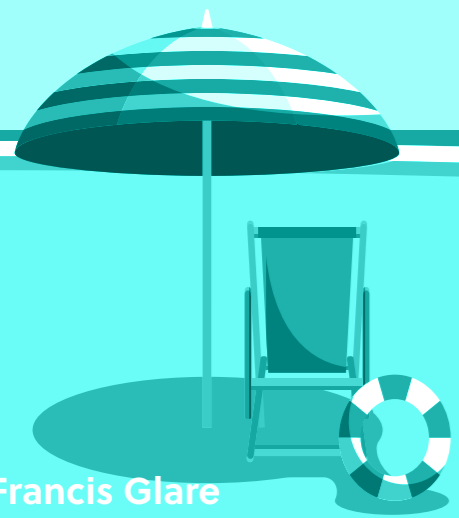
Putting the ideas to Public Consultation

- In liaison with FC, prepare and deliver a public consultation in Spring 2022 to gain feedback on the initial masterplan proposals. This will include the following elements:
 - Community drop-in session held in suitably accessible Town Centre Venue
 - Exhibition event with representatives from project team (BDP) and steering group (FC)
 - Consultation boards including visuals, plans and text as necessary to explain the process undertaken to date, the options and their potential benefits (accompanied by an online video reflecting this content).
 - A questionnaire to record feedback and provide space for further comments and ideas
 - Communications via FBC website, social media, community networks etc.

Further development of preferred masterplan options

- Critically evaluate the results from the public consultation to inform the further development of the masterplan proposals
- Options appraisal with Steering Group to identify preferred option for further development
- Undertake assessments of deliverability i.e., market demand, attractiveness to investors / developers, availability of funding support and viability
- Further development of preferred Masterplan projects including sketch proposals for sites to test development capacity and alternative urban design concepts, streetscapes, public realm and transport interventions.





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