

Integrated Assessment (IA) of the Fylde Local Plan

Regulation 19 Publication Plan
Integrated Assessment Report

Fylde Borough Council

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1. Introduction

1.1 Background

- 1.1.1 AECOM has been commissioned by Fylde Borough Council (herein referred to as 'the Council') to lead on an Integrated Assessment (IA) in support of the new Local Plan.
- 1.1.2 This document is the IA Report, which describes the steps within the Integrated Assessment that have been undertaken throughout the plan-making process. The report contains all the information required to satisfy legislative requirements and is a key piece of evidence.

1.2 Integrated Assessment (IA) explained

- 1.2.1 IA is a mechanism for considering and communicating the likely effects of an emerging plan, and alternatives, with a view to minimising adverse effects and maximising the positives. IA involves undertaking the legally required Sustainability Appraisal (SA)¹ process alongside: Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA), which is undertaken to discharge the Public Sector Equality Duty; Health Impact Assessment (HIA) to have regard to health impacts and promote the reduction of health inequality.
- 1.2.2 To ensure meaningful integration between these different impact assessment tools and therefore avoid duplication, the processes are combined and presented in one report (rather than a series of separate reports).
- 1.2.3 It is a requirement that SA is undertaken in line with the procedures prescribed by the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004, which were prepared to transpose into national law the EU Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Directive. There is established practice and guidance in relation to the SA of Local Plans, and therefore this process is a solid foundation upon which the Integrated Assessment is based (drawing in the features of HIA and EQIA as appropriate).
- 1.2.4 In line with regulations and guidance, a report (in this case known as the IA Report) must be published for consultation alongside the draft plan that essentially 'identifies, describes, and evaluates' the likely significant effects of implementing 'the plan, and reasonable alternatives'. The report must then be considered alongside consultation responses when finalising the plan.
- 1.2.5 More specifically, the IA Report should answer two key questions -
- What has plan-making / IA involved up to this point?
 - including with regards to consideration of 'reasonable alternatives'
 - What are the IA findings at this stage?
 - i.e., in relation to the pre-submission plan

¹ Since provision was made through the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 it has been understood that local planning authorities must carry out a process of Sustainability Appraisal alongside plan-making. The centrality of IA to Local Plan-making is emphasised in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF, 2026). The Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) Regulations 2012 require that an IA Report is published for consultation alongside the 'Proposed Submission' plan document.

2. Scoping

2.1 Introduction

- 2.1.1 The aim here is to summarise the scope of the IA, i.e. the sustainability themes and objectives that should be a focus of (and provide a broad methodological framework for) the IA. Further information on the scope of the IA including a more detailed review of the sustainability issues and objectives as highlighted through a review of the sustainability ‘context’ and ‘baseline’, is presented in the IA Scoping Report.
- 2.1.2 The IA is being driven by the SA/SEA process to ensure legal compliance (whilst also weaving in elements of HIA and EqIA).
- 2.1.3 The SEA Regulations² require that “when deciding on the scope and level of detail of the information that must be included in the report, the responsible authority shall consult the consultation bodies”. In England, the consultation bodies are the Environment Agency, Historic England, and Natural England. Consultees were initially consulted on the Scoping Report between 24.02.2026 and 01.04.2026. The responses received from the consultation have been taken into account and amendments were made to the baseline information, policy context and IA Framework, where deemed necessary.
- 2.1.4 It should be noted that scoping is not a static process and further updates can be made as the IA (and plan-making) process progresses to reflect important changes in evidence, baseline information and policy context. The scoping information has therefore been reviewed and updated as the plan-making process has progressed. These updates have not resulted in any changes to the IA Framework, which remains appropriate for the assessment of the Local Plan.

2.2 IA objectives

- 2.2.1 A key output from scoping is the IA framework, which is essentially a summary table of the scope, identifying the IA themes and objectives that will be a focus for the IA. The IA framework for the Fylde Local Plan is presented in **Table 2.1** and is formed of ten IA themes and their associated objectives. Taken together, the sustainability objectives and supporting criteria provide a methodological ‘framework’ for the appraisal of the Fylde Local Plan and reasonable alternatives. The key issues that have informed the development of this framework are provided below:

Biodiversity

- There is strong legislative and policy framework seeking to protect and enhance biodiversity. In particular, there is a need to reverse the declines that have been experienced in biodiversity and to achieve ‘net gain’.
- There are five internationally designated sites within the borough or within a 2km zone of influence, which contribute to the wider biodiversity network. These sites will be sensitive to development, including through increased impacts on air quality and recreational pressures.

² Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004.

- Internationally designated sites are supported by networks of wildlife habitats which extend across the borough area. Nationally and locally designated sites predominantly exist outside of the urban areas, although some are located within.
- There are a variety of Biodiversity Action Plan Priority Habitats and components of the nature network present across the borough. It will be important for the Local Plan to support nature recovery across the area and restore any losses that might arise as a result of development.

Water, soil and land resources

- Many water bodies in Fylde's catchments fail to achieve "good" ecological status, with pollution from rural areas being the most significant issue. Urban pollution, wastewater pollution, and physical modifications to watercourses also contribute to poor water quality, impacting ecosystems and drinking water sources.
- Designated bathing waters in the Borough of Fylde failed to achieve "good" quality status in 2025 and there is potential for flood risk to have adverse effects on bathing water quality.
- The Borough of Fylde contains large amounts of Grade 2 and potential Grade 3a land. Protecting these productive soils from development is important for preserving local food production and biodiversity.
- There are a number of Mineral Safeguarding Areas within the borough area. Development in proximity of these areas must ensure that they do not confer a detrimental effect on mineral resources.
- There are historic landfill sites situated on the coast in the southeast of the borough area, presenting potential contamination risks. Redevelopment of these areas must consider soil remediation to prevent pollution of water sources and ensure safe land use.
- The Borough of Fylde requires sufficient waste infrastructure to manage residual waste and increase recycling and recovery rates. Population growth is also likely to increase waste management including the need for new infrastructure.

Historic environment

- The Borough of Fylde contains a wide range of designated and non-designated heritage assets, reflecting its long history of industrial, coastal, and urban development. These assets are particularly concentrated in Lytham St Annes and Kirkham.
- The historic environment in the Borough of Fylde is vulnerable to pressures from ongoing regeneration, development, and population growth, particularly in areas with high concentrations of listed buildings and conservation areas. This could result in changes to the setting, character, and structural condition of heritage features if not appropriately managed.
- Not all of the borough's conservation areas have up-to-date appraisals or management plans. This creates a potential risk to the appropriate management of change and highlights the need for strategic evidence to guide planning and investment decisions affecting historic areas.

- Growth may provide opportunities for enhancing the historic environment, such as the reuse of historic buildings, improved interpretation, and better integration of heritage into new development. However, this will rely on early consideration of heritage significance and clear guidance to avoid harm and maximise the public value of heritage.

Landscape

- Fylde is predominantly rural, with limited areas of Green Belt concentrated around major settlements. As a result, development pressures are likely to focus on existing urban greenspaces or extend into surrounding rural land, with potential adverse effects on local character.
- Landscape character across the plan area is defined by its productive farmland and biodiverse coastal and inland habitats. Future development could either reinforce or undermine this unique character, depending on the design quality and sensitivity of proposals.
- The absence of a recent local landscape character assessment for Fylde creates a gap in understanding how the area functions as a landscape and where its key sensitivities and opportunities lie.
- Fylde urban centres are experiencing change due to shifts in retail, working, and travel behaviours. This could impact the townscape positively (e.g. reduced traffic and more active travel infrastructure), or negatively (e.g. empty units, visual degradation), depending on the quality of public realm investment and regeneration.
- Parts of Fylde's rural and coastal landscape are integral to its historic and cultural heritage. Continued change in land use, infrastructure, and development may threaten their setting and contribution to local distinctiveness if not adequately assessed and mitigated.
- There is potential for coalescence of settlements at Wrea Green and Kirkham, Kirkham and Newton unless proper protection is afforded to the green infrastructure that separates the settlements.
- Green infrastructure (GI) plays a critical role in shaping landscape quality and climate adaptation. There is an opportunity to embed GI enhancements (e.g. tree planting, sustainable drainage, green roofs) into new development, with planning policy playing an important role in ensuring consistent delivery.

Air quality and noise

- Air pollution is most acute in urban areas and along major transport corridors, where the density of A-roads, motorways, railways and associated traffic flows contribute to higher pollutant concentrations. Development proposals in these areas may exacerbate air quality challenges if not carefully planned and mitigated.
- Although the plan area currently has no significant issues associated with air quality, there is still a need to effectively manage the cumulative effects of growth, particularly where it may increase traffic volumes or domestic fuel emissions.

- Noise pollution in Fylde is closely linked to the strategic transport network, particularly along the M55, A583, A584, A585, and A586 corridors, where high levels of noise adversely affect nearby residential communities, especially at motorway junctions. Elevated noise levels are also evident on key rail lines. In addition, areas of the Borough of Fylde are impacted by aircraft noise associated with Blackpool airport and Warton aerodrome, with communities in northeast Lytham St Annes, Peel, Lower Ballam, Higher Ballam, Warton, and Freckleton particularly affected due to proximity to the flight path.
- Future growth and regeneration in the borough, including new housing, employment, and infrastructure, could place additional pressure on the borough's transport network and industrial areas, with potential to deteriorate air quality and exacerbate noise impacts. Conversely, sustainable development patterns and improved public and active transport could help to mitigate these issues and enhance quality of life for residents.

Climate change and flood risk

- Flood risk is prevalent across the Borough of Fylde, with areas falling within Flood Zones 2 and 3, primarily associated with local waterbodies such as the River Wyre and River Ribble. Surface water flooding also affects various parts of the borough. It is likely that an increase in the built environment would impact upon the natural drainage capacity. It will be important that the Local Plan guides development away from areas that are most vulnerable to flooding and ensures Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) and other design measures are incorporated in development proposals.
- Climate change is expected to increase vulnerability within the Borough of Fylde, increasing the risk of adverse health impacts resulting from events such as flooding, heatwaves, sea level rise, and extreme weather. There may also be wider implications, including the movement of climate refugees, changes in agricultural practices, and disruptions to biodiversity. It is therefore important for the borough to strengthen its resilience and adaptive capacity to address the impacts of climate change.
- Transport and domestic energy use are the two largest sources of emissions in the Borough of Fylde. Transport-related emissions can be reduced through measures such as promoting active travel, enhancing public transport provision, and supporting the transition to electric vehicles. The Local Plan can help facilitate these changes by embedding policies that encourage sustainable development, prioritise low-carbon transport infrastructure, and align with broader climate objectives. Reducing emissions from homes will depend on improving energy efficiency through actions such as retrofitting insulation, adopting low-carbon heating solutions, and ensuring that new developments are built to high sustainability standards.

Healthy and safe communities

- Fylde's population grew by 7.4% between 2011 and 2021, which is greater than the regional and national rate. The population is anticipated to increase over the plan period, which is likely to lead to localised pressure on key services and facilities that contribute towards healthy and safe communities – such as schools, and community facilities. An ageing population is considered likely to contribute additional pressure, given the need for more supporting infrastructure.
- Whilst life expectancy is in line with national averages, health in Fylde is considered to be poorer than national averages – with indicators such as obesity, alcohol-related conditions and mental health conditions being higher. Health inequalities across Fylde have also been identified, with poorer health levels being identified along the south-west coast and around Warton. As such, there is pressure on the healthcare system and supporting infrastructure in Fylde, which is likely to increase pressure on healthcare facilities and services as the population grows and ages.
- Physical activity levels in Fylde are relatively low, particularly amongst children and young people aged 16 and below. This could be linked to unequal access to green and blue infrastructure, and connectivity issues. Increasing participation in walking, cycling and active travel opportunities could support improved physical health, and would likely improve access to key supporting infrastructure, however it is recognised that there is a need to strengthen the connectivity of the active travel network.
- Levels of education and educational attainment in Fylde are higher than regional and national averages, however the quality of educational infrastructure is generally lower than national averages.
- It is recognised that there are concerns over the safety of the road network in Fylde, and an increase in the population of Fylde has the potential to exacerbate traffic-related pressures. However, it is recognised that the number of traffic collisions has been reducing since 2022.
- Whilst Fylde experiences lower crime rates than local, regional and national figures, deprivation linked to crime has worsened, and specific crime hotspots can be identified. As such, maintaining community safety whilst accommodating additional growth will be a key consideration.

Material assets

- Housing delivery in the Borough of Fylde has generally remained steady, but future supply is increasingly dependent on the delivery of a limited number of strategic sites, making overall delivery sensitive to infrastructure constraints, viability considerations and market conditions.
- An ageing population and smaller household sizes are driving increased demand for smaller, accessible and adaptable homes, while maintaining a balanced supply of family housing to support workforce retention and community sustainability remains an ongoing challenge.
- Kirkham, Lytham and St Annes town centres face structural changes in retailing, with pressure on traditional retail uses and the need to diversify towards leisure, services and residential uses to maintain long-term vitality and viability.

- Economic inactivity remains relatively high compared with regional and national averages, largely reflecting the borough's older age profile, while ensuring opportunities for younger people and working-age residents to participate fully in the labour market is an important consideration.

Equalities

- The Borough of Fylde is considered the 188th most deprived out of 269 local authority areas by average rank, and the largest proportion of LSOAs fall within the 30% most deprived in terms of living environment (23.5%), health deprivation and disability (21.6%) and barriers to housing and services (17.6%).
- The borough has the highest proportion of people with a disability or long-term health condition that limits daily activities (20.4%), compared to Lancashire (19.3%), the north-west region (19.4%), and 14.1% nationally. However, this has marginally decreased (2.8 percentage points) since the 2011 Census. For this protected characteristic group, exclusion from economic activity and higher cost of living are key areas for consideration.
- The Borough of Fylde has an ageing population. The borough has the largest proportion of residents aged 65 and over (27.8%) when compared to Lancashire (20.8%), the north-west (18.7%) and England (18.4%). Population projections estimate a 113.3% increase in the population aged 80 and over by 2047. For an ageing population, overcoming barriers to accessing care and tackling social isolation and loneliness could be prioritised in the future.
- The borough has a high percentage of one-person households aged 66 and over (17.4%) and married or civil partnership couples with no dependent children (12.8%), while a lower percentage of lone parent households with dependent children (8.6%).
- The largest proportion of residents are married or in a registered civil partnership (48.8%) and above average proportions are divorced and widowed; this trend is also likely explained by the ageing population.
- The Borough of Fylde is less diverse in terms of religion and ethnic groups compared to the wider Lancashire area, the north-west, and England, overrepresented by Christians (61.6%) and the White ethnic group (96.3%). The majority of residents are heterosexual (91.8%) and identify with the sex registered at birth (95.3%).
- Health inequalities are further reflective of an ageing population, with the life expectancy steadily increasing and sitting above the regional average (79.8 years for men and 83 years for women). Expanding community-based support for independent living and promoting preventive health measures and lifestyles could help extend disability-free life expectancy.
- Educational performance in the Borough of Fylde is largely in line with expectations; the Attainment 8 scores in the middle quintile nationally and Key Stage 2 performance above the regional average.

- Employment has sharply fluctuated in the Borough of Fylde. The borough has a lower proportion of unemployed (2.8%) and slightly higher proportion of those economically inactive (22.7%) likely reflecting higher rates of those retired or experiencing long-term sickness in line with the ageing population and high percentage of disabled people.
- As of November 2025, 2,306 households were registered for rehousing including 2,381 household members with a disability.
- A third of households in Fylde comprise only older people, with the largest proportion located in St Annes and Lytham, and the proportion of extra care housing for the elderly population sits above the national average.
- The majority of Support Needs households are households with physical disabilities (not in a wheelchair) (63.1%); the majority of Support Needs households are also located in the coastal towns of St Annes and Lytham.

Transport

- Fylde benefits from strong multi-modal connectivity in Kirkham and to a lesser extent in Lytham St Annes, with strategic road and rail infrastructure linking it to areas outside the borough. These include direct road links to Preston and Blackpool and other major UK cities.
- Rural areas are less well connected, with good access to the strategic road network but limited public transport connectivity.
- Fylde's road network includes major A-roads (A583, A584, A585, A586) and access to the M55 motorway. These routes support local, regional, and national travel; however, congestion is a persistent issue, especially on approaches to urban centres. Growth in housing, employment, and population is expected to place increasing pressure on road capacity.
- The rail network includes local services via Lytham St Annes and Kirkham. While frequency improvements are planned, service gaps remain, particularly for northern residents, which may constrain mode shift if not addressed.
- The bus network in Lytham St Annes is well served by Blackpool Transport, with additional coverage in rural parts of the plan area provided by Dial-a-Bus and Stagecoach services. Future growth is expected to increase demand for more frequent services and expanded routes. Strengthening collaboration with operators will be key to improving public transport access, particularly in rural areas.
- Commuter flows show net inflow into the Borough of Fylde, particularly from Blackpool. This data suggest the borough acts as an employment hub, reinforcing the need for a resilient, integrated transport system that supports both local and cross-boundary movement.
- Climate change poses a growing risk to transport resilience. Increasing frequency of extreme weather events, such as heatwaves and flooding, could disrupt road and rail infrastructure. Without targeted adaptation, these impacts may reduce reliability and exacerbate existing congestion.

Table 2.1 IA framework

IA topic	IA objective	Appraisal questions - will the option/ proposal help to...
Biodiversity	Protect, restore and enhance habitats and species, including designated sites, locally important features and links between habitats.	• Protect the integrity of the European designated SPAs and Ramsar within and nearby Fylde? • Avoid negative impacts, and where possible improve the condition of nationally designated SSSI, MCZs and NNR sites within and nearby Fylde? • Manage pressures on locally designated sites for biodiversity in Fylde? • Protect and enhance priority habitats, as well as the habitats of priority species, during both the construction and operational phases of development/ schemes? • Protect and enhance ecological networks and areas of Functionally Linked Land? • Achieve national biodiversity net gain (BNG) standard or above? • Increase the resilience of biodiversity to the potential effects of climate change? • Reduce the impact of development on species' severance? • Manage recreational disturbances on habitats and designated sites? • Support an interconnected green infrastructure network which supports nature recovery and connectivity? • Protect and enhance areas of deep restorable peat? • Align with Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS) and Nature Recovery Networks?
Water, soil and land resources	Seek to deliver neutral, or where possible positive, impacts on water quality, associated biodiversity, and on the physical state of water bodies.	• Support improvements to water quality? • Protect surface water and groundwater resources? • Protect and enhance bathing water quality? • Minimise physical alterations to water bodies and re-naturalise watercourses, where possible? • Minimise the impacts to, and where possible, enhance the quality of water bodies of strategic significance for water supply?

IA topic	IA objective	Appraisal questions - will the option/ proposal help to...
	Promote the efficient use of land.	• Facilitate the use of previously developed land? • Avoid the loss of the best and most versatile agricultural land (Grade 1 to 3a agricultural land)? • Impact brownfield sites of historic or high environmental importance?
	Promote sustainable waste and mineral resource management.	• Encourage recycling of materials and minimise consumption of resources during construction, operation and maintenance of development? • Encourage the reduction, re-use and recycling of waste during construction? • Protect the integrity of mineral resources and mineral safeguarding areas?
Historic environment	Preserve and enhance Fylde's historic environment, including designated and non-designated heritage assets and their setting.	• Conserve and enhance the significance of designated and non-designated assets, and their setting? • Conserve and enhance the special interest, character and appearance of conservation areas and their settings? • Support the protection and management of vulnerable historic places and sites across Fylde? • Protect and enhance the coastal heritage of Fylde? • Support place-making and high-quality design in the built historic environment? • Support access to, interpretation and understanding of the historic environment?
Landscape	Protect and enhance the character and quality of Fylde's landscapes and townscapes.	• Support the five purposes of the Green Belt? • Protect, maintain and enhance local character and distinctiveness? • Conserve and enhance locally important landscape and townscape features? • Prevent adverse visual and landscape impacts from development and infrastructure? • Preserve tranquillity and dark night skies, avoiding significant increases in light pollution? • Support an increase in tree canopy cover across the borough?

IA topic	IA objective	Appraisal questions - will the option/ proposal help to...
Air quality and noise	Deliver improvements in air quality in Fylde	• Conserve and enhance GI to help protect against settlement coalescence, climate change, and urban sprawl? • Reduce emissions from transport? • Promote the use of zero emission vehicles? • Promote enhancements to green infrastructure networks to facilitate increased absorption and dissipation of nitrogen dioxide and other pollutants? • Encourage a modal shift to more sustainable transport? • Improve access to active travel networks?
	Reduce the impacts of noise on human health and the environment	• Contribute to lowering noise levels in general? • Seek to mitigate the impact on areas likely to be affected by noise, and reducing the noise generated at source and/or containing the noise generated? • Utilise measures to reduce traffic noise specifically during transport planning, such as low noise road surfacing?
Climate change and flood risk	Support climate change mitigation across Fylde through limiting greenhouse gas emissions.	• Reduce GHG emissions from transport through active travel, public transport, and low-emission vehicles? • Promote the use of sustainable modes of transport, including walking, cycling, and public transport? • Generate energy from low or zero carbon sources? • Reduce energy consumption from non-renewable sources? • Reduce greenhouse gas emissions across key sectors? • Improve energy efficiency in new and existing buildings, including through retrofitting and sustainable design? • Support low-carbon economic growth and the transition to a green economy? • Encourage sustainable construction practices and low-carbon materials?

IA topic	IA objective	Appraisal questions - will the option/ proposal help to...
	Support Fylde's resilience to the potential effects of climate change, in particular flooding.	• Reduce flood risk by integrating natural flood management, sustainable drainage systems (SuDS) and flood-resilient design? • Sustainably manage water run-off, reducing surface water runoff? • Ensure new developments avoid areas of high flood risk in the first instance, and where no alternative sites are available, incorporate sufficient resilience measures? • Support community and business adaptation to climate risks, including heatwaves and storms? • Encourage urban cooling measures such as green roofs, street trees, and permeable surfaces?
Healthy and safe communities	Improve health and wellbeing of residents	• Reduce the impacts of air and noise pollution on health? • Improve access to active travel (through routes, cycle parking, access to cycles and equipment)? • Encourage physical activity and healthy lifestyles and address health inequalities? • Avoid any negative impacts to the quality and extent of existing recreational/ leisure assets, including cycle routes and formal or informal footpaths? • Tackle key issues with regard to health: smoking, excessive alcohol consumption, poor diet and low physical activity? • Avoid severance between new and existing communities?
	Improve levels of educational attainment	• Will proposals address educational inequalities faced by children from more deprived households? • Will there be improvements to address educational gap caused by Covid-19 pandemic?

IA topic	IA objective	Appraisal questions - will the option/ proposal help to...
	Protect access to green spaces and leisure facilities	• Protect existing and improve the provision of green spaces? • Enhance the provision of, and access to, green and blue infrastructure? • Address deficiencies in green infrastructure access in areas of insufficient provision and amongst residents which face additional barriers to access?
Material assets	Promote coordinated land use planning across Fylde	• Deliver housing in sustainable locations that are well served by existing infrastructure, services, and amenities? • Make efficient use of land, including prioritising previously developed (brownfield) sites where appropriate? • Support the creation of well-designed, healthy, and safe neighbourhoods with access to green spaces and community facilities? • Contribute to climate resilience and reduced environmental impacts by promoting compact and resource-efficient development patterns?
	Promote economic growth and job creation across the sub-region, and improve access to jobs for all	• Support inclusive economic growth and help to create and sustain employment opportunities in a diverse range of sectors? • Improve access to jobs, education, and training opportunities, particularly for underrepresented and disadvantaged groups? • Contribute to regeneration and revitalisation of deprived areas and underperforming centres? • Enhance the quality, resilience, and attractiveness of employment areas and the wider borough economy?

IA topic	IA objective	Appraisal questions - will the option/ proposal help to...
Equalities	Promote equality and cater for existing and future residents' needs as well as the needs of all groups in the community including those with protected characteristics.	• Promote opportunities to foster good relations between protected characteristic groups? • Contribute towards addressing health, education and employment inequalities? • Maintain or enhance the quality of life for residents? • Promote opportunities for deprived households and particular groups, such as disabled people and different ethnic groups? • Promote employment and training opportunities for the young adult population? • Promote access to transport services for all including those with and without shared protected characteristics? • Contribute towards addressing health inequalities for an ageing population and future demand for health and social care services? • Support access to appropriate housing and support services for the elderly and disabled population?
Transport	Reduce the need to travel by private vehicle and promote sustainable modes of transport	• Improve transport to ensure sustainable and active modes are most desired and used to connect people to places? • Improve accessibility and affordability of sustainable forms of travel? • Minimise dependence on the private vehicle? • Promote a wider travel choice through delivering improvements to existing travel networks? • Promote transportation of freight and goods using waterways and rail?

2.3 Plan vision and objectives

- 2.3.1 The draft Plan contains a vision and strategic objectives. The vision is set out below.

Local Plan Vision

In 2042, Fylde will be a place where people choose to live, work and raise a family, retire and feel safe, visit and want to return.

Fylde will have continued to develop as a dynamic, prosperous place to live and work through boosting the delivery of sustainable homes and economic growth in accordance with the Local Plan Development Strategy, supported by the necessary facilities, services, infrastructure and access to modern telecommunications.

People will have the opportunity to access services and jobs close to where they live. New homes will have been developed to meet housing needs. New housing areas will have been developed at sustainable locations, with safe pedestrian/cycle access to all necessary local facilities. A range of specialist accommodation will have been completed to provide for the needs of an ageing population. Affordability of homes will have improved as a result of the mix of new homes provided.

The requirement for high-quality design as a key principle in all development will have led to new housing areas that are valued for their appearance, layout and how they contribute to the attractiveness of the wider settlements, but which still function effectively. New developments will have fitted comfortably into the existing content of the surrounding areas. They will include accessible links for pedestrians and cyclists to connect into the wider area without avoidable use of main roads. Landscaping in completed developments will have begun to mature and provide a softening of the appearance of the built development. New commercial developments will have avoided utilitarian design and provided appropriate character.

Fylde will have enhanced its unique qualities including its historic and built environment, the classic seaside resort towns of Lytham and St Annes, the historic market town of Kirkham, tranquil coastline, high-quality golf courses, tourism offer and picturesque rural settlements. 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. The key historic resort assets including Promenade Gardens, Ashton Gardens, St Annes Pier, Fairhaven Lake and Gardens, Lytham Green and Windmill and Lowther Gardens and all of their associated features will have been maintained, and will remain as lynchpins of the resorts' appeal. 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. Projects to improve the Island Sea Front Area and linkages from the sea front to St Annes town centre through the St Annes Masterplan will have provided a high-quality visitor experience.

Fylde will have remained flexible in its approach to changing economic and employment patterns, particularly with regard to major local employers. Strategic, nationally important manufacturing sites at BAE Systems, Warton (and its Enterprise Zone) and Westinghouse Springfields, along with Blackpool Airport Enterprise Zone will have provided for significant economic growth. The needs of businesses, particularly units to assist continuing micro-business formation will have been provided for through the provision of employment sites close to where people live, including further development at Whitehills.

Lytham and St Annes will be thriving resorts with quality specialist shops, with Kirkham a vibrant historic market town. Lytham, St Annes 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. Whitehills and Whyndyke will have been developed as a Local Service Centre, as a sustainable walkable settlement with local retail centres serving the new communities at both Whitehills and Whyndyke. Wesham and Freckleton will retain their functions as Local Service Centres.

The rural character and attractiveness of the countryside areas of the Fylde will have been retained and enhanced. Rural settlements in Fylde will have retained their individual identities and heritage assets and their distinctive features will have been protected, enhanced and promoted; all development will have respected and conserved the character of these settlements. The release of land away from the main settlements for development will have been minimised and the highest quality agricultural land will have been protected from development. Rural settlements will have had provision of housing of an appropriate type, tenure, design, density and mix to address local needs and issues of affordability. In rural areas the rural economy will thrive, in particular small and medium sized enterprises.

Access to all parts of the Borough from the rest of the region and country will have improved. The T5 Link Road to Queensway will have been completed, providing improved connections to St Annes and to Blackpool Airport Enterprise Zone from the completed Lytham St Annes Way. Rail connections will have improved through improved frequency between the South Fylde Line stations and Preston, and from the provision of parking at Kirkham and Wesham station. Any improvements to motorway junctions needed to mitigate the effects of new development will be completed. Local public transport will have been maintained and enhanced to service newly developed areas. Additional pedestrian and cycle routes provided by new developments will have improved active travel participation through walking and cycling.

Open space will have been provided, woodland cover increased and Fylde's unique offer of Green and Blue Infrastructure will be accessible and contribute to a high quality of life. Biodiversity, including Fylde's Ecological Network, will have been enhanced and protected from inappropriate development.

Sea defences will have been improved. Bathing water quality will have been improved and protected through improvements to infrastructure. Associated tourism, recreational and environmental benefits will have been realised, providing an essential tract of Green Infrastructure network along the coast, running from Starr Gate in the west to Savick Brook in the east.

2.3.2 The vision is supported by four strategic objectives. These strategic objectives are titled as follows:

- Objective 1: Promoting sustainable development.
- Objective 2: Creating safe, caring, sustainable communities.
- Objective 3: Promoting a vibrant and healthy economy.
- Objective 4: Protect, maintain and enhance the natural and built environment.

Part 1: What has plan-making involved?

3. Introduction (to Part 1)

3.1 Background

- 3.1.1 This part of the IA Report summarises the key stages of Local Plan preparation undertaken by the Council to date and explains how the IA has informed the development of the Plan throughout the plan-making process.
- 3.1.2 The Plan has been informed through consultation and engagement exercises, together with ongoing technical studies and evidence gathering. The IA has been undertaken iteratively alongside plan preparation to ensure that sustainability considerations inform the development of the spatial strategy, policies and site allocations. This report accompanies the Publication version of the Fylde Local Plan to 2042, which will be subject to Regulation 19 consultation prior to submission for independent examination.

3.2 Regulation 18 - Options, Issues, Vision and Scope

- 3.2.1 The initial consultation on the new Plan took place between 18th September 2025 and 30th October 2025.
- 3.2.2 The consultation sought views on the vision and future direction of the Local Plan, and presented questions related to a number of themes including (but not limited to): development strategy options; housing; economic development; protected environments and assets; infrastructure; design and amenity; and climate change, renewable energy and flood risk.³ The responses received through this consultation have informed the subsequent preparation of the Local Plan.
- 3.2.3 A Scoping Report, setting out the proposed scope and methodological framework for the IA, was consulted upon with the statutory consultation bodies between 24th February 2026 and 1st April 2026.

3.3 Regulation 19 - Publication Local Plan

- 3.3.1 Following consideration of consultation responses, site submissions and the completion of the supporting evidence base, the Council has prepared the Publication version of the Plan. This represents the version of the Plan that the Council considers to be sound and suitable for submission for independent examination.
- 3.3.2 The Plan has been informed by the findings of the IA, Habitats Regulations Assessment and other supporting technical evidence. The following sections of this report describe the reasonable alternatives considered during the preparation of the Plan and present the findings of the IA of both the alternatives and the Publication version of the Local Plan against the IA Framework.

³ Fylde Council (2025): [Options, Issues, Vision and Scope – Fylde Council](#)

4. Consideration of Alternatives throughout the IA

4.1 Introduction

- 4.1.1 The SEA Regulations⁴ require the Environmental Report to identify, describe and evaluate the likely significant effects of implementing the Plan and any reasonable alternatives, taking account of the objectives and geographical scope of the Plan. The identification of reasonable alternatives has formed an iterative part of the IA process and has been undertaken alongside the preparation of the Fylde Local Plan.
- 4.1.2 There is a need for plan-makers to determine which elements of a Local Plan present strategic 'choices and where alternative approaches could reasonably be taken to address key planning issues. The identification of reasonable alternatives has therefore focused on those aspects of the Plan where there is meaningful scope for alternative approaches and where materially different environmental, social or economic effects could arise.
- 4.1.3 The identification of reasonable alternatives has been undertaken proportionately rather than identifying alternatives for every aspect of the Plan (which is a proportionate established practice that has been tested through numerous examinations). In determining what constituted a reasonable alternative, the Council has considered:
- Evidence documents which suggest action needs to be taken in the Plan to address key issues.
 - Suggestions and feedback to date from stakeholders through consultation.
 - Whether policies are strategic in nature.
 - Whether there are likely to be significant effects.
- 4.1.4 Through this process, consideration has principally been given to whether reasonable alternatives exist in relation to:
- the overall amount of housing growth;
 - the spatial distribution of housing growth;
 - the strategic mixed-use development sites; and
 - employment growth and its spatial distribution.
- 4.1.5 Each of these issues is discussed below. Where reasonable alternatives have been identified, these have been developed and appraised through the IA as the Plan has progressed. In other cases, consideration of the evidence and the emerging development strategy has demonstrated that materially different alternatives would not represent reasonable approaches to meeting the Plan's objectives.

⁴ Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004.

4.2 Overall housing growth

- 4.2.1 The Local Plan seeks to provide for a minimum of 6,656 new homes over the Plan period to 2042, based on the Government's Standard Method for calculating local housing need. The Council's SHELAA identifies sufficient suitable sites to meet the Borough's housing requirement without requiring strategic Green Belt release.
- 4.2.2 Consideration was given early in the plan-making process to whether Green Belt release could provide a wider range of sites for housing growth. Paragraphs 145–147 of the December 2024 NPPF⁵ set out that Green Belt boundaries should only be altered where exceptional circumstances are fully evidenced and justified, with paragraph 146 identifying circumstances where an authority is unable to meet its identified development needs through other means as one such trigger for reviewing Green Belt boundaries. Paragraph 147 further requires authorities to examine fully other reasonable options for meeting identified needs before concluding that exceptional circumstances exist. These provisions are now superseded by Policy GB3 of the August 2026 NPPF,⁶ which similarly identifies an inability to meet development needs in full, having examined other reasonable options, as an exceptional circumstance for altering Green Belt boundaries.
- 4.2.3 In Fylde, the Council has identified sufficient suitable sites outside the Green Belt to comfortably meet the Borough's identified housing requirement. It therefore concluded that the circumstances which would necessitate alterations to Green Belt boundaries had not arisen. Consequently, Green Belt sites were not considered necessary to provide an alternative source of housing land and were not taken forward as part of the reasonable alternatives assessed through the IA.
- 4.2.4 During preparation of the Plan, consideration was also given to whether planning for a lower level of housing growth than the identified need would represent a reasonable alternative. However, the Standard Method provides the starting point for establishing the minimum number of homes to be planned for and there is sufficient suitable land available within the Borough to accommodate this level of development. A lower-growth alternative was therefore not considered reasonable.

Higher housing growth

- 4.2.5 Planning for a higher level of housing growth was identified as a reasonable alternative for further consideration. This reflects the wider strategic planning context and, in particular, the substantial increases in housing need arising from the revised Standard Method across adjoining authorities.⁷ The IA process therefore considered whether Fylde could reasonably accommodate additional housing growth above its own identified requirement. The potential for unmet needs from neighbouring authorities, alongside economic aspirations and housing affordability, were identified as relevant considerations during the development of the alternatives.

⁵ MHCLG (2024) [National Planning Policy Framework](#)

⁶ MHCLG (2026) [National Planning Policy Framework](#)

⁷ The current Standard Method was introduced in December 2024 and resulted in substantial increases in minimum annual housing need across adjoining authorities: from 147 to 587 dwellings per annum (dpa) in Blackpool, 280 to 599 dpa in Wyre, and 269 to 632 dpa in Preston, compared with the previous Standard Method figures (2023).

- 4.2.6 Local Planning Authorities are expected to work collaboratively in considering strategic cross-boundary matters, including whether unmet housing needs arising in neighbouring areas can reasonably be accommodated elsewhere. Whilst no specific unmet housing requirement has been established for Fylde to accommodate, the increase in housing need across neighbouring authorities means that it is appropriate for the IA to consider the potential implications of Fylde accommodating a higher level of growth should such a need arise.
- 4.2.7 There are also wider reasons for considering higher housing growth. Additional housing could provide greater flexibility in housing supply and delivery, increase opportunities to meet affordable housing needs, and support population and economic growth. Importantly, the SHELAA identifies development opportunities beyond those required to meet Fylde's own housing requirement, meaning that a higher-growth scenario can be constructed using realistic site options rather than representing a purely theoretical alternative.
- 4.2.8 Taking these considerations together, a higher housing growth scenario was identified as a reasonable alternative. A 20% uplift above the Standard Method housing requirement has been used to provide a proportionate strategic test of higher growth. This equates to approximately 1,331 additional dwellings, resulting in an indicative higher-growth requirement of approximately 7,987 dwellings over the Plan period. Two alternative spatial distributions of this higher level of growth have been developed and are described in Chapter 5, with appraisal findings in Chapter 6.

4.3 Housing spatial strategy

- 4.3.1 The distribution of housing growth in Fylde has been informed by the settlement hierarchy, the availability and capacity of suitable sites, their relative performance through the Council's site assessment process, and the objectives of the Local Plan.
- 4.3.2 The adopted Local Plan directs approximately 90% of growth towards four Strategic Locations and has provided a broad base for housing delivery. The emerging Local Plan broadly continues this approach, while reflecting changes in available site options. The emerging Strategic Locations are St Annes (including Squires Gate), Whyndyke and Whitehills, Warton, and Kirkham and Wesham.
- 4.3.3 The SHELAA identifies more suitable sites than are required to meet the housing requirement, including sites across settlements at different levels of the settlement hierarchy. There is therefore meaningful strategic choice over the distribution of the variable component of housing growth, allowing materially different approaches to the concentration and dispersal of growth to be considered.
- 4.3.4 The alternatives explored whether growth should be maximised at Kirkham and Wesham; whether remaining growth should be concentrated at other relatively sustainable locations or distributed more widely; and whether a greater proportion of growth should be dispersed across a broader range of settlements. In developing these approaches, consideration was also given to factors including public transport provision and access to town centres, community facilities and schools.

- 4.3.5 These considerations led to the identification of four reasonable alternative spatial distributions at broadly equivalent levels of housing growth. These comprise the emerging Local Plan approach (Option 1); maximising growth at Kirkham and Wesham with the remaining growth principally concentrated at Warton (Option 2A); maximising growth at Kirkham and Wesham with a broader distribution of remaining growth (Option 2B); and a more dispersed distribution across a wider range of settlements (Option 3). The development and composition of these alternatives is explained further in Chapter 5.

4.4 Strategic mixed-use sites

- 4.4.1 The Local Plan includes three strategic mixed-use development sites at St Annes and Whyndyke / Whitehills. These sites provide opportunities to deliver substantial housing and/or employment development alongside retail, other commercial uses, infrastructure and other supporting facilities. Consideration has therefore been given to whether alternative approaches to these sites should be assessed through the IA.
- 4.4.2 At St Annes, land adjacent to Lytham St Annes Way (SAS012) provides for 389 dwellings alongside commercial development. St Annes is the largest settlement in the Borough and provides the widest range of town centre facilities, alongside good local road links, bus services and a range of employment opportunities. The Local Plan therefore identifies St Annes as a sustainable location for accommodating development. SAS012 also directly adjoins and would round off the much larger committed site to the west, together forming a strategic development to the north of St Annes. The site therefore provides a distinct opportunity to deliver large-scale growth as a logical extension to an existing commitment, at the edge of a principal settlement with good transport access. Alternative sites elsewhere would not provide the same combination of scale, location and relationship with committed development, supporting the inclusion of SAS012 irrespective of the wider spatial distribution of housing growth pursued. Furthermore, there were no reasonable sites in the vicinity of St Annes and Lytham due to significant site constraints.
- 4.4.3 Land at Peel Hill Farm, Whitehills (WHY003) provides a strategic mixed-use opportunity for 700 dwellings and commercial development. Development at the site provides opportunities to support pedestrian and cycle connections, including connections to local services, schools and public transport, alongside the provision of substantial areas of public open space.
- 4.4.4 Whyndyke Farm (WHY011) forms part of the wider committed mixed-use development at Whyndyke and includes 20 ha of employment land within the overall scheme. The wider site has planning permission, including the employment element, and represents the only opportunity within the Borough capable of accommodating a medium-to-large industrial user. More widely, development at Whyndyke provides opportunities to support the provision of a new Local Centre and further services and infrastructure, including open space, public transport, health and education facilities.

- 4.4.5 The three mixed-use sites are therefore considered to represent key strategic development opportunities that should form part of the Local Plan irrespective of the wider spatial distribution of housing growth pursued. Their scale and mixed-use nature provide opportunities to deliver substantial housing and/or employment development in sustainable locations alongside complementary commercial uses, infrastructure and facilities. These wider benefits distinguish the sites from other smaller site options and support their strategic role within the emerging Local Plan.
- 4.4.6 Substituting these sites with alternative housing or employment sites elsewhere in the Borough would not provide an equivalent alternative to their wider mixed-use role or necessarily realise the associated employment, commercial and infrastructure benefits. This is particularly relevant at Whyndyke, given the committed nature of the wider development and the specific role of its employment provision. The sites are therefore considered integral to the emerging strategic approach, and no separate reasonable alternatives have been identified for appraisal through the IA.

4.5 Employment growth and spatial strategy

- 4.5.1 The Fylde Coast Economic Needs Update and Employment Land Review (ELR)⁸ establishes an employment land need for Fylde of 28.68 ha to 2042. Taking account of employment land developed between 2023 and 2026 results in a residual requirement of 24.49 ha from the April 2026 base date.
- 4.5.2 The ELR also reviewed the employment allocations contained within the adopted Local Plan to determine their continuing suitability and realistic contribution to supply. It concluded that the remaining elements of all but one of the existing allocations should be taken forward, with Naze Lane, Freckleton the exception. The evidence therefore identifies both the amount of employment land required and a substantial existing supply of suitable land capable of meeting that need.
- 4.5.3 On this basis, there is limited meaningful strategic choice to either the scale or spatial distribution of employment growth. Planning for a materially lower level of provision would not meet the identified employment need, while a higher level is not supported by an identified additional requirement. Similarly, as the ELR confirms that the majority of existing allocations remain suitable and provide sufficient land to meet identified needs, there is no evidenced requirement to identify a materially different mix of sites or spatial distribution. These allocations have therefore been carried forward as the basis of the emerging Local Plan employment land supply.

⁸ Blackpool, Fylde and Wyre Borough Councils (2024) Fylde Coast Economic Needs Update and Employment Land Review

- 4.5.4 In addition to the existing employment allocations, the Local Plan proposes a new allocation at 'Land south of Bradkirk Business Park, Weeton Road' in Wesham. Although the ELR did not identify a quantitative requirement for additional employment land, the site responds to a specific local opportunity and identified gap in supply. It is actively promoted for employment development, adjoins the existing industrial estate and provides new employment land within the Kirkham and Wesham Strategic Location, where the previous Local Plan allocation has been fully taken up. Its inclusion therefore reflects specific site and market circumstances, rather than a wider requirement for additional employment allocations from which alternative spatial distributions or sites could reasonably be developed.
- 4.5.5 Overall, no reasonable alternatives have been identified relating to either the scale or spatial distribution of employment growth. The scale of provision is informed by the identified employment need, while the spatial approach principally reflects the continuation of existing allocations which the ELR has confirmed remain appropriate, supplemented by a specific additional opportunity at Kirkham and Wesham where there is an identified gap in new supply. Identifying a materially different mix of employment sites would therefore not respond to an identified quantitative need or the evidence regarding the suitability and continuing role of the existing employment land supply.

4.6 Reasonable alternatives taken forward

- 4.6.1 The consideration of alternatives set out above has identified housing growth and its spatial distribution as the principal strategic choice requiring detailed appraisal through the IA. Six reasonable alternatives have consequently been developed: four which test different spatial distributions at a broadly equivalent level of housing growth, and two which test alternative spatial distributions under a higher-growth scenario. These alternatives are discussed further in Chapter 5 and assessed in Chapter 6.
- 4.6.2 No separate reasonable alternatives have been identified in relation to the strategic mixed-use development opportunities or employment provision for the reasons set out above.

5. Reasonable alternatives to the Plan

5.1 Introduction

- 5.1.1 The proposed Local Plan seeks to meet an identified housing requirement of 6,656 dwellings over the Plan period, as calculated using the Government's Standard Method. A substantial component of the housing supply is common to all of the alternatives and has therefore been treated as a constant for the purposes of the assessment. This includes existing commitments, which would be expected to contribute to housing supply irrespective of the spatial strategy pursued, and an allowance for windfall development. The mixed-use sites at St Annes and Whitehills/Whyndyke are also treated as constants, reflecting the wider strategic opportunities they provide for the delivery of housing alongside employment and other supporting uses, and are therefore assumed to form part of the development strategy under each alternative option.
- 5.1.2 As these components of supply would remain unchanged between the alternatives, they do not provide a basis for distinguishing between different spatial strategies. The reasonable alternatives therefore focus on the variable component of housing supply, comprising sites where there is a reasonable strategic choice over whether they should form part of the housing strategy and where different combinations of sites can be used to test alternative spatial distributions, and, for Options 4A and 4B, a higher level of housing growth.
- 5.1.3 In defining the reasonable alternatives, assumptions have been made regarding the variable component of housing supply that could form part of each spatial strategy. The alternatives have been constructed using suitable SHELAA sites identified through the Council's site assessment process, with different combinations used to represent the spatial strategy being tested. Indicative SHELAA site capacities have been used to provide a consistent basis for comparison. The alternatives are not intended to represent alternative allocation schedules, but reasonable strategic scenarios against which the sustainability implications of different distributions and scales of growth can be assessed. There are countless combinations of sites that could be constructed, but it is necessary to be proportionate and ensure that alternatives are reasonably distinct. Alternatives also need to meet Plan objectives, so any approaches that would deviate from these would not be reasonable.
- 5.1.4 For example, Clifton and Elswick have not been included within the reasonable alternatives, reflecting their relative sustainability within the settlement hierarchy and the Council's assessment of their suitability for accommodating further growth. Elswick is considered a less sustainable location due to its relative remoteness from higher-order settlements and access to services, whilst Clifton has a more limited range of local services and facilities, including no primary school, and lacks suitable development opportunities. Testing growth at these settlements was therefore considered to be unreasonable.

- 5.1.5 It is also worth noting that whilst individual site options generate a high degree of interest, they are not reasonable alternatives in the context of most local plans. Were a local plan setting out to allocate one site, then site options would be reasonable alternatives, but that is rarely the case. Rather, the key objective is to allocate a package of sites to meet needs and wider objectives, hence reasonable alternatives should be in the form of alternative packages of sites (i.e. strategies), in so far as possible. Nonetheless, consideration is naturally given to the merits of individual site options as part of the parallel process of site appraisal and selection undertaken by the Council through its Strategic Housing and Employment Land Availability Assessment (SHELAA) process.

5.2 Alternative spatial distributions (Options 1, 2A, 2B and 3)

- 5.2.1 For Options 1, 2A, 2B and 3, approximately 2,692 dwellings are accommodated through the variable supply component. This figure has been derived from the housing requirement calculated using the Standard Method (6,656 dwellings), taking account of the anticipated contribution from existing commitments (approximately 3,116) and windfall development (approximately 520 dwellings), and applying a small buffer to provide sufficient flexibility to meet the remaining housing need. The alternatives provide between 2,691 and 2,693 dwellings and can therefore be considered equivalent in terms of overall housing quantum.

Option 1: Emerging Local Plan approach

- 5.2.2 Option 1 represents the emerging Local Plan approach to the distribution of housing growth. It broadly reflects the spatial strategy established through the adopted Local Plan, with the majority of development focused within the identified strategic locations for development: St Annes; Whyndyke / Whitehills; Warton; Kirkham; and Wesham. These locations are considered to provide sustainable opportunities for accommodating growth, with the emerging strategy seeking to direct approximately 90% of development towards the strategic locations. The distribution of growth has also been informed by the Council's site assessment process, with better-performing suitable sites generally prioritised when identifying development opportunities within and outside the strategic locations, rather than distributing growth proportionately between settlements. The variable component of Option 1 provides capacity for approximately 2,692 dwellings.

Option 2: Focus on maximising growth at Kirkham and Wesham

- 5.2.3 This alternative explores a more concentrated spatial strategy which seeks to maximise residual housing growth at Kirkham and Wesham, reflecting their position as relatively sustainable locations within the settlement hierarchy.
- 5.2.4 All suitable non-committed SHELAA sites identified at Kirkham and Wesham are included, providing capacity for approximately 1,876 dwellings.

Option 2A: Maximise growth at Kirkham and Wesham, with remaining growth at higher-order sustainable locations (principally at Warton)

- 5.2.5 Option 2A distributes the remaining requirement by focusing further growth principally at Warton, alongside development at Whyndyke / Whitehills. This reflects a more concentrated approach, with additional growth directed towards higher-order and relatively sustainable locations rather than dispersed more widely across the settlement hierarchy. Overall, the variable component of Option 2A provides capacity for approximately 2,693 dwellings.

Option 2B: Maximise growth at Kirkham and Wesham, with remaining growth more widely distributed

- 5.2.6 Option 2B tests a broader distribution of the remaining requirement than Option 2A. Rather than concentrating further growth principally at Warton, growth is distributed between Warton and Wrea Green, alongside development at Whyndyke / Whitehills. This retains the focus on Kirkham and Wesham while testing the implications of accommodating the remaining requirement across a slightly wider range of settlements. Overall, the variable component of Option 2B provides capacity for approximately 2,691 dwellings.

Other approaches considered

- 5.2.7 In developing the reasonable alternatives, consideration was given to additional ways in which the remaining housing requirement could be accommodated.
- 5.2.8 Accommodating all remaining growth at Kirkham and Wesham was considered but discounted. The identified suitable site capacity at these locations is insufficient to meet the full residual requirement and such an approach would also provide a very limited spatial distribution of growth.
- 5.2.9 Consideration was also given to maximising Kirkham and Wesham and then distributing the remaining requirement more widely across Newton, Staining, Singleton and Freckleton. However, this was not taken forward as it would result in a substantially more dispersed pattern of development, contrary to the Plan's objectives for focusing growth at the most sustainable locations and achieving a sustainable pattern of development. It would also be inconsistent with the underlying rationale of an alternative focused on maximising growth at Kirkham and Wesham.

Option 3: Increased dispersal across a wider range of settlements

- 5.2.10 Option 3 tests a more dispersed spatial strategy, with a greater proportion of housing growth distributed across a wider range of settlements. Growth is distributed across Kirkham and Wesham, Whyndyke / Whitehills, Warton, Freckleton, Staining, Newton, Weeton, Wrea Green and Singleton. The alternative does not seek an even or maximum dispersal of development; rather, it tests a materially wider distribution whilst continuing to have regard to the settlement hierarchy and site performance through the Council's site assessment process. Overall, the variable component of Option 3 provides capacity for approximately 2,692 dwellings.

Other approaches considered

- 5.2.11 In developing Option 3, consideration was given to different degrees and patterns of dispersal.
- 5.2.12 An approach which redistributed only a small proportion of growth away from Kirkham and Wesham was considered but was not taken forward as a separate reasonable alternative. Such an approach would result in only a limited change to the overall spatial distribution and would not provide a sufficiently distinct test of a more dispersed spatial strategy.
- 5.2.13 An approach which focused the additional dispersed growth within one or two alternative settlements, particularly those with greater available capacity such as Newton, was also considered. However, this was not taken forward as it would largely substitute concentration at Kirkham and Wesham with concentration elsewhere, rather than testing a genuinely broader distribution of growth. It would also fail to make use of well-performing sites available across other sustainable settlements, including Freckleton, Staining, Wrea Green, Singleton and Weeton.
- 5.2.14 A maximum dispersal approach was also considered, whereby development would be distributed as widely as possible across all settlements containing available sites. However, this was not considered reasonable as it would make spatial dispersal an objective in itself, rather than reflecting the settlement hierarchy, relative performance of individual sites and identified constraints. Once the better-performing sites had been utilised, further dispersal could require the inclusion of poorer-performing sites or more constrained sites simply to increase the spatial distribution of growth, rather than as part of a coherent spatial strategy. The increased dispersal alternative therefore seeks to achieve a materially wider distribution of growth without requiring development to be accommodated within every settlement containing an available site.
- 5.2.15 An approach which excluded Kirkham and Wesham altogether and sought to accommodate the requirement across other settlements was also discounted. This would disregard substantial growth opportunities within two of the Borough's more sustainable settlements and would not represent a proportionate approach to increased dispersal.

5.3 Higher growth strategy (Options 4A and 4B)

- 5.3.1 The consideration of reasonable alternatives also identified planning for a higher level of housing growth as an appropriate alternative to explore. The higher-growth scenario applies a 20% uplift to the Standard Method housing requirement of 6,656 dwellings, equivalent to approximately 1,331 additional dwellings and an overall requirement of approximately 7,987 dwellings over the Plan period. The purpose of the higher-growth alternatives is not to identify a precise alternative housing requirement, but to test the sustainability implications of accommodating / planning for a materially greater level of housing growth within the Borough (should a need arise).

- 5.3.2 In developing the higher-growth alternatives, it was recognised that opportunities to accommodate additional housing are influenced by the availability and capacity of suitable sites. Options 4A and 4B therefore take Option 1 (emerging Local Plan approach) as their starting point, with additional suitable SHELAA sites included to accommodate approximately the additional housing associated with the 20% uplift. Two alternative spatial distributions have been developed to test how this additional growth could reasonably be accommodated.

Option 4A: Higher growth focused principally at Kirkham, Warton and Newton

- 5.3.3 Option 4A tests a higher-growth strategy in which additional development is focused principally at Kirkham, Warton and Newton, making greater use of suitable sites at more sustainable locations before directing additional growth further down the settlement hierarchy. The distribution has been informed by both the settlement hierarchy and the relative performance of sites through the Council's site assessment process. Kirkham accommodates the largest share of additional growth, reflecting its position as one of the Borough's higher-order settlements, while Warton provides a substantial opportunity for additional growth at a Local Service Centre. Newton also makes a significant contribution, with only a limited amount of additional growth directed to Singleton. Overall, the alternative provides capacity for approximately 1,324 additional dwellings above Option 1, closely corresponding with the indicative 1,331-dwelling uplift being tested.

Option 4B: Higher growth distributed across a wider range of settlements

- 5.3.4 Option 4B tests an alternative higher-growth strategy in which additional development is distributed across a wider range of settlements, rather than being focused principally at Kirkham, Warton and Newton. As with Option 4A, the distribution has been informed by the settlement hierarchy and the relative performance of sites through the Council's site assessment process, but deliberately tests a different spatial approach by providing a greater role for growth at Wrea Green and Singleton. Overall, the alternative provides capacity for approximately 1,353 additional dwellings above Option 1, resulting in a variable supply of approximately 4,045 dwellings.
- 5.3.5 **Table 5.1** summarises the distribution of the variable housing supply across the six reasonable alternatives. Options 1, 2A, 2B and 3 test materially different spatial distributions at a broadly equivalent housing quantum, whilst Options 4A and 4B test alternative distributions under a higher-growth scenario. **Figures 5.1 to 5.6** illustrate the sites assumed to form part of each option.

Table 5.1: Reasonable alternatives to the Plan

Supply component	Option 1	Option 2A	Option 2B	Option 3	Option 4A	Option 4B
Constants						
Committed sites	3,116	3,116	3,116	3,116	3,116	3,116
Mixed use sites	1,089	1,089	1,089	1,089	1,089	1,089
Windfall allowance	520	520	520	520	520	520
Variables						
Kirkham	-	571	571	563	571	539
Wesham	1,186	1,305	1,305	745	1,186	1,186
Whyndyke / Whitehills	89	89	89	89	89	89
Warton	485	728	423	110	841	485
Wrea Green	164	-	303	303	164	422
Freckleton	14	-	-	14	14	14
Newton	224	-	-	357	595	581
Staining	88	-	-	88	88	88
Singleton	247	-	-	260	273	446
Weeton	195	-	-	163	195	195
Total variables	2,692	2,693	2,691	2,692	4,016	4,045
Total	7,417	7,418	7,416	7,417	8,741	8,770

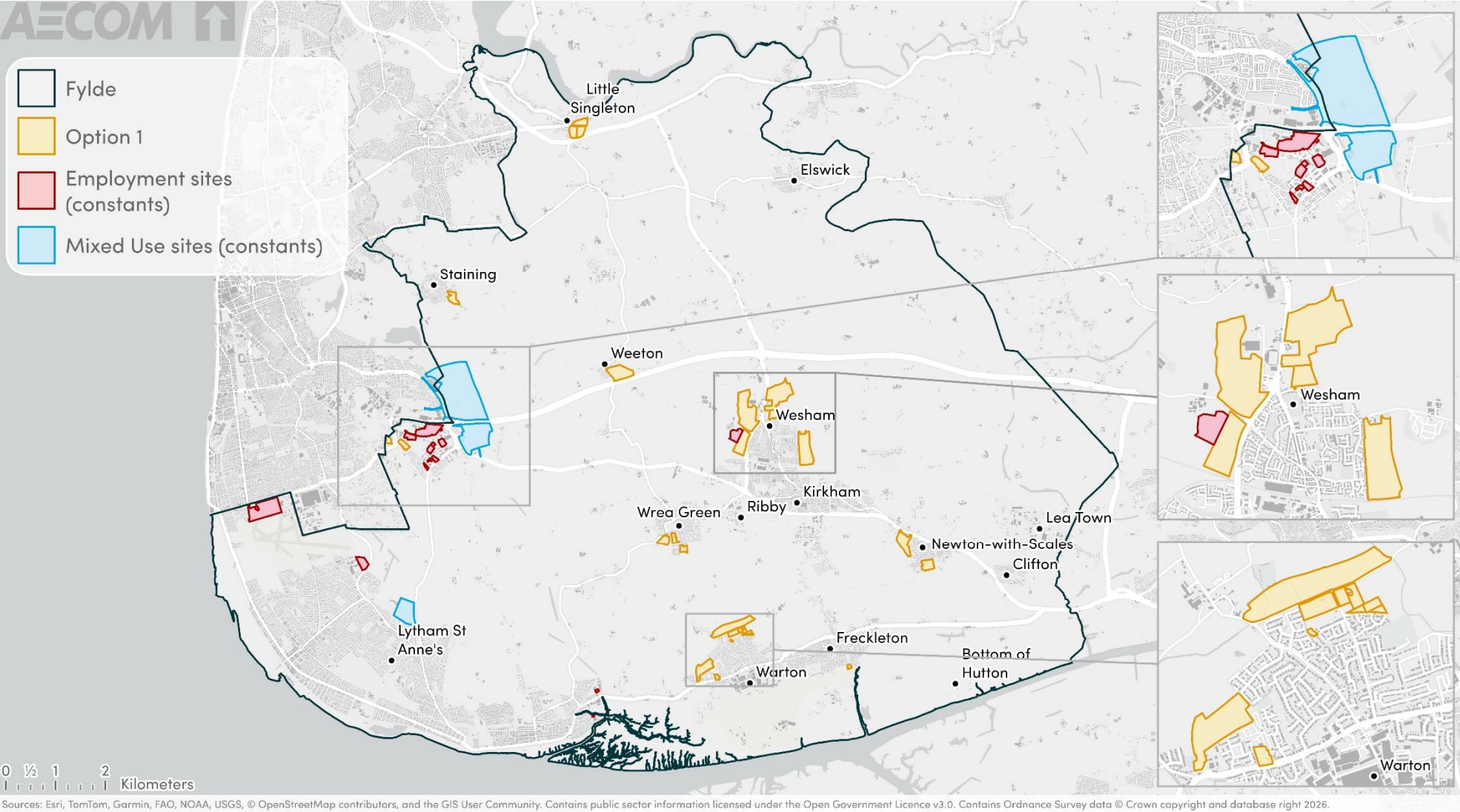


Figure 5.1: Option 1 - Emerging Local Plan approach

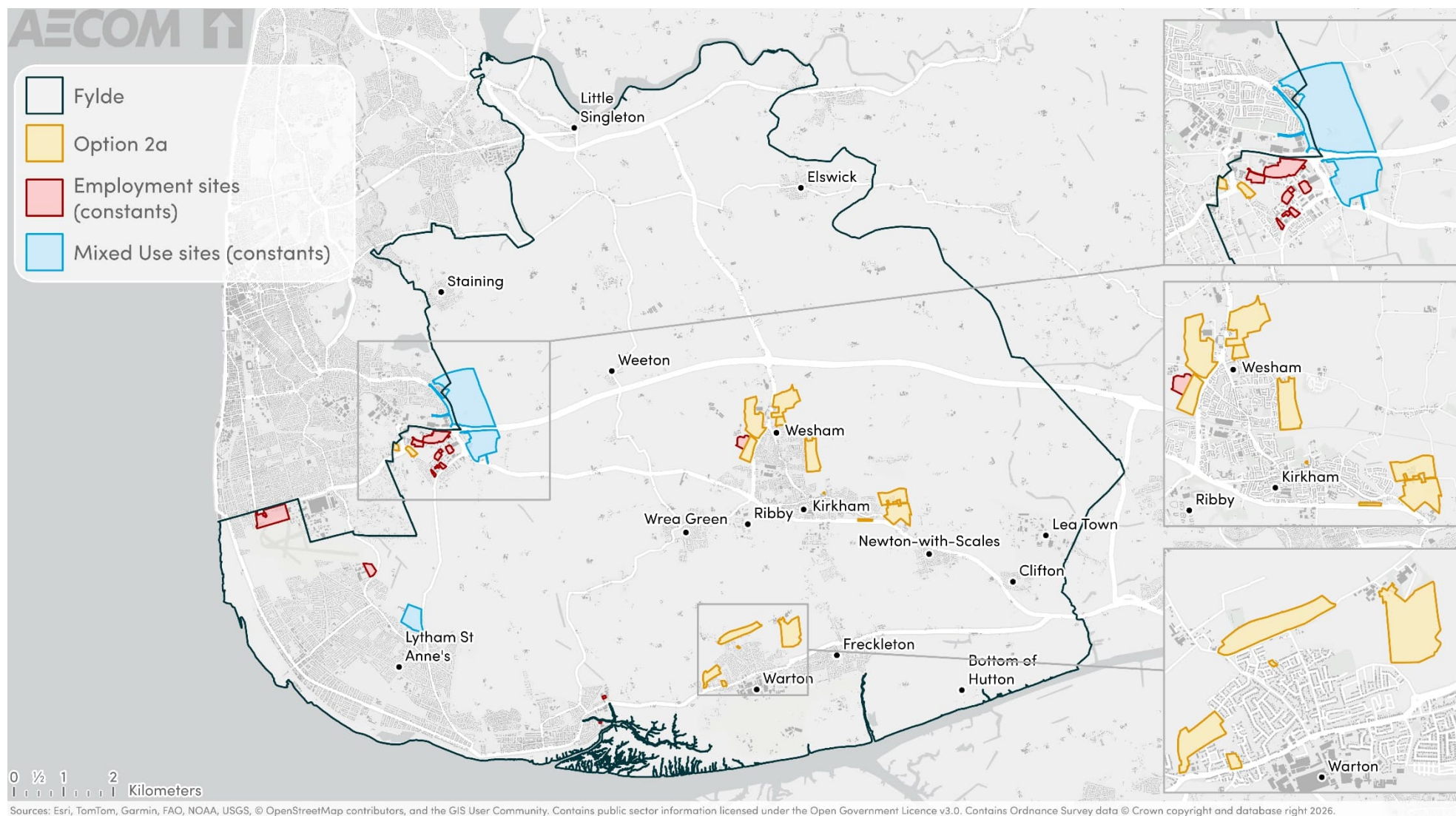


Figure 5.2: Option 2A - Maximise growth at Kirkham and Wesham, with remaining growth at higher-order sustainable locations (principally at Warton)

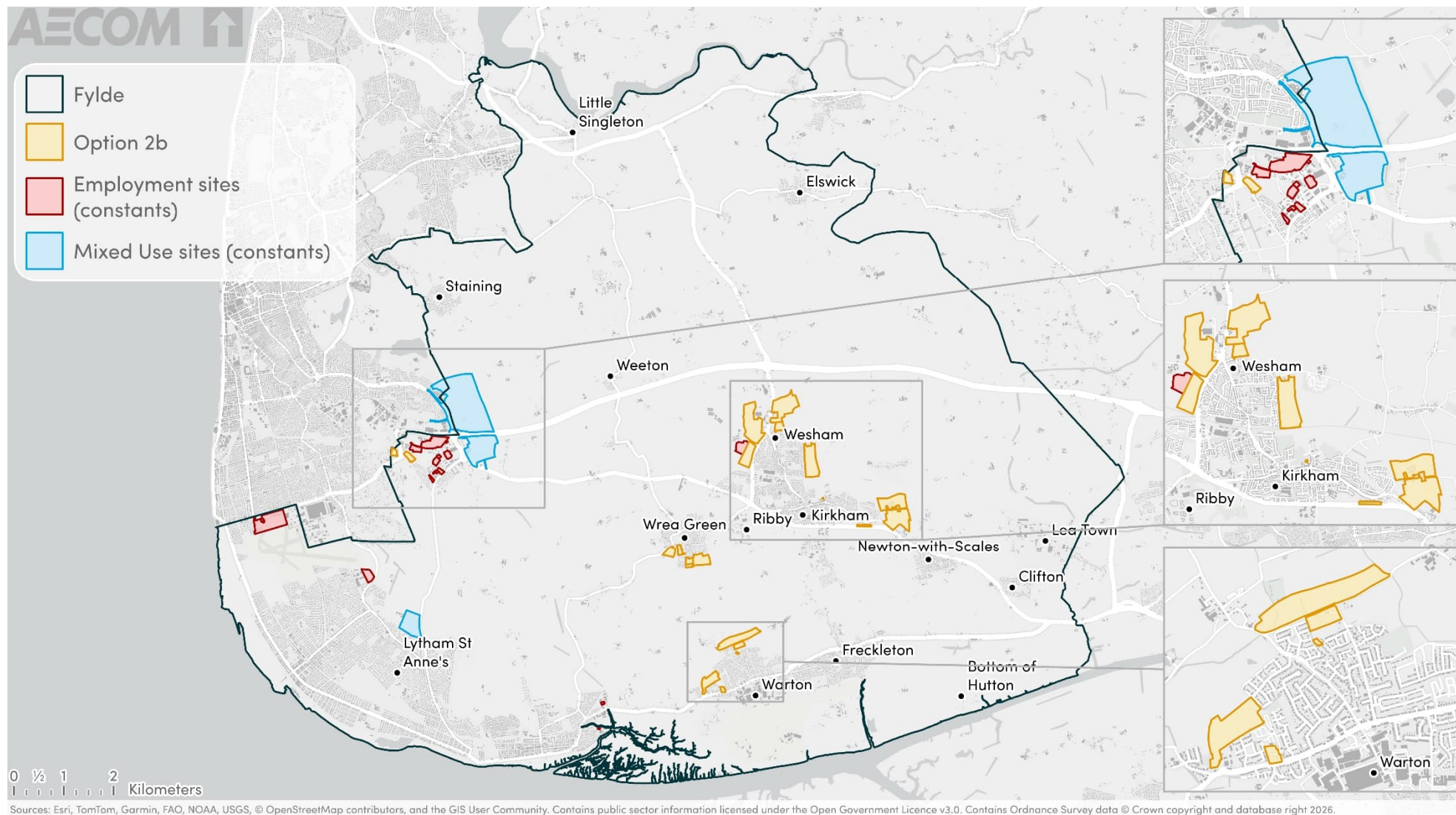


Figure 5.3: Option 2B - Maximise growth at Kirkham and Wesham, with remaining growth more widely distributed

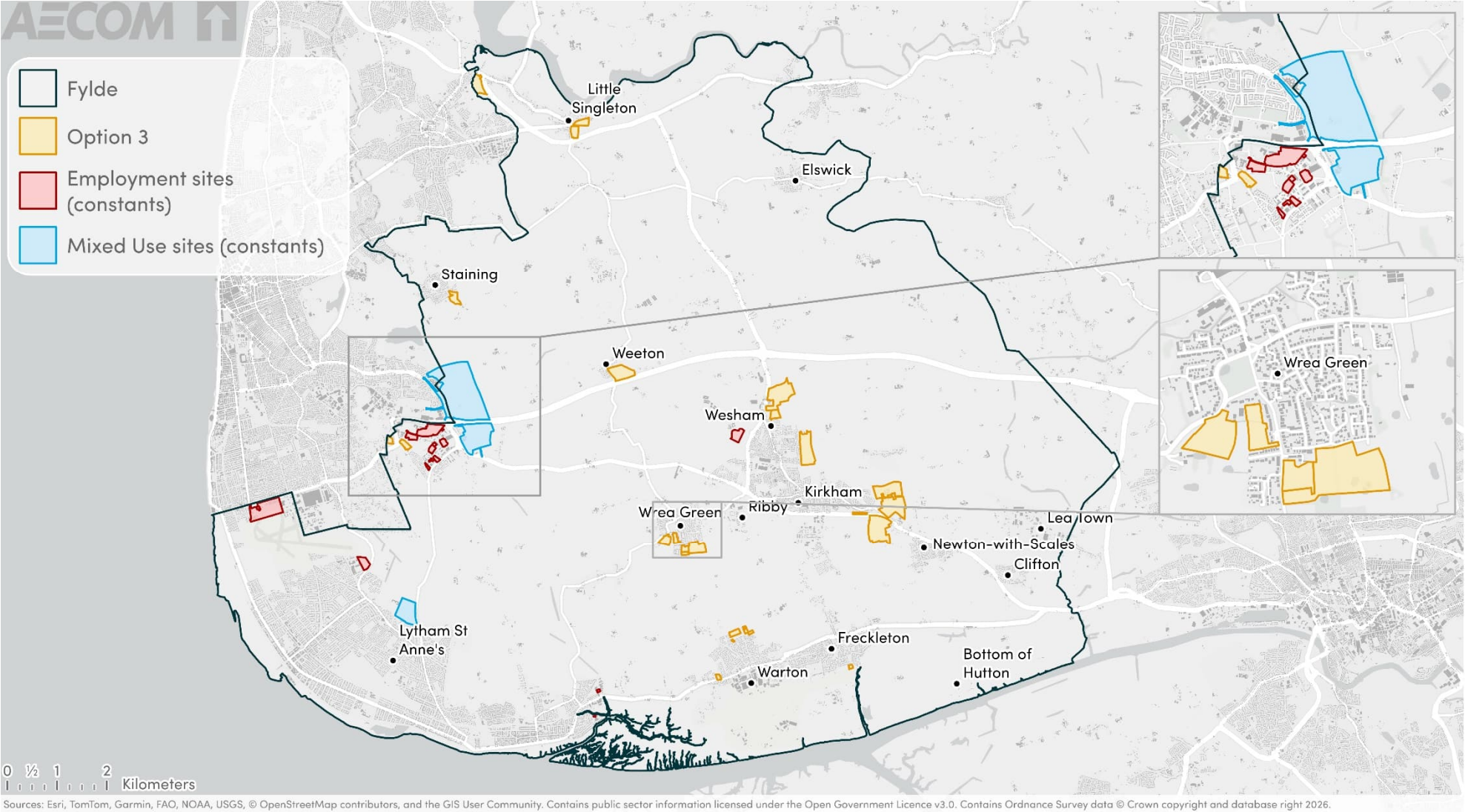


Figure 5.4: Option 3 - Increased dispersal across a wider range of settlements

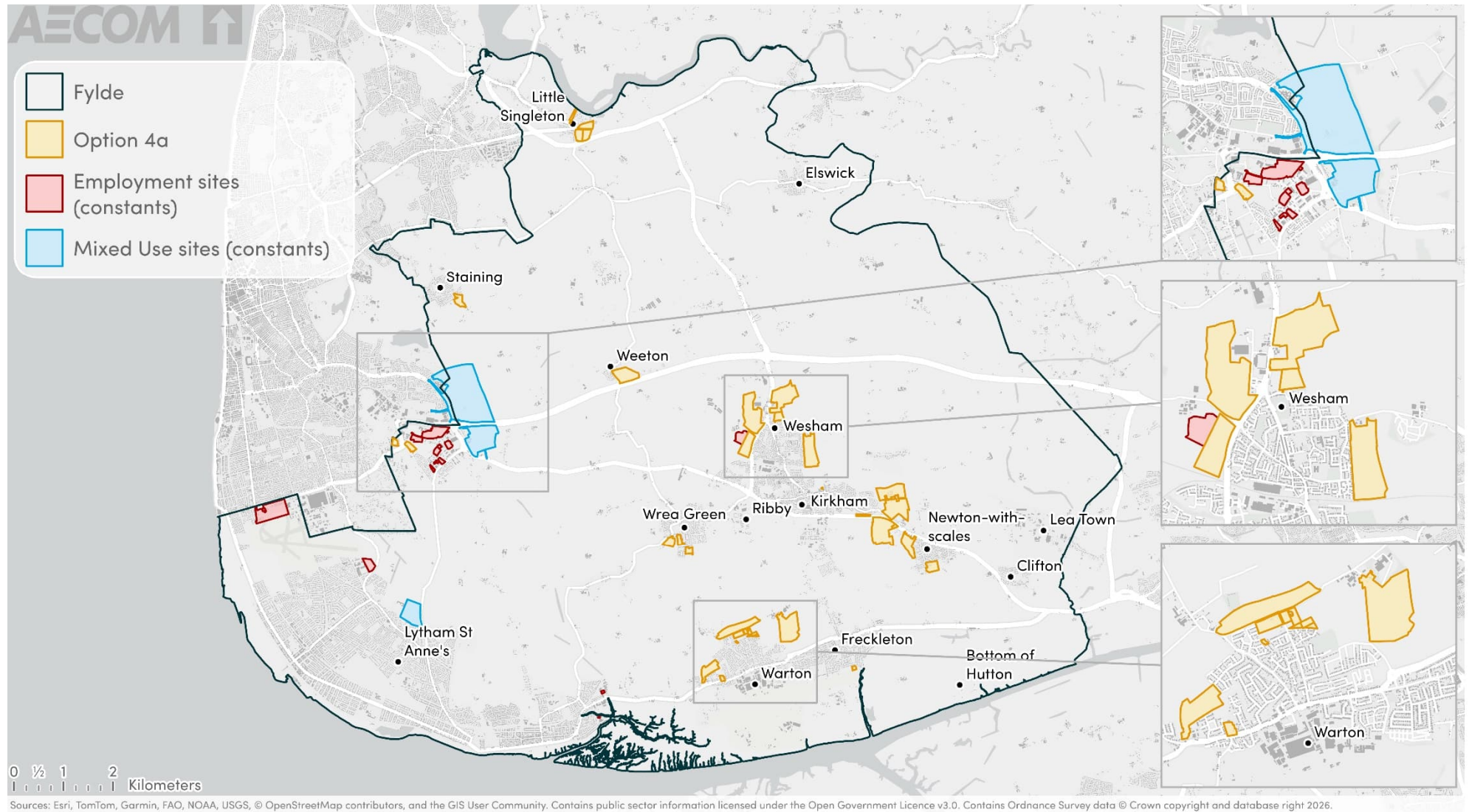


Figure 5.5: Option 4A - Higher growth focused principally at Kirkham, Warton and Newton

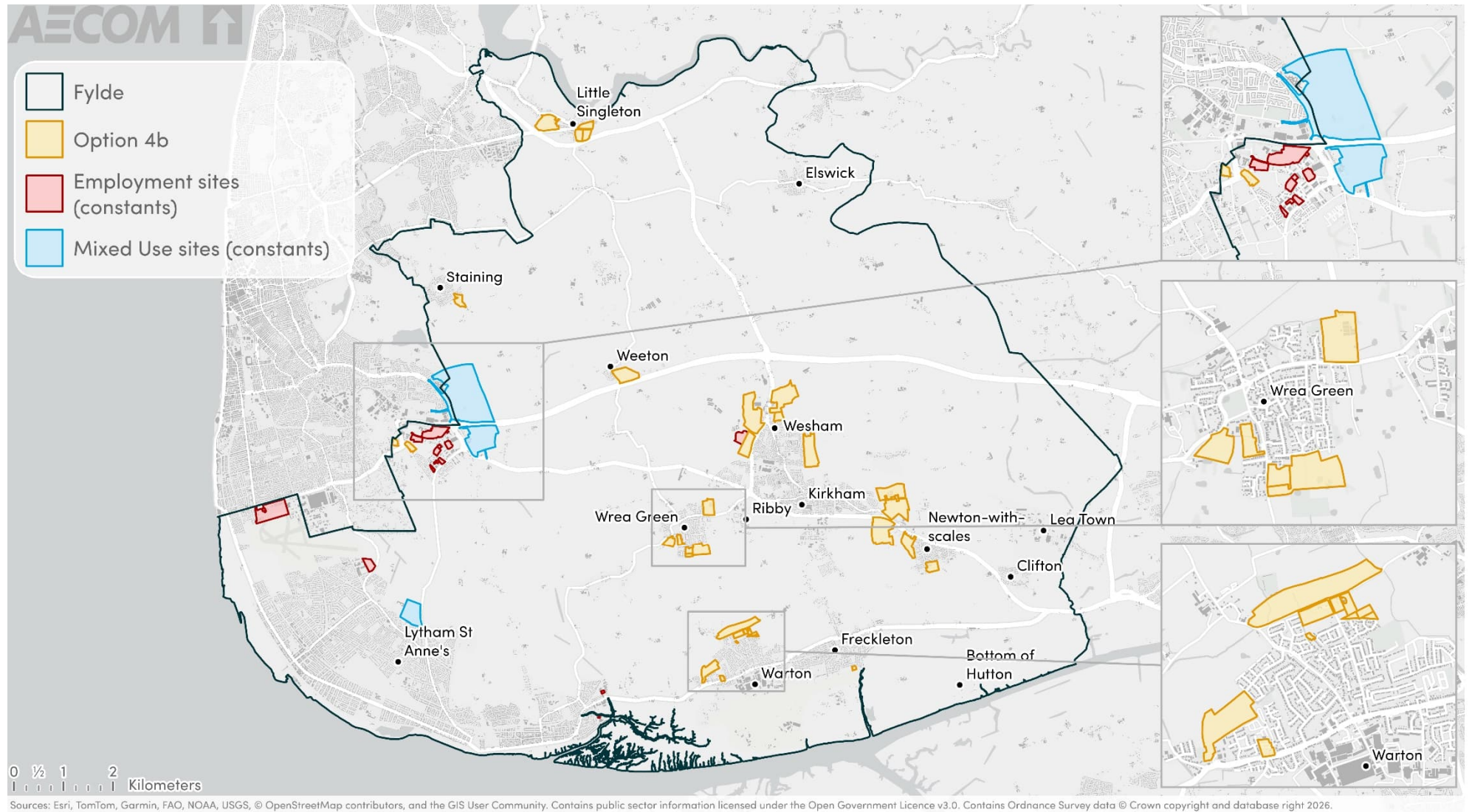


Figure 5.6: Option 4B - Higher growth distributed across a wider range of settlements

6. Appraisal of the reasonable alternatives

6.1 Introduction

- 6.1.1 This section presents the appraisal of the reasonable alternatives identified and considered during the plan-making process, as described in Chapters 4 and 5. The appraisal considers the likely effects and relative performance of each alternative, helping to inform the development of the Local Plan and the Council's consideration of the strategic choices available.

6.2 Approach and methodology

- 6.2.1 The reasonable alternatives have been appraised against the IA Framework established through the scoping process. For each IA topic, the appraisal considers the likely effects associated with the scale and spatial distribution of growth under each alternative, including potential cumulative effects arising from the combination of sites assumed.
- 6.2.2 In determining the significance of effects, professional judgement has been applied having regard to the characteristics of effects identified in Schedule 2 of the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004 and relevant IA guidance. Consideration has been given, where relevant, to the magnitude, duration, frequency, likelihood, permanence and timescale of effects, together with the potential for cumulative and synergistic effects.
- 6.2.3 The appraisal has been informed by the baseline information, trends and key sustainability issues identified through the IA Scoping Report, alongside GIS analysis, supporting technical evidence and professional observations. The characteristics of effects are discussed proportionately and where relevant to determining the significance of effects. Effects are recorded using the significance scale established for the IA below, ranging from neutral to major positive or major negative, with uncertainty identified where appropriate.

Major positive

Moderate positive

Minor positive

Neutral



Major negative

Moderate negative

Minor negative

Uncertainty



?

- 6.2.4 Alongside the significance of effects, the appraisal provides a relative ranking of the alternatives for each IA topic. The ranking reflects their relative performance against the IA objective, with the better-performing alternative ranked first. Where alternatives perform similarly, an equal ranking is applied. The ranking also enables more marginal differences between alternatives to be identified where they are predicted to result in effects of the same overall significance.

Assumptions

- 6.2.5 The reasonable alternatives have been appraised on a consistent basis to enable a like-for-like comparison of their likely effects. The appraisal focuses primarily on the inherent characteristics of the sites and the scale and spatial distribution of growth associated with each alternative.
- 6.2.6 The appraisal has been undertaken on a 'policy-off' basis, whereby the emerging Local Plan policies have not generally been taken into account in determining the significance of effects. This enables the appraisal to distinguish more clearly between the effects arising from the alternatives themselves, rather than assuming that potential effects would be mitigated through the subsequent application of Plan policies. Having said this, if national policy provides clear guidelines for development regardless of local policy, this has been factored into the appraisals, but (again) on a consistent basis across alternatives.
- 6.2.7 Similarly, site-specific mitigation or enhancement measures have not been assumed unless these are established requirements or supported by the evidence available for the appraisal. This provides a consistent and precautionary basis for comparing the alternatives. The absence of assumed mitigation does not mean that identified effects are fixed or incapable of being mitigated through the Local Plan, development management or detailed scheme design. Therefore, the appraisal findings should be interpreted with this in mind.

6.3 Biodiversity

IA Objective:

- Protect, restore and enhance habitats and species, including designated sites, locally important features and links between habitats.

Key considerations

- 6.3.1 Fylde contains a range of internationally, nationally and locally important biodiversity assets. Particularly relevant are the Ribble and Wyre estuaries, which support important habitats and bird populations and contribute to wider ecological networks. None of the sites forming the alternatives directly overlap the international or national designations, although a number lie in close proximity, particularly around Singleton, Warton and Freckleton.
- 6.3.2 Potential effects on internationally designated sites may arise through recreational disturbance, changes in water quality and the loss or disturbance of functionally linked habitat. The latter is particularly relevant to agricultural, grazing marsh and other open habitats outside designated site boundaries which may provide feeding or roosting habitat for qualifying bird species. The likelihood of such effects will depend on factors including proximity, habitat characteristics, ecological connectivity and accessibility, rather than distance alone.
- 6.3.3 Fylde contains a range of priority habitats, including coastal and floodplain grazing marsh, saltmarsh, sand dunes, deciduous woodland and traditional orchards.

- 6.3.4 Habitat network enhancement and expansion areas are identified across the Borough, including a notable Network Enhancement Zone to the north-west of Wrea Green and east of Kirkham. Development could fragment these networks if existing habitats and connections are not retained, while cumulative development close to sensitive coastal and estuarine areas could also increase recreational and disturbance pressures.
- 6.3.5 All alternatives include sites that provide opportunities for BNG, habitat creation and enhanced green infrastructure, potentially helping to restore habitats and strengthen ecological connections. However, this appraisal is undertaken at a strategic policy-off stage and therefore adopts a precautionary approach. Whilst biodiversity enhancement is likely to be secured through project design, mandatory BNG requirements and the protection afforded through the Local Plan and national planning policy, the extent, quality and effectiveness of such measures cannot be assumed at this stage. Consequently, the assessment places greater weight on the potential for habitat loss, fragmentation and effects on designated sites, particularly where higher levels of development are proposed.
- 6.3.6 All alternatives include development at St Annes (SAS012) and Whyndyke (WHY002, WHY003, WHY011 and WHY016). These sites therefore establish a common baseline level of biodiversity effects across the reasonable alternatives. SAS012 is particularly notable as it lies approximately 214 m from Lytham St Annes Dunes SSSI and overlaps approximately 49% coastal and floodplain grazing marsh priority habitat. Development therefore has potential to result in direct loss and fragmentation of priority habitat, alongside potential indirect effects on the nearby SSSI. This is particularly relevant given the concentration of Priority Green Infrastructure and habitat network enhancement and expansion opportunities in the south-west of Fylde. The retention and integration of existing habitat features would therefore be important in avoiding fragmentation and maintaining connections with the wider ecological network.
- 6.3.7 Additionally, constant sites WHY002 and WHY003 are located approximately 1.7-1.9 km from Marton Mere SSSI and LNR, whilst WHY002 also contains a small area of coastal and floodplain grazing marsh priority habitat. Consequently, all alternatives have potential for some habitat loss and fragmentation associated with priority habitat, alongside indirect effects on designated biodiversity assets.
- 6.3.8 A number of the variable sites included within the alternatives also represent important biodiversity differentiators. In particular:
- SGL001, SGL003, SGL006, SGL008, SGL013 and SGL014 at Singleton are located in proximity to the Morecambe Bay and Duddon Estuary SPA, Morecambe Bay Ramsar site and Wyre Estuary SSSI;
 - SGL014 overlaps a substantial area of coastal and floodplain grazing marsh priority habitat;
 - SGL008 lies immediately adjacent to the Wyre Estuary designations;
 - FRK007 is located in relatively close proximity to the Ribble and Alt Estuaries SPA/Ramsar site and Ribble Estuary SSSI;
 - WAR005 overlaps traditional orchard priority habitat; and

- Development around Wrea Green has potential to either strengthen or fragment ecological connections within an identified habitat network enhancement area.

Option 1: Proposed strategy

- 6.3.9 Option 1 includes development across a range of settlements, with the most notable potential effects on designated biodiversity assets arising around Singleton. SGL003 lies approximately 90 m from the Morecambe Bay and Duddon Estuary SPA, Morecambe Bay Ramsar site and Wyre Estuary SSSI, while SGL006 and SGL001 lie approximately 270 m and 314 m respectively from these designations.
- 6.3.10 Development across these sites would result in the loss of areas of open agricultural land close to the estuary and could affect habitat connectivity and the wider ecological value of the area. The proximity of residential development to the estuary could also increase recreational activity and associated disturbance. However, the extent of these effects will depend on the design, mitigation and enhancement measures incorporated through development. It will be important to identify (through the HRA) whether these sites constitute functionally linked land, and to identify an appropriate mitigation strategy if likely significant effects could arise.
- 6.3.11 As the three sites are located adjacent to one another, there is potential for Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG), habitat creation and green infrastructure to be planned and delivered in a coordinated manner across the area. This could provide opportunities to create more continuous areas of habitat, strengthen ecological corridors (particularly between existing biodiversity important habitats nearby) and improve connections with the wider ecological network.
- 6.3.12 Potential adverse effects are also identified elsewhere. At Warton, WAR010 and WAR001 lie approximately 737 m and 923 m respectively from the Ribble and Alt Estuaries SPA/Ramsar site and Ribble Estuary SSSI. STI003 at Staining lies approximately 676 m from Marton Mere SSSI and 788 m from Marton Mere LNR. In terms of direct habitat effects, approximately 23% of WAR005 overlaps traditional orchard priority habitat. Development therefore has potential to result in localised habitat loss and fragmentation, alongside potential indirect effects on designated sites.
- 6.3.13 At Freckleton, FRK007 lies approximately 560 m from the Ribble and Alt Estuaries SPA/Ramsar site and Ribble Estuary SSSI and approximately 105 m from the Ribble Estuary Marine Conservation Zone. The proximity of the site to these designations gives rise to potential for indirect effects, including through increased recreational activity and disturbance. However, FRK007 is relatively small and is located adjacent to the built-up area of Freckleton, and thus is unlikely to result in significant effects.
- 6.3.14 At Wesham and Wrea Green, growth also provides opportunities to support the habitat network enhancement opportunities identified around the settlement edges. Coordinated BNG, habitat creation and green infrastructure across multiple sites could enable more strategic and connected habitat improvements, rather than isolated site-level measures. This could help to strengthen existing ecological corridors, create new habitat links between sites, and improve connectivity between habitats within the settlements and the wider countryside.

- 6.3.15 Overall, **minor negative effects** are anticipated, principally reflecting the potential adverse effects from growth around Singleton on the Wyre Estuary designations, alongside the potential for habitat loss and fragmentation elsewhere and cumulative pressures on habitat sites. These effects are balanced to some extent by opportunities for BNG, habitat creation and green infrastructure. Where delivered in a coordinated manner, this could provide wider benefits for biodiversity.

Option 2A: Maximise growth at Kirkham and Wesham, followed by concentrating growth in other higher-order sustainable locations

- 6.3.16 Option 2A directs development primarily towards Kirkham and Wesham, with more limited development at Warton. Across this distribution, there are relatively few sites in very close proximity to European sites. However, cumulative pressures could still arise, and will need to be addressed through an appropriate mitigation strategy (to be explored through the HRA).
- 6.3.17 Development at Warton lies within the wider vicinity of the Ribble Estuary designations. WAR001 lies approximately 923m from the Ribble and Alt Estuaries SPA, Ramsar site and Ribble Estuary SSSI, while WAR020 lies approximately 1.6 km away. Development at these locations therefore has potential for localised habitat loss and fragmentation, alongside indirect cumulative effects on designated sites.
- 6.3.18 Conversely, the concentration of a substantial proportion of growth at Kirkham and Wesham provides opportunities for BNG, habitat creation and green infrastructure to be coordinated across a larger coherent spatial area. This could support the creation of more continuous ecological networks, strengthen existing ecological corridors through and around sites and improve connections between existing and newly created habitats.
- 6.3.19 Overall, **minor negative effects** are anticipated, principally reflecting the potential loss and fragmentation of priority habitat at the constant site SAS012 and potential indirect effects on designated sites. However, coordinated BNG, habitat creation and green infrastructure could help strengthen ecological connectivity and wider habitat networks.

Option 2B: Maximise growth at Kirkham and Wesham while retaining the most suitable sites across Warton and Wrea Green

- 6.3.20 Option 2B includes development at Kirkham and Wesham, while retaining a greater spread of development across Warton and Wrea Green. As with Option 2A, relatively few sites are located in close proximity to European sites across the alternatives.
- 6.3.21 At Warton, the sites included under Option 2B include WAR010, which lies approximately 737 m from the Ribble and Alt Estuaries SPA, Ramsar site and Ribble Estuary SSSI. Development at Wrea Green also introduces additional considerations relating to habitat connectivity, given the habitat network enhancement opportunities identified around the settlement. Development could result in localised habitat loss and fragmentation, but also provides opportunities for BNG, habitat creation and green infrastructure to strengthen ecological corridors and connections with the wider habitat network.

6.3.22 Compared with Option 2A, the broader distribution of development across Warton and Wrea Green increases the potential for habitat loss and fragmentation across a wider area. However, it also provides greater opportunities to deliver habitat enhancement and improved ecological connectivity across these locations, particularly at Wrea Green where development could contribute to identified habitat network enhancement opportunities.

6.3.23 Overall, like Option 2A, **minor negative effects** are anticipated, principally reflecting the potential indirect effects on designated sites and habitat loss and fragmentation associated with greenfield development. However, coordinated BNG, habitat creation and green infrastructure could help enhance habitats and strengthen ecological connectivity.

Option 3: Increased dispersal across a wider range of sustainable settlements

6.3.24 Like Option 1, Option 3 distributes development across a wider mix of settlements. This creates potential for biodiversity effects across a broader spatial area, including effects on ecological connectivity and development in proximity to designated biodiversity sites. The wider distribution also provides opportunities for habitat creation and enhancement through BNG across a broader spatial area, potentially helping to strengthen ecological networks and improve connectivity between habitats.

6.3.25 Development around Singleton is particularly relevant. SGL003 lies approximately 90 m from the Morecambe Bay and Duddon Estuary SPA, Morecambe Bay Ramsar site and Wyre Estuary SSSI, while SGL001 and SGL014 lie approximately 314 m and 387 m respectively from these designations. The open agricultural landscape around Singleton has potential to provide supporting habitat for qualifying estuarine bird species. Development across several sites could therefore result in loss or disturbance of potentially functionally linked habitat, alongside potential cumulative pathways associated with recreational activity and disturbance. However, development across multiple sites could also provide some opportunities for coordinated habitat enhancement and green infrastructure, particularly where measures can be designed to maintain and strengthen connections with the wider ecological network.

6.3.26 SGL014 is also notable as approximately 88% of the site overlaps coastal and floodplain grazing marsh priority habitat. Development therefore has potential to result in substantial loss or fragmentation of an existing priority habitat and affect its contribution to the wider ecological network.

6.3.27 At Freckleton, FRK007 lies approximately 560 m from the Ribble and Alt Estuaries SPA/Ramsar site and Ribble Estuary SSSI and approximately 105 m from the Ribble Estuary Marine Conservation Zone. The proximity of the site to these designations gives rise to potential for indirect effects, including through increased recreational activity and disturbance. However, FRK007 is relatively small and is located adjacent to the built-up area of Freckleton, and thus is unlikely to result in significant effects.

- 6.3.28 The greater role for Wrea Green is also relevant to ecological connectivity, given the habitat network enhancement opportunities identified around the settlement. Development across Wrea Green could therefore provide opportunities to support these wider network objectives through habitat creation, enhancement and strengthened ecological corridors, particularly where BNG and green infrastructure are planned strategically across sites rather than delivered as isolated interventions.
- 6.3.29 Overall, **minor negative effects** are anticipated. This reflects the wider distribution of development and associated potential for habitat loss and fragmentation, including development around the Wyre and Ribble estuaries, potential loss or disturbance of supporting habitat, and substantial priority habitat overlap at SGL014. However, the wider spatial distribution of growth also creates opportunities to deliver BNG, habitat creation and green infrastructure across a broader area. If coordinated effectively, these measures could provide strategic benefits by strengthening ecological corridors, improving connectivity between habitats and contributing to wider nature recovery.

Option 4A: Focus additional growth at Kirkham, Warton and Newton

- 6.3.30 Option 4A builds upon Option 1 through the delivery of a higher overall quantum of growth, retaining the biodiversity considerations identified under that option whilst introducing additional development at Kirkham, Warton, Newton and Singleton. As a result, there is greater potential for habitat loss and fragmentation and for pressures associated with additional residential growth. However, the additional scale of development also increases opportunities for BNG, habitat creation and green infrastructure to be delivered in a coordinated manner and at a larger spatial scale.
- 6.3.31 SGL008 at Singleton is particularly notable, lying approximately 9–11 m from the Morecambe Bay and Duddon Estuary SPA, Morecambe Bay Ramsar site and Wyre Estuary SSSI, and approximately 37 m from the Wyre-Lune Marine Conservation Zone. Given its close proximity to these designations, development could result in negative effects, including from increased recreational activity and disturbance, pollution and from potential effects on habitats that contribute to the wider ecological network. The extent of these effects would depend on the ecological value of the site and the mitigation and enhancement measures incorporated through design.
- 6.3.32 Further growth at Singleton could increase the cumulative loss and fragmentation of habitats and place additional pressure on ecological connections around the settlement. At Warton, additional growth at WAR008 could similarly result in habitat loss and fragmentation, including effects on small areas of priority habitat. Where existing habitat features such as hedgerows and other ecological connections are retained and integrated into development, BNG and habitat creation could help to strengthen and extend these networks.
- 6.3.33 The concentration of additional growth at Kirkham, Warton and Newton also provides scope for habitat enhancement and green infrastructure to be coordinated across sites. This could support larger and better-connected areas of habitat and strengthen ecological corridors, rather than enhancements being delivered as isolated site-level measures.

- 6.3.34 Overall, **moderate negative effects** are anticipated, reflecting the higher level of growth and associated cumulative potential for negative effects on European sites and other biodiversity designations. This is particularly relevant to SGL008, which lies immediately adjacent to the Wyre Estuary designations, where insensitive development could result in habitat loss and fragmentation, disturbance, pollution and effects on ecological connectivity. However, the scale and concentration of growth also provide opportunities for coordinated BNG and habitat enhancement, with potential to strengthen wider ecological networks where measures are planned strategically.

Option 4B: Higher growth distributed across a wider range of settlements

- 6.3.35 Option 4B also builds upon Option 1 through the delivery of a higher overall quantum of growth. Consequently, it retains the biodiversity considerations identified under Option 1 whilst introducing additional development at Kirkham, Newton, Wrea Green and Singleton. The higher level of growth increases the potential for habitat loss, fragmentation and recreational pressures on designated sites, whilst the broader distribution of development increases the spatial extent over which these effects could occur. Conversely, it also provides opportunities for BNG, habitat creation and green infrastructure to strengthen ecological networks across a wider geographic area.
- 6.3.36 At Singleton, SGL013 lies approximately 360 m from the Morecambe Bay and Duddon Estuary SPA, Morecambe Bay Ramsar site and Wyre Estuary SSSI. Its proximity to these designations means development could contribute to increased recreational activity and disturbance, alongside the loss or fragmentation of habitats that may support species associated with the European sites. In combination with other growth around Singleton, this could increase cumulative pressures on the estuary and its associated habitats.
- 6.3.37 Additional development at Wrea Green, including WAG004 and WAG006, could result in the loss and fragmentation of existing habitats and disruption of ecological connections in an area where habitat network enhancement opportunities have been identified. However, the additional growth also provides opportunities for coordinated BNG, habitat creation and green infrastructure to strengthen ecological corridors and contribute to identified habitat network enhancement opportunities around the settlement.
- 6.3.38 More widely, the higher quantum and broader distribution of growth increase the potential for habitat loss and fragmentation and pressures on designated sites. However, it also increases the scale and geographical coverage of BNG and habitat enhancement that could be delivered. Where coordinated strategically, this could help connect existing habitats, address fragmentation and strengthen ecological networks at a strategic level.
- 6.3.39 Overall, **moderate negative effects** are anticipated, reflecting the higher level of growth and associated potential for increased recreational and other pressures on European sites, alongside habitat loss, fragmentation and effects on ecological connectivity across a wider area. However, the wider distribution also provides strategic opportunities for BNG and habitat enhancement, with potential benefits for ecological connectivity where measures are coordinated effectively.

Summary of effects

- 6.3.40 All of the options are likely to result in some adverse biodiversity effects, principally through cumulative pressures on European and other designated sites, including through increased recreational activity and disturbance, habitat loss and fragmentation and potential effects on ecological connectivity. The principal biodiversity constraint common to all options is SAS012 which is in proximity of a SSSI and a large proportion of the site overlaps with coastal and floodplain grazing marsh priority habitat.
- 6.3.41 All options also provide opportunities for BNG, habitat creation and green infrastructure, with potential to strengthen ecological networks where measures are planned and delivered strategically.
- 6.3.42 Options 2A and 2B perform comparatively well, with fewer sites located in close proximity to European sites. Option 2A concentrates a greater proportion of growth at Kirkham and Wesham, providing opportunities for BNG and habitat enhancement to be coordinated across larger sites and across fewer settlement peripheries. Option 2B provides a somewhat broader distribution, including a greater role for Warton and Wrea Green. This increases the spatial extent over which habitat loss and fragmentation could occur, but also provides opportunities to contribute to the identified habitat network enhancement opportunities around Wrea Green. Therefore, the options are difficult to distinguish between in terms of effects on biodiversity, and as such are ranked on par.
- 6.3.43 Options 1 and 3 also perform relatively well overall, although both give rise to greater biodiversity considerations than Options 2A and 2B, particularly around Singleton and the Wyre Estuary designations. Option 1 includes SGL003, SGL006 and SGL001, whilst Option 3 includes SGL003, SGL001 and SGL014. The latter is particularly notable as approximately 88% of the site overlaps coastal and floodplain grazing marsh priority habitat. Nevertheless, both options provide opportunities for habitat creation, biodiversity enhancement and habitat network strengthening, particularly where measures are coordinated across multiple sites.
- 6.3.44 The higher-growth alternatives perform less favourably overall (bearing mind this is a policy-off appraisal and a precautionary approach to achieving BNG on site is assumed at this stage). The additional quantum of growth under Options 4A and 4B increases the potential for habitat loss and fragmentation and for further cumulative pressures on European sites, including through increased recreational activity and disturbance. Option 4A is particularly constrained by SGL008 at Singleton, which lies immediately adjacent to the Wyre Estuary designations. This creates a greater potential for effects on designated sites, habitat connectivity and disturbance than identified for the other options. Option 4B avoids this particularly sensitive location but distributes additional development more widely, increasing the spatial extent over which habitat loss, fragmentation and effects on ecological connectivity could arise.

6.3.45 There are also different opportunities for biodiversity enhancement between the higher-growth alternatives. The greater concentration of growth under Option 4A provides scope for BNG, habitat creation and green infrastructure to be coordinated across larger sites and peripheral areas of settlements, including Kirkham, Warton and Newton. Under Option 4B, enhancement opportunities would be distributed more widely, including around Wrea Green, providing greater potential to contribute to habitat networks across a broader spatial area. These potential benefits are dependent on effective coordination and delivery and do not remove the need to avoid and minimise effects on existing sensitive habitats.

	Option 1	Option 2a	Option 2b	Option 3	Option 4a	Option 4b
Significance	Minor -ve	Minor -ve	Minor -ve	Minor -ve	Moderate -ve	Moderate -ve
Rank	=2	=1	=1	=2	4	3

6.4 Water, soil and land resources

IA Objectives:

- Seek to deliver neutral, or where possible positive, impacts on water quality, associated biodiversity, and on the physical state of water bodies.
- Promote the efficient use of land.
- Promote sustainable waste and mineral resource management.

Key considerations

- 6.4.1 Water bodies within Fylde face a range of environmental pressures and many fail to achieve good ecological status. The most prevalent reasons for not achieving good ecological status relate to pollution from rural areas, pollution from towns, cities and transport, pollution from wastewater and physical modifications to watercourses. Additional development therefore has the potential to increase pressure on water resources, wastewater infrastructure and receiving water bodies.
- 6.4.2 The borough is predominantly underlain by agricultural land, including extensive areas of best and most versatile (BMV) agricultural land. For the purposes of this appraisal, consideration has been given to the Predictive Agricultural Land Classification (ALC) Map 2026, which provides the most up-to-date available evidence regarding agricultural land quality. BMV agricultural land comprises Grades 1, 2 and 3a and is a finite resource which should be protected where possible.
- 6.4.3 All alternatives include development at St Annes (SAS012) and Whyndyke (WHY003 and WHY011). Based on the Predictive ALC Map 2026, SAS012 is located on Grade 2 agricultural land, whilst WHY003 and WHY011 comprise a mixture of Grade 1, Grade 3a and Grade 3b agricultural land. In addition, WHY002 and WHY016 feature within all reasonable alternatives, with WHY002 located on Grade 1 agricultural land and WHY016 located on urban land. Consequently, all alternatives would result in the loss of some Grade 1, Grade 2 and Grade 3a agricultural land regardless of the option selected.

- 6.4.4 A number of the variable sites included within the alternatives are also located on BMV agricultural land and therefore represent important differentiators between the options. In particular, NEW002, NEW003, NEW004, NEW005 and the majority of NEW007 are located on Grade 3a agricultural land. WEE003 and SGL001 are also located on Grade 3a agricultural land, whilst WAG001, WAG004, WAG007, WAR010 and WES002 contain varying proportions of Grade 3a agricultural land.
- 6.4.5 A more limited number of sites included within the reasonable alternatives are located on previously developed land. The principal brownfield sites are KKM001 and WAR001. Development of previously developed land represents a more efficient use of land resources and can reduce pressure on undeveloped greenfield land and agricultural soils.
- 6.4.6 All alternatives would increase waste arisings and place additional pressure on waste-management infrastructure, with the principal differences relating to the scale and distribution of growth proposed. However, Fylde benefits from an established kerbside waste collection service and household waste recycling facilities. While all growth options would increase the amount of waste generated and place additional demand on collection services, the differences between the alternatives are likely to be limited. The existing waste management network is expected to be capable of accommodating the level of growth envisaged, with any additional pressures likely to be addressed through ongoing service planning and operational investment. As a result, waste management infrastructure is not considered to be a key factor in differentiating between the reasonable alternatives. A marginal differentiator is that growth directed toward locations that reduce collection vehicle mileage / more efficient routing would be expected to be more beneficial. In this sense, the more established settlements are likely to be preferable.

Option 1: Proposed strategy

- 6.4.7 Option 1 distributes growth across a broad range of settlements including Warton, Wrea Green, Singleton, Whitehills, Wesham, Staining, Freckleton, Weeton and Newton. As a result, additional pressures on water resources, wastewater infrastructure and waste-management capacity would be spread across a relatively wide geographic area, resulting in neutral effects with regards of water and waste / minerals.
- 6.4.8 The option includes a number of allocations located wholly or partly on BMV agricultural land. NEW005 is located on Grade 3a agricultural land, whilst WEE003 is also located on Grade 3a agricultural land. Development is also proposed at WAG001 and WAG007, both of which contain areas of Grade 3a agricultural land. SGL001 is located on Grade 3a agricultural land and would contribute to additional losses of productive agricultural land within Singleton.
- 6.4.9 Conversely, a number of the allocations are located on urban land or predominantly lower-quality agricultural land. WAR001 is located on previously developed land, whilst WAR003, WAR004, WAR020, STI003 and FRK007 are predominantly located on Grade 3b agricultural land. WES001, WES003 and WES004 are also predominantly located on Grade 3b agricultural land, reducing the overall extent of BMV land loss.

6.4.10 The broad distribution of growth means that losses of agricultural land and pressures on water infrastructure would occur across a larger number of settlements than the more concentrated alternatives. However, this is partially offset by the inclusion of previously developed land and a number of allocations located on Grade 3b agricultural land.

6.4.11 Overall, the option is expected to result in **minor negative effects**.

Option 2A: Maximise growth at Kirkham and Wesham, followed by concentrating growth in other higher-order sustainable locations

6.4.12 Option 2A focuses growth principally within Kirkham, Wesham, and Warton. Compared with Options 1 and 3, this concentrated pattern of development is likely to facilitate a more coordinated approach to water supply, wastewater treatment and waste-management infrastructure. However, this is not a major differentiator between the options.

6.4.13 The option includes KKM001 and WAR001, both of which are located on previously developed land and therefore represent an efficient use of land resources. A substantial proportion of growth is directed towards Wesham through WES001, WES002, WES003 and WES004. Whilst WES002 contains some Grade 3a agricultural land, WES001, WES003 and WES004 are predominantly located on Grade 3b agricultural land.

6.4.14 The option also includes NEW004 and NEW007. Both sites are located predominantly on Grade 3a agricultural land and therefore contribute to losses of BMV agricultural land. WAR010 contains a mixture of Grade 3a and Grade 3b agricultural land, whilst WAR008 is predominantly Grade 3b agricultural land.

6.4.15 Importantly, the option avoids development at WEE003, NEW005, SGL001, WAG001, WAG004 and WAG007. As a result, it avoids a number of the significant Grade 3a allocations included within other alternatives. Together with the inclusion of KKM001 and WAR001, this reduces the overall extent of agricultural land loss somewhat when compared with the other options.

6.4.16 Overall, the option is expected to result in **minor negative effects**.

Option 2B: Maximise growth at Kirkham and Wesham while retaining the most suitable sites across Warton and Wrea Green

6.4.17 Option 2B retains a strong focus on Kirkham and Wesham but provides a greater role for growth at Wrea Green. The option therefore remains relatively concentrated, although development is distributed across a broader range of settlements than under Option 2A.

6.4.18 As with Option 2A, the option benefits from the inclusion of KKM001 and WAR001, which are located on previously developed land. It also directs substantial growth towards Wesham, where much of the development would occur on Grade 3b agricultural land.

6.4.19 However, the option introduces development at WAG001, WAG004 and WAG007. All three sites contain areas of Grade 3a agricultural land, with WAG007 being predominantly Grade 3a. Consequently, the option would result in a greater loss of BMV agricultural land than Option 2A.

- 6.4.20 The option avoids development at WEE003, NEW005 and SGL001 and therefore performs more favourably than Option 1 in respect of BMV agricultural land loss. Nevertheless, the inclusion of the larger Wrea Green allocations results in a marginally weaker performance than Option 2A.
- 6.4.21 Overall, the option is expected to result in **minor negative effects**.

Option 3: Increased dispersal across a wider range of sustainable settlements

- 6.4.22 As with Option 1, Option 3 distributes growth across a broad range of settlements including Newton, Singleton, Wrea Green, Weeton, Freckleton and Staining, whilst also retaining substantial growth at Kirkham and Wesham. Consequently, pressures on water resources, wastewater infrastructure and waste management facilities would be spread across a larger number of locations than under the more concentrated alternatives, although the option retains a stronger focus on the borough's larger settlements than might otherwise be expected from its more dispersed spatial pattern.
- 6.4.23 The option includes a number of allocations located on BMV agricultural land. NEW003 is entirely located on Grade 3a agricultural land and represents one of the largest allocations proposed across any of the baseline growth alternatives. WEE003 is also located on Grade 3a agricultural land, whilst SGL001 is entirely Grade 3a. Additional losses of BMV agricultural land would occur through WAG001, WAG004 and WAG007.
- 6.4.24 Although some allocations are located on lower-quality agricultural land, including SGL014, STI003 and FRK007, the overall extent of development proposed on BMV agricultural land is greater than under Options 1, 2A and 2B, principally due to the inclusion of NEW003 and the larger allocations at Wrea Green.
- 6.4.25 Consequently, the option would result in slightly more extensive losses of productive agricultural land than Options 1, 2A and 2B, whilst continuing to distribute development-related pressures across a wide range of settlements. Although the differences relative to Option 1 are not substantial, the inclusion of NEW003 and additional growth at Wrea Green result in a slightly weaker overall performance. The overall significance of effects is nevertheless considered to be **minor negative**.

Option 4A: Focus additional growth at Kirkham, Warton and Newton

- 6.4.26 Option 4A represents a higher level of growth than Options 1, 2A, 2B and 3. As a result, greater pressure on water resources, wastewater infrastructure and waste-management capacity is likely (though effects are likely to be manageable with infrastructure improvements).
- 6.4.27 In addition to all allocations included within Option 1, the option introduces NEW007, NEW004, NEW003 and NEW002. NEW002 and NEW003 are entirely located on Grade 3a agricultural land, whilst NEW007 is predominantly Grade 3a and NEW004 is entirely Grade 3a.

- 6.4.28 Collectively, these allocations would result in additional losses of BMV agricultural land.
- 6.4.29 The option benefits from the inclusion of KKM001, which is located on previously developed land, and WAR008, which is predominantly located on Grade 3b agricultural land. Nevertheless, these benefits are outweighed by the scale of additional development proposed on Grade 3a agricultural land, particularly at Newton and Kirkham.
- 6.4.30 Consequently, the option would result in additional losses of productive agricultural land and greater pressure on water and waste infrastructure than the lower-growth alternatives.
- 6.4.31 Overall, the option is expected to result in **moderate negative effects**.

Option 4B: Higher growth distributed across a wider range of settlements

- 6.4.32 Option 4B also accommodates a higher level of growth tested through the reasonable alternatives. Development would be distributed across Kirkham, Newton, Wrea Green and Singleton in addition to all sites included within Option 1.
- 6.4.33 The option introduces NEW007 and NEW003, both of which are predominantly located on Grade 3a agricultural land. Additional losses of BMV agricultural land would occur through WAG004 and WAG006, both of which contain areas of Grade 3a agricultural land, whilst SGL013 also contains some Grade 3a land.
- 6.4.34 Unlike Option 4A, the option does not benefit from the inclusion of KKM001 and therefore does not make use of one of the key brownfield opportunities identified within the alternatives. Furthermore, the broader spatial distribution of growth increases the geographic extent of pressure on water resources, wastewater infrastructure and waste-management systems.
- 6.4.35 The combination of a higher growth quantum, additional development at Wrea Green and Singleton, and the loss of substantial areas of BMV agricultural land results in the weakest performance against the objective.
- 6.4.36 Overall, the option is expected to result in **moderate negative effects**.

Summary of effects

- 6.4.37 All alternatives have the potential to affect water resources, wastewater infrastructure, agricultural land and mineral resources through the delivery of housing and associated infrastructure. All options include development at SAS012, WHY002, WHY003, WHY011 and WHY016, resulting in the loss of some Grade 1, Grade 2 and Grade 3a agricultural land irrespective of the option selected.

- 6.4.38 Option 2A performs most favourably as it concentrates growth within a limited number of settlements, makes use of previously developed land at KKM001 and WAR001, and generally avoids a number of the substantial Grade 3a allocations that feature within the other alternatives. Option 2B performs slightly less favourably due to the inclusion of additional development at Wrea Green and the associated loss of Grade 3a agricultural land.
- 6.4.39 Option 1 performs moderately due to development at NEW005, WEE003, SGL001 and parts of Wrea Green, although this is partially offset by the inclusion of WAR001 and a number of sites located on Grade 3b agricultural land. Option 3 performs slightly less favourably due to the inclusion of substantial allocations on Grade 3a agricultural land at Newton, Weeton, Singleton and Wrea Green.
- 6.4.40 Option 4A performs less well still due to its significantly higher level of growth and the extensive development proposed on Grade 3a agricultural land at Newton and Kirkham. Option 4B performs least favourably as it combines a higher level of growth with a broader spatial distribution of development and the loss of substantial areas of BMV agricultural land across Newton, Wrea Green and Singleton.

	Option 1	Option 2a	Option 2b	Option 3	Option 4a	Option 4b
Significance	Minor -ve	Minor -ve	Minor -ve	Minor -ve	Moderate -ve	Moderate -ve
Rank	3	1	2	4	5	6

6.5 Historic environment

IA Objective:

- Preserve and enhance Fylde's historic environment, including designated and non-designated heritage assets and their setting.

Key considerations

- 6.5.1 Fylde contains a rich and varied historic environment, including listed buildings, conservation areas, registered parks and gardens, historic farmsteads and archaeological assets. The historic character of the borough is reflected in its market towns, villages, rural landscapes and historic estates, with heritage assets contributing significantly to local distinctiveness and sense of place.
- 6.5.2 Heritage assets are often sensitive not only to direct physical impacts but also to changes within their setting. Development can affect the character, appearance and significance of designated assets through alterations to views, settlement form, landscape context and the relationship between historic buildings and their surroundings. Conservation Areas are particularly sensitive to changes that may affect their character and appearance, whilst development in proximity to listed buildings can affect their setting even where the asset itself is not directly impacted.

- 6.5.3 All alternatives would introduce new development and therefore have the potential to affect the historic environment. The principal differences between the alternatives relate to the scale and distribution of growth, the extent to which development occurs within or adjacent to Conservation Areas, and whether growth is directed towards sites containing or closely associated with designated or locally important heritage assets.
- 6.5.4 All alternatives include development at St Annes (SAS012) and Whyndyke (WHY002, WHY003, WHY011 and WHY016). These sites are not associated with any particularly significant heritage constraints and therefore are not expected to materially differentiate the performance of the alternatives.
- 6.5.5 The principal heritage distinctions between the options instead relate to growth at Wrea Green adjacent to the Conservation Area, development within Kirkham Conservation Area, and development at NEW006 which contains a Grade II listed building - Newton Hall Farmhouse. Some options also include limited development within Kirkham Conservation Area through KKM001, although this is a comparatively small allocation.
- 6.5.6 Development at Weeton has some potential to affect the setting of the Grade II listed Knowsley Farmhouse; however, the relationship is moderated by the presence of existing intervening development between the site and the listed building.

Option 1: Proposed strategy

- 6.5.7 Option 1 distributes growth across a range of settlements including Wesham, Warton, Wrea Green, Singleton, Newton, Weeton, Staining and Freckleton. As a consequence, there is potential for effects on the setting of heritage assets across a relatively broad area / several settlements.
- 6.5.8 Firstly, there is a Grade 2 listed building to the North of WES001, but this is relatively well screened and unlikely to be significantly affected by housing growth. There is also the Grade II Listed, Bradkirk Hall Farmhouse, which is fairly close to WES004. Whilst development would reduce the open countryside in the surrounding area, there still remains open greenspace land that will act as a buffer to the setting of the farmhouse. Therefore, impacts at Wesham would be expected to be neutral.
- 6.5.9 A notable consideration is the inclusion of WAG001 and WAG003, both of which are located adjacent to Wrea Green Conservation Area. Development in these locations has the potential to affect the setting of the Conservation Area and the historic character of Wrea Green, especially through the loss of rural views to and from the Conservation Area on its southern boundary. The option also includes WEE003 at Weeton, which is located in fairly close proximity to the Grade II listed Knowsley Farmhouse. However, existing residential development is located between the site and the listed building, reducing the likelihood of significant negative effects on its setting.
- 6.5.10 The option also includes development at Singleton and Newton. Whilst the Singleton sites are not associated with significant heritage constraints, the option includes NEW006, which contains a Grade II listed building and represents one of the most notable heritage constraints identified amongst the reasonable alternatives.

- 6.5.11 Overall, given that Option 1 includes a site containing a listed building and sites that have the potential to affect the setting of a conservation area, the option is expected to result in **moderate negative effects**.

Option 2A: Maximise growth at Kirkham and Wesham, followed by concentrating growth in other higher-order sustainable locations

- 6.5.12 Option 2A focuses growth within Kirkham and Wesham, resulting in a more concentrated pattern of development than the proposed strategy and reducing the extent to which development is dispersed across historic villages and rural settlements.
- 6.5.13 The option avoids the principal heritage sensitivities associated with the available site options. In particular, it avoids development adjacent to Wrea Green Conservation Area, avoids growth at Weeton, and avoids NEW006, which contains a Grade II listed building within the site. However, the option includes KKM001, which is a small site located within Kirkham Conservation Area. Development at this location has some potential to affect the character and appearance of the conservation area.
- 6.5.14 Whilst some heritage assets remain present within the wider vicinity of a number of the options' sites, including around Kirkham and Warton (as discussed for Option 1), there are no other particularly significant heritage constraints associated with the option when compared to other alternatives.
- 6.5.15 Overall, the option is expected to result in **minor negative effects** due to the presence of a site located within a Conservation Area.

Option 2B: Maximise growth at Kirkham and Wesham while retaining the most suitable sites across Warton and Wrea Green

- 6.5.16 Option 2B retains a strong focus on Kirkham and Wesham and other higher-order settlements, but introduces development at smaller settlements, including Wrea Green.
- 6.5.17 One of the main heritage considerations is the inclusion of WAG001 and WAG003, which are located adjacent to Wrea Green Conservation Area. As with Option 1, development at these locations has the potential to affect the setting of the Conservation Area and the historic character of the village. The sites are located on the edge of the settlement where open land contributes to the rural setting of the Conservation Area, and development would extend the built form of Wrea Green into currently undeveloped areas.
- 6.5.18 The option includes a small allocation within Kirkham Conservation Area (KKM001), which has some potential to affect the character and appearance of the Conservation Area.
- 6.5.19 The option avoids NEW006, which contains a Grade II listed building within the site. Consequently, whilst some effects on heritage significance could arise through impacts on Kirkham Conservation Area and the setting of Wrea Green Conservation Area, the overall level of heritage constraint remains relatively limited.
- 6.5.20 Overall, the option is expected to result in **minor negative effects**.

Option 3: Increased dispersal across a wider range of sustainable settlements

- 6.5.21 Option 3 distributes growth across a range of settlements including Newton, Singleton, Wrea Green, Weeton, Freckleton and Staining, in addition to substantial development at Kirkham and Wesham. As with Option 1, growth is spread across a relatively wide geographic area, although the option includes a stronger focus on Kirkham and a larger allocation at Newton.
- 6.5.22 As with Option 1 and 2B, the Option 3 includes development adjacent to Wrea Green Conservation Area through WAG001 and WAG003. The option also includes WEE003 at Weeton, although the potential for negative effects on the nearby listed building is moderated by the presence of existing residential development between the site and the listed building.
- 6.5.23 The option avoids KKM001 within Kirkham Conservation Area and does not include NEW006, which contains a Grade II listed building.
- 6.5.24 The other sites included within the option at smaller settlements are not associated with significant heritage constraints. Consequently, the principal heritage considerations remain those associated with development adjacent to Wrea Green Conservation Area and, to a lesser extent, development at Weeton. Unlike Option 1, however, the option avoids development at NEW006 and therefore avoids one of the more notable site-specific heritage constraints identified within the reasonable alternatives.
- 6.5.25 Overall, the option is expected to result in **minor negative effects**.

Option 4A: Focus additional growth at Kirkham, Warton and Newton

- 6.5.26 Option 4A builds upon Option 1 through the delivery of a higher level of growth. Consequently, it retains the principal heritage sensitivity associated with Option 1, namely development adjacent to Wrea Green Conservation Area and development of NEW006 which contains a Grade II listed building.
- 6.5.27 In addition, the option introduces development associated with Kirkham and Newton. The option also includes KKM001, which is located within Kirkham Conservation Area. Whilst this is a relatively small allocation, development at this location has some potential to affect the character and appearance of the conservation area.
- 6.5.28 Overall, the combination of the heritage sensitivities associated with Option 1, particularly the inclusion of NEW006, together with development within Kirkham Conservation Area, means this option is anticipated to result in **moderate** negative effects.

Option 4B: Higher growth distributed across a wider range of settlements

- 6.5.29 Option 4B also builds upon Option 1 through the delivery of a higher level of growth and therefore retains its heritage sensitivities. As with Option 4A, Option 4B, therefore, includes additional development adjacent to Wrea Green Conservation Area and development of NEW006 which contains a Grade II listed building.

- 6.5.30 Additional development is focused at Newton, Wrea Green and Singleton through NEW003, WAG004, WAG006 and SGL013. However, there are no significant heritage sensitivities associated with these sites.
- 6.5.31 Unlike Option 4A, the option does not include sites within or adjacent to Kirkham Conservation Area.
- 6.5.32 Overall, the option is expected to result in **moderate negative effects** on the historic environment.

Summary of effects

- 6.5.33 All alternatives have the potential to affect heritage assets and/or their settings through the delivery of housing and associated infrastructure. The principal differences between the alternatives relate to whether development occurs within or adjacent to conservation areas, whether sites contain designated heritage assets, and the extent to which development is located in proximity to listed buildings and could affect their setting.
- 6.5.34 Option 2A performs most favourably. The option avoids development adjacent to Wrea Green Conservation Area, avoids development at Weeton and avoids NEW006, which contains a Grade II listed building. Whilst the option includes KKM001 within Kirkham Conservation Area, this is a comparatively small allocation.
- 6.5.35 Options 2B and 3 perform relatively well. Option 2B includes development adjacent to Wrea Green Conservation Area and a small allocation within Kirkham Conservation Area but avoids NEW006 and development at Weeton. Option 3 includes development adjacent to Wrea Green Conservation Area and development at Weeton but avoids development within Kirkham Conservation Area and NEW006. Consequently, it performs marginally better than Option 2B.
- 6.5.36 Options 1, 4A and 4B perform least favourably. Option 1 and Option 4B include development adjacent to Wrea Green Conservation Area and NEW006, which contains a Grade II listed building. Option 4A performs least favourably as it additionally includes a small development within Kirkham Conservation Area.

	Option 1	Option 2a	Option 2b	Option 3	Option 4a	Option 4b
Significance	Moderate -ve	Minor -ve	Minor -ve	Minor -ve	Moderate -ve	Moderate -ve
Rank	=4	1	3	2	6	=4

6.6 Landscape

IA Objective:

- Protect and enhance the character and quality of Fylde's landscapes and townscape.

Key considerations

- 6.6.1 Fylde is characterised by the open and predominantly rural landscape of the Lancashire and Amounderness Plain, with development concentrated within the coastal urban area and the settlements of Kirkham and Wesham. The borough's landscape is defined by its agricultural character, open views, settlement edges, areas of green infrastructure and limited areas of Green Belt. Local landscape character is particularly sensitive to urban expansion, changes to the rural setting of villages and the erosion of settlement identity.
- 6.6.2 All alternatives would result in landscape and visual change through the delivery of new housing and associated infrastructure. The principal differences between the alternatives therefore relate to the location of development, the extent to which growth alters settlement form, affects the rural setting of villages, or reduces the degree of separation between settlements.
- 6.6.3 All alternatives include development at SAS012, WHY002, WHY003, WHY011 and WHY016. The Whyndyke allocations represent a substantial urban extension to the east of Blackpool and would inevitably result in the permanent loss of open countryside. Whilst these allocations are adjacent to existing development and major transport infrastructure, they establish a baseline level of landscape change associated with all alternatives.
- 6.6.4 A number of site-specific landscape sensitivities differentiate the options:
- WEE003 would introduce substantial growth at Weeton, a relatively small settlement, with potential to noticeably alter village character and the relationship between the settlement and the surrounding countryside. The development site is also on slightly higher ground than the existing village, which will increase the potential for negative effects;
 - WAG001, WAG003, WAG004, WAG006 and WAG007 would extend development into open countryside around Wrea Green. In particular, WAG006 has potential to reduce the degree of separation between Wrea Green and Kirkham/Wesham;
 - WAR008 adjoins the existing settlement along a small part of its boundary and is otherwise situated within relatively open countryside;
 - NEW003 and NEW007 are large greenfield sites and would result in significant outward expansion of Newton and Kirkham, respectively; and
 - SGL001, SGL013 and SGL014 would extend development into the rural landscape surrounding Singleton.
- 6.6.5 Consequently, the principal landscape considerations are not simply the scale of growth proposed, but the extent to which development affects village character, settlement separation, and the openness of the countryside.

Option 1: Proposed strategy

- 6.6.6 Option 1 would distribute residual housing growth across a range of settlements, including Wesham, Warton, Wrea Green, Singleton, Newton, Weeton, Staining and Freckleton. Whilst development would be distributed across a number of locations, the pattern of growth is relatively balanced, with no single settlement accommodating a substantial proportion of the overall requirement.
- 6.6.7 The option includes development at Weeton. Site WEE003 has capacity for approximately 163 dwellings within a settlement which contained approximately 183 dwellings at the time of the 2021 Census. As a result, the scale of growth proposed has the potential to noticeably alter the character and appearance of the village and its relationship with the surrounding rural landscape.
- 6.6.8 Development at Wrea Green through WAG001, WAG003 and WAG007 would extend the settlement into surrounding countryside and affect the rural setting of the village. Growth at Singleton through SGL001, SGL003 and SGL006 would similarly result in expansion at the edge of the settlement and loss of open countryside. However, for both of these settlements the potential negative landscape effects will be slightly reduced as the sites are located on relatively lower land than the existing respective established settlements.
- 6.6.9 At Newton, development would occur through NEW005 and NEW006. Whilst this would extend the settlement edge into undeveloped land, the scale of growth is more limited than the substantial expansion proposed through NEW003 under some of the other alternatives. Growth at Warton, Wesham, Staining and Freckleton would also result in localised changes to settlement edges and the loss of open land, but generally within areas already influenced by adjacent development.
- 6.6.10 Overall, the option is expected to result in **moderate negative effects**.

Option 2A: Maximise growth at Kirkham and Wesham, followed by concentrating growth in other higher-order sustainable locations

- 6.6.11 Option 2A focuses growth within Kirkham, Wesham, and Warton.
- 6.6.12 The option includes large-scale development at Kirkham and Wesham through NEW007, NEW004, KKM001, KKM004, WES001, WES002, WES003 and WES004. In particular, NEW007 would result in a significant outward extension of Kirkham into surrounding countryside (potential contributing to significant coalescence between settlements). The Wesham allocations would collectively extend the urban edge of the settlement as well.
- 6.6.13 However, the option avoids development at Weeton, Singleton, Wrea Green and Newton. It therefore avoids many of the village-scale landscape effects associated with the other alternatives, including those with significant growth at Weeton (associated with WEE003) and the larger expansions proposed around Wrea Green and Singleton.

- 6.6.14 Development at Warton through WAR020, WAR001, WAR014 and WAR010 would alter settlement edges and result in the loss of open land. In addition, WAR008 represents a substantial greenfield extension at Warton.
- 6.6.15 Whilst associated with the settlement, the site only adjoins the existing built-up area along a relatively small part of its boundary and extends into open countryside. Development of the site therefore has potential to result in a relatively significant localised landscape effect compared with other allocations within the option.
- 6.6.16 Overall, this option is expected to result in **moderate negative effects**, mainly attributable to cumulative impacts and the potential coalescence between Kirkham and Newton.

Option 2B: Maximise growth at Kirkham and Wesham while retaining the most suitable sites across Warton and Wrea Green

- 6.6.17 Option 2B retains a strong focus on Kirkham and Wesham whilst directing development towards Warton and Wrea Green.
- 6.6.18 As with Option 2A, substantial landscape change would occur at Kirkham and Wesham through NEW007, NEW004, KKM001, KKM004, WES001, WES002, WES003 and WES004. In particular, NEW007 would represent a major outward extension of Kirkham into currently undeveloped land (contributing to further coalescence), whilst the collective effect of the Wesham allocations would noticeably extend the settlement edge.
- 6.6.19 At Warton, development would be concentrated on WAR001, WAR014, WAR010, WAR020 and WAR005. These sites would result in the loss of areas of open land around the settlement edge and further consolidate development around Warton. However, unlike Option 2A, the option does not include WAR008 and therefore avoids a relatively sensitive area to landscape change.
- 6.6.20 The principal landscape sensitivity associated with the option relates to Wrea Green. Development through WAG001, WAG003, WAG004 and WAG007 would extend the settlement into surrounding countryside. Whilst individually moderate in scale, the cumulative effect of these allocations would result in a noticeable expansion of the village and erosion of elements of its rural setting. WAG004 is particularly notable given its size relative to the other Wrea Green allocations.
- 6.6.21 The option avoids the substantial village-scale effects associated with growth at Weeton, does not include the significant expansion of Newton associated with NEW003, and avoids the additional landscape effects associated with growth at Singleton. However, some degree of coalescence is possible between Newton and Kirkham, which is a significant consideration.
- 6.6.22 Overall, the option is expected to result in **moderate negative effects**.

Option 3: Increased dispersal across a wider range of sustainable settlements

- 6.6.23 Option 3 distributes growth across a wider range of settlements including Newton, Singleton, Wrea Green, Weeton, Freckleton and Staining, alongside development at Kirkham and Wesham.

- 6.6.24 At Kirkham and Wesham, development would be focused on NEW007, KKM004, WES001, WES002 and WES003. Whilst the overall scale of growth at these settlements is lower than under Options 2A and 2B, significant development would nevertheless be concentrated within two of the borough's larger settlements. For example, NEW007 would still result in a substantial extension of Kirkham into open countryside. As discussed for Options 2a and 2b, this could contribute towards sprawl towards Newton and affect distinct settlement identifies.
- 6.6.25 The option also includes NEW003 at Newton. With capacity for approximately 357 dwellings, the site would represent a further substantial expansion of the settlement into currently undeveloped countryside and is one of the most significant landscape effects associated with the option.
- 6.6.26 At Wrea Green, WAG001, WAG003, WAG004 and WAG007 would collectively extend the village into surrounding rural land. The cumulative effect of these allocations would alter the relationship between the settlement and the surrounding countryside and would result in a more pronounced change than under Options 1 and 2A. Similarly, development at Singleton, through SGL001, SGL003 and SGL014, would result in expansion on the settlement edge.
- 6.6.27 As with Option 1, the option includes significant growth at Weeton through site WEE003. Given the relatively small size of the existing settlement, development of this scale has the potential to noticeably alter village character and the relationship between the settlement and the surrounding countryside.
- 6.6.28 Overall, the option is expected to result in **moderate negative effects**.

Option 4A: Focus additional growth at Kirkham, Warton and Newton

- 6.6.29 Option 4A builds upon Option 1 through the delivery of a significantly higher level of growth, with additional development focused principally on Kirkham, Warton and Newton.
- 6.6.30 The option therefore combines the landscape effects identified under Option 1 with substantial additional greenfield development at NEW007, NEW004, NEW003 and NEW002. Together these allocations would result in major outward expansion of both Kirkham and Newton and extensive loss of open countryside at the settlement edge. Collectively, this creates the potential merging of settlements and significant loss of distinct character.
- 6.6.31 At Kirkham, NEW007, NEW004, KKM001 and KKM004 would result in substantial outward expansion of the settlement into surrounding countryside. In particular, NEW007 represents one of the largest individual housing allocations considered through the reasonable alternatives and would significantly alter the settlement edge and relationship between Kirkham and the surrounding rural landscape.
- 6.6.32 At Newton, the option introduces NEW003 and NEW002 in addition to NEW005 and NEW006 already included within Option 1. Collectively, these allocations would result in major expansion of the settlement into currently undeveloped countryside and represent one of the most substantial concentrations of growth within a rural settlement proposed by any of the alternatives.

6.6.33 Also of relevance is the inclusion of site WAR008, which only adjoins the existing settlement along a relatively small part of its boundary and is otherwise situated within open countryside. Development would therefore project substantially into the rural landscape. This effect would occur in addition to development at WAR001, WAR003, WAR004, WAR005, WAR010, WAR014, WAR016 and WAR020.

6.6.34 Overall, the option is expected to result in **major negative effects**. This reflects the combination of the landscape effects associated with the Option 1, major expansion of Kirkham and Newton, and the extensive encroachment into open countryside associated at Warton.

Option 4B: Higher growth distributed across a wider range of settlements

6.6.35 As with Option 4A, Option 4B also builds upon Option 1 through the delivery of a higher level of growth.

6.6.36 The option retains all of the landscape effects associated with Option 1, including development at Weeton, Wrea Green, Singleton and Newton, whilst introducing substantial additional growth at Kirkham, Newton, Wrea Green and Singleton.

6.6.37 At Kirkham, NEW007 would result in a substantial outward extension of the settlement into open countryside. At Newton, NEW003 would represent a major expansion of the settlement beyond its existing developed edge. Taken together, these sites would result in significant landscape change at two of the borough's key settlements.

6.6.38 The option introduces particularly notable additional growth at Wrea Green through WAG004 and WAG006. In combination with WAG001, WAG003 and WAG007 already included within Option 1, this would result in development extending into the countryside around multiple sides of the village. WAG006 is of particular significance as it would reduce the undeveloped gap between Wrea Green and Kirkham/Wesham. Whilst a gap would remain, development would erode elements of the rural landscape which currently contribute to the visual and physical distinction between these settlements.

6.6.39 Additional growth is also proposed at Singleton through SGL013. When considered alongside SGL001, SGL003 and SGL006 included within Option 1, development would extend across a number of settlement edges and result in a further loss of rural land around the village.

6.6.40 Overall, the option is expected to result in **major negative effects** due to the combination of higher growth, expansion at Kirkham and Newton, cumulative landscape change around Wrea Green and Singleton, and the reduction in separation between Wrea Green and Kirkham/Wesham.

Summary of effects

- 6.6.41 All alternatives would result in landscape and visual change through the delivery of housing and associated infrastructure. The principal differences between the alternatives relate to the extent of settlement expansion proposed, effects on village character, impacts on settlement separation and the cumulative loss of open countryside. All options include growth at St Annes and Whyndyke/Whitehills and therefore share a common baseline level of landscape change.
- 6.6.42 Option 2A performs favourably as it avoids many of the village-scale landscape effects associated with growth at Weeton, Singleton, Newton and Wrea Green. However, the option would still result in notable landscape change through major development at Kirkham and Wesham and the substantial countryside encroachment associated with WAR008. Option 2B also performs relatively favourably, although the inclusion of additional growth at Wrea Green results in greater effects on the rural setting of the village (hence being ranked less well than Option 2b). Option 1 performs similarly overall, providing a relatively balanced distribution of growth across the borough but including substantial growth at Weeton together with expansion at Wrea Green and Singleton. For this reason, it is ranked on par with Option 2a.
- 6.6.43 Option 3 includes a number of more landscape-sensitive allocations, most notably NEW003 at Newton, WAG004 at Wrea Green and NEW007 at Kirkham, resulting in greater effects on settlement character, settlement edges and the surrounding countryside, with significant coalescence potential.
- 6.6.44 Options 4A and 4B perform least favourably as they combine the effects associated with Option 1 with substantial additional growth at major greenfield sites. Option 4A is driven primarily by major expansion at Kirkham and Newton together with the extensive countryside encroachment associated with WAR008, whilst Option 4B introduces additional landscape effects around Wrea Green and would reduce the degree of separation between Wrea Green and Kirkham/Wesham through WAG006.

	Option 1	Option 2a	Option 2b	Option 3	Option 4a	Option 4b
Significance	Moderate -ve	Moderate -ve	Moderate -ve	Major-ve	Major-ve	Major-ve
Rank	=1	=1	3	4	=5	=5

6.7 Air quality and noise

IA Objective:

- Deliver improvements in air quality in Fylde.
- Reduce the impacts of noise on human health and the environment.

Key considerations

- 6.7.1 Fylde currently has no Air Quality Management Areas (AQMAs), with nitrogen dioxide concentrations within relevant limits and particulate levels below the national average. Traffic is a principal source of air pollution, with potential for higher pollutant concentrations around the M55, A583 and A585. Transport is also the main source of environmental noise, with elevated road noise along the M55 and principal A-road corridors, alongside rail noise and aviation noise associated with Blackpool Airport and Warton Aerodrome (though this is a transient issue).
- 6.7.2 Across the options, the scale and distribution of growth are key to the likely effects. Higher levels of growth are expected to generate greater travel demand, with associated potential for increased traffic-related emissions and noise. The spatial distribution of growth is also important: concentrating development in larger, more accessible settlements may provide greater opportunities to reduce car dependency and support public transport use and active travel. However, it may also concentrate traffic movements, emissions and noise effects within a smaller number of locations. Conversely, a wider distribution could spread traffic-related effects across a broader area and increase reliance on private vehicles in settlements with more limited public transport accessibility. Development in areas already affected by road, rail or aviation noise could also increase the number of people exposed to existing noise sources.
- 6.7.3 Over the plan period, increasing uptake of electric and other zero-emission vehicles is likely to reduce tailpipe emissions and help offset some of the air quality effects associated with additional traffic. However, this would not remove emissions from other sources and is unlikely to have influence on traffic volumes and some associated road noise. The relative distribution of growth and opportunities to reduce car dependency therefore remain important considerations across the options.
- 6.7.4 St Annes (SAS012) and Whyndyke (WHY002, WHY003, WHY011 and WHY016), establishing a common baseline level of air quality and noise effects. Specifically, this development at has potential to increase traffic movements associated with the strategic road network in these areas irrespective of the option selected, although both of these areas are served by regular bus services. The sites involved are a mix of residential and mixed used developments, which create the potential for trips associated with both commuting and accessing retail.

Option 1: Proposed strategy

- 6.7.5 Option 1 distributes further housing growth across a range of settlements, including Warton, Wrea Green, Singleton, Wesham, Staining, Freckleton, Weeton and Newton. This is likely to increase traffic and associated emissions and noise across several areas of the borough rather than concentrated within a small number of locations.
- 6.7.6 Growth at Warton is particularly relevant given existing aviation noise associated with Warton Aerodrome. Development in these locations could therefore increase the number of residents exposed to existing sources of noise.
- 6.7.7 A substantial proportion of growth is directed towards Kirkham and Wesham, which benefit from comparatively strong public transport accessibility, including rail and bus connections. This provides opportunities to encourage sustainable travel and limit increases in traffic-related emissions and noise. However, car dependency is still likely to remain relatively high, including due to the availability and distribution of services and facilities and the need for some journeys to be made elsewhere.
- 6.7.8 Conversely, growth across smaller settlements with more limited public transport access is likely to result in greater reliance on private vehicles. Associated increases in emissions and road noise are likely to be predominantly localised, particularly around congestion hotspots and on routes experiencing increased traffic flows. Whilst growth across smaller settlements is likely to result in greater reliance on private vehicles, the more balanced distribution of development also reduces the extent to which traffic, emissions and noise are concentrated within any individual settlement.
- 6.7.9 Overall, **minor negative effects** are anticipated, reflecting increased traffic-related emissions and noise and the location of some growth within areas already affected by transport noise. These effects could be reduced through encouraging sustainable and active transport.

Option 2A: Maximise growth at Kirkham and Wesham, followed by concentrating growth in other higher-order sustainable locations

- 6.7.10 Option 2A concentrates growth principally at Kirkham and Wesham, with more limited development at Warton. Growth would generate additional traffic and associated emissions and noise, including on routes serving these areas.

- 6.7.11 A significant proportion of growth would be concentrated at Kirkham and Wesham, which has good multimodal connectivity and the Borough's busiest railway station. This provides opportunities to encourage sustainable travel and limit increases in traffic-related emissions and noise. However, car dependency is still likely to remain relatively high, including due to the availability and distribution of services, facilities and employment opportunities and the need for some journeys to be made elsewhere. Additionally, concentrating a substantial proportion of development within Kirkham and Wesham also has potential to concentrate traffic-related emissions and road noise effects within these settlements. Growth at Warton could also result in localised increases in traffic-related emissions and road noise, particularly around congestion hotspots and routes experiencing increased traffic, while additional residential development could increase exposure to existing aviation noise associated with Warton Aerodrome.
- 6.7.12 Overall, **minor negative effects** are anticipated. Whilst growth would increase traffic-related emissions and noise, the concentration of development in areas with comparatively strong public transport accessibility provides greater opportunities to limit these effects.

Option 2B: Maximise growth at Kirkham and Wesham while retaining the most suitable sites across Warton and Wrea Green

- 6.7.13 Option 2B similarly concentrates substantial growth at Kirkham and Wesham but distributes more development towards Warton and Wrea Green.
- 6.7.14 As with Option 2A, the concentration of growth at Kirkham and Wesham, which benefit from comparatively good rail and bus accessibility, provides opportunities to encourage sustainable and active travel and limit increases in traffic-related emissions and noise. However, substantial growth would still be concentrated within these settlements and therefore has potential to increase localised traffic, emissions and noise effects. Car dependency is still likely to remain relatively high given the need to travel beyond these settlements for some services, facilities and employment opportunities. Growth at Warton and Wrea Green, where public transport opportunities are more limited, is likely to result in greater reliance on private vehicles. Associated increases in emissions and road noise are likely to be predominantly localised, particularly around congestion hotspots and routes experiencing increased traffic. Warton is also affected by existing aviation noise associated with Warton Aerodrome.
- 6.7.15 Overall, **minor negative effects** are predicted. The option performs broadly similarly to Option 2A, combining opportunities for sustainable travel with the potential for localised concentration of traffic, emissions and noise effects.

Option 3: Increased dispersal across a wider range of sustainable settlements

- 6.7.16 Option 3 distributes growth across a wider range of settlements, including Newton, Singleton, Wrea Green, Weeton, Freckleton and Staining, alongside growth at Kirkham and Wesham.

- 6.7.17 Whilst substantial growth is directed towards Kirkham and Wesham, which benefit from comparatively good public transport accessibility (which has associated air quality and noise benefits over private transport), the option also distributes growth across a number of smaller settlements where accessibility is generally more limited.
- 6.7.18 Singleton benefits from relatively good bus services, providing opportunities for sustainable travel, while public transport provision and access to services and facilities are more limited in several of the other smaller settlements. This is likely to increase reliance on private vehicles, with associated increases in emissions and road noise are likely to be predominantly localised, particularly around congestion hotspots and routes experiencing increased traffic. This is also relevant at Singleton, where existing congestion could be exacerbated by additional traffic.
- 6.7.19 Growth at Freckleton is also relevant given existing aviation noise associated with Warton Aerodrome.
- 6.7.20 Conversely, the broader distribution of growth compared to Options 2A and 2B means that traffic, emissions and noise effects are likely to be spread across a wider number of settlements, limiting the degree to which effects are concentrated within any single location.
- 6.7.21 Overall, **minor negative effects** are anticipated, reflecting the wider distribution of growth and greater proportion of development in locations with more limited sustainable transport accessibility and access to services and facilities, increasing the potential for localised traffic-related emissions and noise.

Option 4A: Focus additional growth at Kirkham, Warton and Newton

- 6.7.22 Option 4A tests a higher level of housing growth, which is likely to generate greater travel demand and therefore greater potential for traffic-related emissions and noise than Options 1–3. Additional growth is focused principally at Kirkham, Warton and Newton.
- 6.7.23 The concentration of additional growth at Kirkham is comparatively favourable, given its good multimodal connectivity and rail accessibility, providing opportunities to limit increases in car-based travel and associated emissions and noise. However, the concentration of substantial additional development at Kirkham also has potential to intensify local traffic, emissions and road noise effects within and around the settlement. Additional growth at Warton and Newton would generate additional vehicle movements, while Warton has poor rail accessibility and is already affected by aviation noise associated with Warton Aerodrome.

- 6.7.24 Overall, **minor negative effects** are anticipated. The higher level of growth would generate additional travel demand and therefore has greater potential for traffic-related emissions and noise than Options 1–3. However, given the generally good existing air quality baseline, increasing uptake of zero-emission vehicles, and the concentration of some additional growth at Kirkham where public transport accessibility is comparatively good, a substantial deterioration in air quality is not anticipated. Noise effects are also expected to be predominantly localised, particularly along routes experiencing increased traffic and around congestion hotspots. Additional growth at Warton could increase exposure to existing aviation noise, although appropriate development design and mitigation should help manage these effects.

Option 4B: Higher growth distributed across a wider range of settlements

- 6.7.25 Option 4B also tests a higher level of housing growth, but distributes additional development across a wider range of settlements. The combination of higher growth and greater dispersal increases the potential for traffic-related emissions and road noise across a broader part of the Borough.
- 6.7.26 Whilst some growth would benefit from access to the borough's more established public transport network, additional development is also directed towards Newton, Wrea Green and Singleton. Public transport provision and access to services and facilities are more limited at Newton and Wrea Green, increasing the potential for reliance on private vehicles. Singleton benefits from relatively good bus services, providing greater opportunities for sustainable travel; however, existing congestion within the settlement means additional traffic could exacerbate localised emissions and road noise, particularly around existing congestion hotspots and along routes experiencing increased traffic. However, the broader distribution of development means that traffic, emissions and road noise effects are less concentrated within a small number of settlements than under Option 4A.
- 6.7.27 Overall, **minor negative effects** are anticipated. The combination of higher growth and a greater distribution towards locations with more limited public transport accessibility increases the potential for car-based travel and associated emissions and road noise compared with the lower-growth alternatives. However, the existing air quality baseline is generally good, and increasing uptake of zero-emission vehicles over the plan period should help offset some of the additional transport-related emissions. Any increases in emissions and road noise are expected to be predominantly localised around routes experiencing increased traffic and existing congestion hotspots, rather than resulting in a substantial borough-wide deterioration in air quality or noise.

Summary of effects

- 6.7.28 All options are anticipated to result in **minor negative effects**. Growth would increase travel demand, with potential for additional traffic-related emissions and road noise, particularly around congestion hotspots and routes experiencing increased traffic. However, Fylde has a generally good existing air quality baseline, while increasing uptake of zero-emission vehicles should help moderate air quality effects over the plan period. Though each option is predicted to have a similar effect, there are some marginal differences that are worth discussing to aid in 'ranking' of the options.
- 6.7.29 Options 1, 2A, 2B, and 3 perform broadly similarly overall, although for different reasons. Options 1 and 3 distribute growth across a wider range of settlements, allowing traffic, emissions and noise effects to be spread more evenly across the borough. In contrast, Options 2A and 2B focus substantial growth at Kirkham and Wesham, supporting opportunities for more sustainable travel but also increasing the potential for localised concentration of traffic-related emissions and noise. Option 2A and Option 2B are not considered to differ substantially in performance.
- 6.7.30 Options 4A and 4B perform least favourably due to the higher growth and associated travel demand. Nevertheless, given the existing air quality baseline and anticipated improvements in vehicle emissions, effects are still considered minor negative. Option 4A concentrates more growth within Kirkham and therefore has greater potential to concentrate localised air quality and noise effects, whilst Option 4B distributes more growth towards settlements where reliance on private vehicles is generally higher. On balance, these contrasting effects are considered broadly comparable, and both options are expected to result in minor negative effects.

	Option 1	Option 2a	Option 2b	Option 3	Option 4a	Option 4b
Significance	Minor -ve	Minor -ve	Minor -ve	Minor -ve	Minor -ve	Minor -ve
Rank	=3	=1	=1	=3	=5	=5

6.8 Climate change

IA Objectives:

- Support climate change mitigation across Fylde through limiting greenhouse gas emissions.
- Support Fylde's resilience to the potential effects of climate change, in particular flooding.

Key considerations

- 6.8.1 Climate change is expected to increase the frequency and severity of extreme weather events, including flooding, heatwaves and periods of intense rainfall. Large areas of Fylde are vulnerable to fluvial, tidal and surface water flooding due to the borough's low-lying coastal location and extensive drainage network. Climate projections indicate warmer, wetter winters and hotter, drier summers, which are likely to increase flood risk and place greater pressure on communities, infrastructure and the environment.

- 6.8.2 All alternatives would increase greenhouse gas emissions through construction activity and generate additional travel demand through the delivery of new housing. However, it is important to acknowledge that housing development would likely come forward in the absence of the Plan, but in a less coordinated manner. It is therefore not appropriate to simply associate planned growth with increased emissions. The Plan has to meet housing needs, and the focus should be on how this can be achieved in a way that reduces climate change concerns.
- 6.8.3 The scale of emissions generated within Fylde will clearly be influenced by the overall quantum of growth planned for, with higher-growth alternatives expected to generate greater greenhouse gas emissions than lower-growth alternatives. However, it should also be noted that increasing housing provision on Fylde could reduce emissions generated in neighbouring authorities or in the longer term.
- 6.8.4 Differences between the alternatives therefore principally relate to the extent to which growth is concentrated within locations that support more sustainable travel patterns and lower transport-related emissions, the scale of growth proposed, and the extent to which development is directed towards sites affected by flood risk. At this stage, the appraisal considers the inherent characteristics of the alternatives and does not assume the implementation of mitigation measures (unless they are routine and / or strictly mandated by national policy).
- 6.8.5 St Annes (SAS012) and Whyndyke (WHY002, WHY003, WHY011 and WHY016). These sites therefore establish a common baseline level of climate change and flood risk effects across the alternatives. WHY016 is particularly relevant as it contains approximately 23% high surface water flood risk.

Option 1: Proposed strategy

- 6.8.6 Option 1 directs a substantial proportion of residual growth towards Wesham and Warton but also distributes further development across a range of smaller settlements including Wrea Green, Singleton, Newton, Weeton, Staining and Freckleton. Whilst the significant concentration of growth at Wesham is likely to support more sustainable travel patterns than growth focused entirely within smaller settlements, the overall strategy is more dispersed than Options 2A and 2B and is therefore likely to generate a greater reliance on private vehicle travel than these options (and thus marginally higher levels of greenhouse gas emissions could be anticipated).
- 6.8.7 From a flood risk perspective, a number of allocations contain areas of higher risk. In particular, WAR001 contains approximately 27% Flood Zone 3 and around 19% of the site is affected by a high risk of surface water flooding. WES001 also contains approximately 15% high surface water flood risk. These represent some of the most significant flood-risk constraints associated with available sites for consideration. It is possible that these areas of sites could be avoided or mitigation incorporated, but at this stage, such assumptions have not been made, except for WES001, which is included as a reduced capacity site option.

- 6.8.8 The overall level of growth is broadly comparable with Options 2A, 2B and 3. Consequently, the principal differentiator is the more dispersed pattern of development rather than the quantity of growth proposed. Whilst the option avoids some of the more significant flood risk constraints associated with Option 3 and the higher-growth alternatives, it nevertheless includes several sites affected by flood risk and is slightly less favourable than the more concentrated Options 2A and 2B from a climate mitigation perspective.
- 6.8.9 Overall, the relatively balanced but more dispersed pattern of growth, together with the inclusion of several allocations affected by flood risk, is expected to result in **minor negative effects** anticipated.

Option 2A: Maximise growth at Kirkham and Wesham, followed by concentrating growth in other higher-order sustainable locations

- 6.8.10 Option 2A directs the majority of growth towards Kirkham, Wesham, and Warton. The concentration of development within the borough's larger and more accessible settlements is likely to support more sustainable travel patterns and reduce reliance on private vehicle journeys when compared with other alternatives. Whilst car travel would still be expected at peripheral sites, there is also greater potential to encourage commuting by train, given that this settlement contains a station. There may also be the potential to introduce new or improved services with substantial development, but this is not a certainty and there are limits to infrastructure improvements towards Newton as an example. On balance, the option is expected to perform marginally more favourably in relation to transport-related greenhouse gas emissions (compared to Option 1).
- 6.8.11 The majority of sites are located predominantly within Flood Zone 1. However, several allocations contain areas of flood risk. WAR001 contains approximately 27% Flood Zone 3 and around 19% high surface water flood risk, WAR008 contains approximately 6% Flood Zone 3, whilst WES001 contains approximately 15% high surface water flood risk. These sites represent some of the more significant flood-risk constraints associated with the sites considered under the reasonable alternative.
- 6.8.12 Nevertheless, this option avoids the most constrained site considered in the reasonable alternatives, namely SGL014, which contains approximately 45% Flood Zone 3.
- 6.8.13 Overall, Option 2A performs fairly well against the climate change and flood risk objective. The relatively concentrated pattern of development supports climate change mitigation objectives to an extent, whilst some flood risk constraints remain, and some car-based travel will persist, this will not lead to significant effects. Therefore, **neutral effects** are predicted but with an element of caution / uncertainty

Option 2B: Maximise growth at Kirkham and Wesham while retaining the most suitable sites across Warton and Wrea Green

- 6.8.14 Option 2B retains a strong focus on Kirkham and Wesham and directs other growth towards Warton and Wrea Green. As with Option 2A, much of the development would occur within relatively accessible settlements.

- 6.8.15 However, the inclusion of Wrea Green introduces a broader and slightly more dispersed pattern of development than Option 2A, although the difference is marginal.
- 6.8.16 From a flood risk perspective, the option includes WAR001, which contains approximately 27% Flood Zone 3 and around 19% high surface water flood risk. The option avoids SGL014, WAR008 and NEW003, all of which contain notable areas of Flood Zone 3.
- 6.8.17 Consequently, the option has a broadly comparable flood risk profile to Option 2A. Whilst development is distributed slightly more widely, the overall pattern remains relatively concentrated and the differences between the two options are marginal.
- 6.8.18 Overall, the option performs fairly well. As with Option 2A, **neutral effects** are anticipated but with a level of caution/ uncertainty.

Option 3: Increased dispersal across a wider range of sustainable settlements

- 6.8.19 Whilst the option retains substantial growth at Kirkham and Wesham, it also distributes development across a broader range of settlements including Newton, Singleton, Wrea Green, Weeton, Freckleton and Staining. Consequently, as with Option 1, opportunities to support lower-carbon travel choices are somewhat reduced when compared with the more concentrated alternatives such as Options 2A and 2B.
- 6.8.20 The option also contains some of the most significant flood-risk constraints identified across all reasonable alternatives. Most notably, SGL014 contains approximately 45% Flood Zone 3, representing the largest proportion of Flood Zone 3 land associated with any site included within the options. The option also includes NEW003, which contains approximately 4% Flood Zone 3.
- 6.8.21 Although the overall quantum of growth is broadly comparable to Options 1, 2A and 2B, and a substantial proportion of development would still occur at Kirkham and Wesham, the inclusion of sites with significant flood-risk constraints means that this option performs less well in relation to climate change mitigation and climate resilience.
- 6.8.22 Overall, this option performs least favourably against the climate change and flood risk objective. **Moderate negative effects** are anticipated.

Option 4A: Focus additional growth at Kirkham, Warton and Newton

- 6.8.23 Option 4A would accommodate a higher level of housing growth than previous options, with additional growth focused principally on Kirkham, Warton and Newton. The concentrated pattern of development for the additional growth in larger settlements may support more sustainable travel behaviour than the Option 4B. The higher quantum of growth compared to other options is likely to generate greater construction-related emissions, operational emissions and travel demand.

- 6.8.24 In addition to the flood risk constraints associated with Option 1, this option introduces development at WAR008 and NEW003. WAR008 contains approximately 6% Flood Zone 3 whilst NEW003 contains approximately 4% Flood Zone 3. Although these proportions are considerably lower than those associated with SGL014 and WAR001, they nevertheless introduce additional exposure to fluvial flood risk when compared with Options 1, 2A and 2B.
- 6.8.25 Consequently, whilst the option benefits from a relatively concentrated spatial pattern, these advantages are reduced by both the increased level of growth and the inclusion of additional sites affected by Flood Zone 3.
- 6.8.26 Overall, **moderate negative effects** are anticipated.

Option 4B: Higher growth distributed across a wider range of settlements

- 6.8.27 Option 4B combines a higher level of housing growth with a broader distribution of development across Kirkham, Newton, Wrea Green and Singleton. The higher overall growth quantum and more dispersed spatial pattern are likely to increase transport-related greenhouse gas emissions when compared with Options 1, 2A and 2B.
- 6.8.28 In addition to the flood risk constraints associated with Option 1, the option includes NEW003, which contains approximately 4% Flood Zone 3. However, unlike Option 4A, it does not include WAR008 and therefore avoids one of the additional sites affected by notable fluvial flood risk.
- 6.8.29 As a result, the flood-risk profile of the option is marginally stronger than Option 4A. However, this advantage is offset to some degree by the broader pattern of development, which is likely to result in greater reliance on private vehicle travel. Conversely, an increase in homes within these settlements could help to support a greater range of local services, and the funding of transport infrastructure improvements such as pedestrian and cycle lanes.
- 6.8.30 Overall, the option is expected to result in **moderate negative effects**. Whilst it performs slightly better than Option 4A in relation to flood risk, the broader pattern of growth offsets this advantage, and overall performance is considered broadly comparable.

Summary of effects

- 6.8.31 All alternatives would increase greenhouse gas emissions and place additional pressure on the borough's ability to adapt to climate change through the delivery of new housing. The principal differences between the alternatives relate to the overall quantum of growth proposed, the extent to which development is concentrated within accessible settlements that support sustainable travel patterns, and the degree to which development occurs on sites affected by flood risk. All alternatives include development at SAS012, WHY002, WHY003, WHY011 and WHY016 and therefore share a common baseline level of flood risk and climate change effects.

- 6.8.32 Options 2A and 2B perform most favourably overall. Both options concentrate a substantial proportion of growth within Kirkham and Wesham, supporting opportunities for sustainable travel and reduced transport-related emissions, whilst avoiding the most significant flood risk constraint identified within the reasonable alternatives, namely SGL014.
- 6.8.33 Whilst both options contain some sites affected by flood risk, these constraints are relatively limited in extent and are not considered sufficient to outweigh the climate mitigation benefits associated with the overall spatial strategy.
- 6.8.34 Option 3 performs less favourably than Option 1. Whilst it retains a substantial proportion of growth within Kirkham and Wesham, it also includes SGL014 and NEW003, which represent some of the most notable flood-risk constraints identified through the assessment. These flood-risk considerations are the principal reason for its weaker overall performance.
- 6.8.35 Options 4A and 4B perform least favourably due to their higher levels of growth and associated increase in travel demand, construction activity and operational emissions. Both options also introduce additional development within areas affected by flood risk through NEW003, whilst Option 4A additionally includes WAR008. Although Option 4A benefits from a more concentrated pattern of development and Option 4B benefits from a marginally stronger flood risk profile, these advantages broadly offset one another in terms of overall ranking.

	Option 1	Option 2a	Option 2b	Option 3	Option 4a	Option 4b
Significance	Minor -ve	Neutral?	Neutral?	Moderate -ve	Moderate -ve	Moderate -ve
Rank	3	=1	=1	4	=5	=5

6.9 Healthy and safe communities

IA Objective:

- Improve health and wellbeing of residents.
- Improve levels of educational attainment.
- Protect access to green spaces and leisure facilities.

Key considerations

- 6.9.1 Fylde has an ageing and growing population which is expected to increase demand for healthcare facilities, community infrastructure, open space, leisure facilities and education provision over the plan period. Whilst levels of health are generally comparable to national averages, the borough performs relatively poorly across several indicators associated with unhealthy lifestyles, including adult obesity, alcohol-related admissions and physical inactivity, particularly amongst children and young people. Access to healthcare, schools and leisure facilities and formal green space is generally strongest within the borough's larger settlements and more limited within some rural areas. However, the rural settlements have good access to areas of open space and 'countryside'.

- 6.9.2 All alternatives would increase demand for community infrastructure, health services, education facilities and green space through the delivery of new housing. All alternatives would also involve development on the peripheries of existing settlements, resulting in some deterioration of access for existing communities to open countryside. This could reduce opportunities for informal recreation and access to the countryside, particularly where development changes the character or accessibility of established routes. Where sites contain or adjoin Public Rights of Way (PROWs), development could also affect the existing experience and enjoyment of these routes through changes to their setting, although site-specific requirements for connectivity and landscaping may provide opportunities to retain or improve access.
- 6.9.3 Differences between the alternatives therefore principally relate to the extent to which growth is directed towards settlements with existing access to healthcare, education, leisure facilities, green infrastructure and opportunities for active travel. Alternatives that concentrate growth within larger settlements are likely to provide greater opportunities to support healthy lifestyles and access to community services, whereas more dispersed alternatives may increase pressure on facilities across a wider range of settlements and result in a less efficient pattern of service provision. Having said this, incremental growth of an appropriate scale can help to support the vitality of smaller settlements, without putting undue pressure on services.
- 6.9.4 The scale and distribution of growth may also influence community wellbeing through its effects on the character, identity and functioning of individual settlements. Where communities perceive the scale of development to be disproportionate or have concerns about pressure on local services, infrastructure, traffic or changes to the character of the settlement (including loss of greenspace), this may contribute to community opposition to growth and potentially have adverse effects on community wellbeing and cohesion. These effects are likely to be more pronounced where growth would involve concentrated development at settlement edges, would substantially extend the built area / increase the population or involve land valued for amenity and recreation.
- 6.9.5 All alternatives also include development at St Annes (SAS012) and Whyndyke (WHY002, WHY003, WHY011 and WHY016). These sites are generally located within or adjacent to settlements with relatively good access to healthcare, education, leisure facilities and community infrastructure. Consequently, they establish a common baseline level of positive effects across all alternatives. Several sites are also mixed use and will offer access to retail and other services to a wide range of communities.

Option 1: Proposed strategy

- 6.9.6 Option 1 directs a substantial proportion of additional growth towards Wesham, with further development distributed across Warton, Wrea Green, Singleton, Newton, Weeton, Staining and Freckleton. Growth at Wesham would provide access to existing healthcare facilities, schools, community services and active travel opportunities, whilst helping to support local infrastructure and community facilities.

- 6.9.7 However, a significant proportion of development would also be distributed across smaller settlements where access to healthcare, education facilities, leisure opportunities and public transport is generally more limited. The provision of smaller-scale, incremental growth in these settlements may help to sustain local communities, services and facilities and support their ongoing vitality, without placing the same level of pressure on infrastructure as more substantial concentrations of growth. Nevertheless, where the scale of growth is perceived by existing communities to place pressure on local infrastructure, services or the character of settlements, this could contribute to community opposition and adversely affect perceptions of community wellbeing. The dispersed pattern of growth may limit opportunities to maximise access to existing facilities and could increase pressure on healthcare, education and leisure provision across a wider geographic area (though not to a significant degree).
- 6.9.8 The option provides a relatively balanced distribution of growth across the borough and has potential to support a wider range of settlements and local communities (including greater provision of affordable homes). Whilst opportunities to maximise access to existing services and facilities are somewhat lower than under the more concentrated alternatives, the strategy helps to sustain community facilities, services and local vitality across a broader geographic area. Overall, the option is expected to result in **moderate positive effects**.

Option 2A: Maximise growth at Kirkham and Wesham, followed by concentrating growth in other higher-order sustainable locations

- 6.9.9 Option 2A focuses growth within Kirkham, Wesham and Warton, directing development towards settlements that already contain a concentration of healthcare facilities, schools, leisure assets, active travel routes and community infrastructure.
- 6.9.10 By concentrating growth within larger and more accessible settlements, the option is likely to maximise opportunities for residents to access healthcare, education, leisure facilities and green spaces. It is also likely to support active lifestyles through greater access to walking and cycling infrastructure and reduce the risk of social isolation by locating development close to services and facilities. However, it is worth noting that several sites involved to the east of Kirkham are currently poorly serviced by pedestrian and cycle access and it could be difficult to resolve these issues. This could limit active travel in certain locations.
- 6.9.11 Although the option would increase demand for community infrastructure, the concentration of growth within the borough's principal settlements is likely to support more efficient service provision and investment. The option also focuses growth within locations that are comparatively well placed to accommodate additional development whilst maintaining access to existing services and facilities. However, the scale of growth focused around Kirkham and Wesham, together with development at Newton, could result in more noticeable changes to the character and relationship between these settlements. Existing communities may have concerns about the cumulative effects of development, including increased pressure on local services and infrastructure, traffic and changes to the character of the settlements.

- 6.9.12 Where such concerns arise, there is potential for adverse effects on perceptions of community wellbeing and cohesion.
- 6.9.13 Overall, this option is expected to result in **moderate positive effects**, and perform most favourably against the healthy and safe communities objective.

Option 2B: Maximise growth at Kirkham and Wesham while retaining the most suitable sites across Warton and Wrea Green

- 6.9.14 Option 2B retains a strong focus on Kirkham and Wesham whilst also directing substantial growth towards Warton and Wrea Green. Much of the development would therefore occur in locations with reasonable access to healthcare, education, leisure facilities and community infrastructure.
- 6.9.15 Whilst the inclusion of Wrea Green introduces a broader distribution of growth than Option 2A, the majority of development would remain concentrated within locations capable of supporting healthy lifestyles and access to services. The option would also support access to active travel opportunities and existing green infrastructure.
- 6.9.16 The option performs broadly similarly to Option 2A, with the main distinction being the slightly wider distribution of growth. Nevertheless, a substantial proportion of development remains focused within accessible settlements capable of supporting community wellbeing. The inclusion of Wrea Green alongside the substantial growth at Kirkham and Wesham also means that the effects of development would be experienced across a wider area. In particular, the cumulative relationship between growth around Kirkham and Wesham and development at Wrea Green and Newton could result in concerns about changes to settlement character, pressure on local infrastructure and the cumulative effects of development. These concerns could contribute to community opposition to growth and have some adverse effects for community wellbeing, although the distribution of growth also provides opportunities for benefits to be realised across a wider range of communities.
- 6.9.17 Overall, the option is expected to generate **moderate positive effects**, performing similarly to Option 2A.

Option 3: Increased dispersal across a wider range of sustainable settlements

- 6.9.18 This option distributes growth across a range of settlements including Newton, Singleton, Wrea Green, Weeton, Freckleton and Staining. However, it also includes substantial growth at Kirkham and Wesham, which represent two of the borough's most accessible settlements in terms of access to community services and facilities.
- 6.9.19 As with Option 1, the wider dispersal of development may help support local communities and facilities across a greater number of settlements. However, many of the smaller settlements have more limited access to healthcare facilities, secondary schools, leisure facilities, active travel infrastructure and community services.

- 6.9.20 Whilst substantial growth is directed towards Kirkham and Wesham, the distribution of development across a wider range of settlements is likely to somewhat reduce opportunities to maximise accessibility to health and community assets when compared with the more concentrated alternatives.
- 6.9.21 The inclusion of smaller settlements with fewer existing services and facilities also means that the proportional impact of additional growth could be greater in these locations. Development may represent a more noticeable change to the scale and character of these communities and could place greater pressure on the limited services and facilities that are available. This may contribute to local concerns or opposition to growth, with potential adverse effects on community wellbeing and cohesion.
- 6.9.22 Whilst the option may increase pressure on infrastructure and service provision across a larger number of settlements, it also has potential to support the vitality and viability of a broader range of communities across the borough.
- 6.9.23 Overall, the option is expected to result in **minor positive effects**.

Option 4A: Focus additional growth at Kirkham, Warton and Newton

- 6.9.24 Option 4A accommodates a higher level of housing growth through a concentrated pattern of additional development focused on Kirkham, Warton and Newton. Growth at Kirkham would provide good access to community infrastructure, schools, healthcare facilities and active travel opportunities. The higher level of housing growth would also provide greater opportunities to deliver affordable housing, helping to meet identified local housing needs and supporting access to suitable and secure housing for households who may otherwise experience affordability pressures. The additional population associated with higher growth could also increase demand for, and support the vitality and viability of, local community facilities and services, including through contributions associated with new development.
- 6.9.25 The higher quantum of development would generate additional pressure on healthcare services, education provision, open spaces and leisure facilities. Whilst concentrating growth in a limited number of accessible settlements may support coordinated infrastructure planning, it could also provide opportunities for existing facilities and services to be enhanced in response to increased demand. Developer contributions and other mechanisms associated with new development could help to support improvements to local infrastructure and community facilities. However, the concentration of higher levels of growth within a smaller number of settlements (particularly around Kirkham and Newton) could also result in greater perceived impacts on those communities, including concerns about pressure on infrastructure, traffic and changes to settlement character. Where such concerns contribute to opposition to development, there is potential for adverse effects on community wellbeing and cohesion. The additional population may also support the longer-term viability of local shops, services and community facilities, particularly where new development is well integrated with existing settlements.

- 6.9.26 The higher level of growth would increase demand for healthcare, education, leisure facilities and green infrastructure, but would also provide greater opportunities to address local housing needs, including through the delivery of affordable housing, and to support investment in and enhancement of community infrastructure. Concentrating growth in a limited number of accessible settlements may support coordinated infrastructure planning, but these benefits are likely to be experienced across a more limited number of communities than under Option 4B. Overall, the option is expected to generate **moderate positive effects**.

Option 4B: Higher growth distributed across a wider range of settlements

- 6.9.27 Option 4B combines a higher overall level of housing growth with a broader distribution of development focused on Kirkham, Newton, Wrea Green and Singleton. The higher level of housing growth would provide greater opportunities to deliver affordable housing, helping to meet identified local housing needs and supporting access to suitable and secure housing for households experiencing affordability pressures. The wider distribution of growth would also enable these benefits to be realised across a broader range of communities, with additional residents potentially supporting the vitality and viability of local services and facilities and providing opportunities for investment in community infrastructure.
- 6.9.28 As with Option 4A, the higher level of housing growth would generate greater demand for healthcare, education, leisure and community infrastructure. However, new development could also support enhancements to existing facilities and services, including through developer contributions, while additional population can increase the use and support the viability of local facilities. Opportunities to access services and facilities would also vary considerably between settlements, with those in more sustainable locations likely to have better access to existing provision.
- 6.9.29 The broader distribution of growth would increase pressure on healthcare, education and leisure facilities across more settlements compared to Option 4A. However, the dispersal of growth may also help to spread demand across a broader range of existing services and facilities and distribute the benefits of additional housing and associated investment, reducing the extent to which pressure is concentrated within any single location and helping to retain community vitality across a wider mix of settlements. Conversely, the introduction of development at higher levels across a greater number of communities may result in local concerns about the cumulative effects of growth, including changes to settlement character and pressure on existing infrastructure and services.
- 6.9.30 Overall, Option 4B would provide similar benefits to Option 4A in terms of additional housing provision, including affordable housing, and opportunities to support local facilities and services. Its broader distribution means that these benefits could be experienced across a wider range of communities, although infrastructure pressures would also arise across more settlements and opportunities for coordinated investment may be reduced. On balance, this option is likely to generate **moderate positive effects**.

Summary of effects

- 6.9.31 All options are expected to perform positively against the healthy and safe communities objective, reflecting the opportunities associated with additional housing provision, including affordable housing and supporting the vitality and viability of local facilities and services. Options 4A and 4B are expected to perform most favourably, reflecting their higher level of housing growth and therefore greater opportunities to address local housing needs and support investment in community infrastructure. Both options would also benefit from development being focused in a number of higher-order settlements, although the spatial distribution of growth results in different implications for the concentration and distribution of infrastructure pressures and benefits. The scale of growth may nevertheless result in concerns about changes to some communities and pressure on local infrastructure, with potential implications for community wellbeing.
- 6.9.32 Option 2A is expected to perform next most favourably, reflecting its focus on locations with good access to existing healthcare, education and community facilities. Option 2B performs similarly, although its broader distribution means benefits are spread across a wider range of communities. Both Option 2A and 2B could nevertheless result in adverse effects on community wellbeing due to concerns about the scale and cumulative effects of growth on communities around Kirkham, Wesham and Newton. Options 1 is also expected to result in moderate positive effects, reflecting additional housing, including affordable housing, and opportunities to support local services and facilities, although its spatial distribution provides less potential to maximise these benefits in the most sustainable locations.
- 6.9.33 Option 3 is expected to perform less favourably than the other options and is assessed as having a minor positive effect. Its more dispersed pattern of growth would provide opportunities to support a wider range of communities and deliver additional affordable housing. However, the greater dispersal of development across settlements with more variable levels of access to healthcare, education, leisure and other community facilities may reduce the extent to which the benefits of growth can be fully realised and supported by existing infrastructure. Growth in smaller settlements with fewer existing services and facilities may also represent a more substantial change proportionately, potentially increasing local concerns about development and its effects on community wellbeing. While the option would still provide positive benefits through housing delivery and support for local communities, these are less likely to be maximised across the borough compared with the more focused approaches.

	Option 1	Option 2a	Option 2b	Option 3	Option 4a	Option 4b
Significance	Moderate +ve	Moderate +ve	Moderate +ve	Minor +ve	Moderate +ve	Moderate +ve
Rank	5	3	4	6	=1	=1

6.10 Material assets

IA Objectives:

- Promote coordinated land use planning across Fylde.
- Promote economic growth and job creation across the sub-region, and improve access to jobs for all.

Key considerations

- 6.10.1 Fylde is expected to accommodate significant housing growth over the plan period whilst supporting economic development, maintaining the vitality of town centres and ensuring efficient use of land and infrastructure. The borough's ageing population is expected to increase demand for new housing, including smaller, accessible and adaptable homes, while maintaining a supply of family housing and supporting economic participation remain important considerations. The borough's principal town centres at Kirkham, Lytham and St Annes are expected to continue functioning as key service, retail and employment hubs.
- 6.10.2 Differences between the alternatives relate principally to the scale and distribution of housing growth. Alternatives that concentrate development within larger settlements are likely to make more efficient use of existing infrastructure, support town centre vitality and improve access to employment opportunities and services. In contrast, alternatives that distribute growth more widely across smaller settlements may support a broader range of communities, help sustain local services and facilities, and promote a more balanced pattern of growth across the borough, although they may result in a less concentrated pattern of investment and service provision.
- 6.10.3 All alternatives are assumed to meet identified housing needs; therefore, the assessment focuses primarily on the efficiency and sustainability of the spatial distribution of growth and its contribution to supporting economic activity, centres and infrastructure.
- 6.10.4 All alternatives also include growth at St Annes (SAS012) and Whyndyke (WHY002, WHY003, WHY011 and WHY016). In particular, SAS012, WHY003 and WHY011 are mixed-use allocations which provide opportunities not only for housing delivery but also for employment, services and associated economic activity. These sites are located within or adjacent to areas with good access to existing infrastructure, services, facilities and employment opportunities and are therefore expected to make a positive contribution towards economic growth, access to jobs and the efficient use of land. WHY002 and WHY016 are housing allocations and similarly benefit from good access to services and employment opportunities. Consequently, these allocations establish a common baseline level of positive effects across all options.

Option 1: Proposed strategy

- 6.10.5 The proposed strategy would deliver further housing growth across a range of settlements, with a significant proportion focused at Wesham and further allocations at Warton, Wrea Green, Singleton, Newton, Weeton, Staining and Freckleton. Growth at Wesham would support one of the borough's larger service centres and help sustain local facilities and employment opportunities. Wesham is also well connected to both Preston and the Fylde Coast by rail and road, providing good access to existing and planned employment opportunities.
- 6.10.6 The option would also contribute towards meeting housing needs and supporting local communities across a range of settlements. However, the distribution of growth across numerous settlements may reduce the extent to which development supports the vitality of the borough's principal centres when compared with the most concentrated alternatives and may result in a less concentrated pattern of infrastructure investment.
- 6.10.7 Nevertheless, a degree of incremental growth within smaller settlements can help maintain the vitality and viability of local communities, support existing services and facilities, and contribute towards a more balanced pattern of development across the borough. It also provides housing in the more isolated settlements and provides a broader portfolio of sites to achieve choice and flexibility.
- 6.10.8 Overall, **moderate positive effects** are anticipated.

Option 2A: Maximise growth at Kirkham and Wesham, followed by concentrating growth in other higher-order sustainable locations

- 6.10.9 This option directs growth towards Kirkham, Wesham and Warton, concentrating development within the borough's larger and more established settlements.
- 6.10.10 As a result, the option is likely to make efficient use of existing infrastructure, services and community facilities whilst supporting the vitality and viability of principal centres. Kirkham and Wesham are relatively well connected to both Preston and the Fylde Coast, particularly by rail and road, and therefore provide good access to existing and planned employment growth. A significant focus on Warton is also positive as it is close to a major source of employment (BAE Systems Warton site) and a wider range of services compared to the smaller villages in the borough.
- 6.10.11 The option would provide a substantial contribution towards meeting housing needs and would support access to employment opportunities, services and facilities. Concentrating growth within a limited number of higher-order settlements is also likely to strengthen the economic role of these locations and support coordinated infrastructure investment.
- 6.10.12 Conversely, the vitality and function of some smaller settlements may stagnate if further incremental growth is directed away from them.
- 6.10.13 Overall, the option is expected to perform well against the material assets objective, with **moderate positive effects** anticipated.

Option 2B: Maximise growth at Kirkham and Wesham while retaining the most suitable sites across Warton and Wrea Green

- 6.10.14 Option 2B retains a strong focus on Kirkham and Wesham whilst also directing growth towards Warton and Wrea Green. The majority of development would therefore continue to be focused within settlements that already contain services, facilities and employment opportunities.
- 6.10.15 As with Option 2A, Kirkham and Wesham provide good access to employment opportunities within Fylde, Preston and the wider sub-region. The option would therefore support sustainable access to jobs whilst making efficient use of existing infrastructure and services.
- 6.10.16 Whilst the inclusion of Wrea Green introduces a slightly broader spatial distribution than Option 2A, the option would still support efficient use of infrastructure and make a significant contribution towards meeting identified housing needs. The option is also likely to support the vitality of nearby centres and maintain access to employment opportunities and community services.
- 6.10.17 It is marginally less preferable to Option 2A from a material aspect perspective (given that it directs less growth to Warton), but still retains a **moderate positive effect**.

Option 3: Increased dispersal across a wider range of sustainable settlements

- 6.10.18 This option distributes development across a broader range of settlements including Newton, Singleton, Wrea Green, Weeton, Freckleton and Staining, alongside growth at Kirkham and Wesham.
- 6.10.19 The option directs substantial growth towards Kirkham and Wesham, which would provide good access to employment opportunities within Fylde and neighbouring authorities. However, significant development would also be directed towards a range of smaller settlements, where access to employment opportunities and services is generally more limited.
- 6.10.20 As with Option 1, the wider distribution of growth would support a broader range of communities in the borough and help sustain local services across multiple settlements. However, the option would still result in a less concentrated pattern of development than Options 2A and 2B, reducing opportunities to maximise the benefits of existing infrastructure, support principal centres and focus investment within the borough's main settlements.
- 6.10.21 Whilst the option would contribute towards meeting housing needs and direct substantial growth towards Kirkham and Wesham, the broader distribution of development across a range of settlements is likely to reduce overall performance against the material assets objective when compared with the more concentrated alternatives. Therefore, **minor positive effects** are anticipated.

Option 4A: Focus additional growth at Kirkham, Warton and Newton

- 6.10.22 Option 4a would accommodate a higher level of housing growth through a concentrated pattern of additional development focused on Kirkham, Warton and Newton.
- 6.10.23 The additional housing provision would make a substantial contribution towards meeting housing needs and could provide greater support for economic growth, local services and community facilities. Growth focused within a relatively small number of settlements would support coordinated infrastructure planning and enhance access to employment opportunities and services.
- 6.10.24 The strong focus on Kirkham, Wesham and Warton would support access to major employment locations, including Preston, the Fylde Coast and the BAE Systems site at Warton.
- 6.10.25 The higher quantum of development would also increase opportunities to support workforce retention and the long-term resilience of the borough's economy. Conversely, 'over-provision' of housing could increase the resident workforce more rapidly than planned employment growth within the Borough. Whilst Fylde benefits from strong economic links with Preston and the wider Central Lancashire area, this may increase commuting flows and result in a less balanced relationship between homes and jobs than options more closely aligned with identified housing and employment needs
- 6.10.26 Overall, this option is expected to result in **major positive effects** on the material assets objective.

Option 4B: Higher growth distributed across a wider range of settlements

- 6.10.27 This option would also provide a significantly higher level of housing growth and therefore make a strong contribution towards meeting housing needs and supporting economic growth. Additional development would be directed towards Kirkham, Newton, Wrea Green and Singleton.
- 6.10.28 The higher quantum of development would provide opportunities to support local services and facilities across a wider range of communities. However, compared with Option 4A, the broader distribution of growth would reduce opportunities to concentrate investment within the borough's principal settlements and maximise the efficient use of existing infrastructure.
- 6.10.29 Whilst significant growth would still be directed towards accessible locations, a greater proportion of development would occur in settlements with fewer services and employment opportunities than under Option 4A.
- 6.10.30 Overall, the option is expected to generate **major positive effects**, reflecting the benefits of increased housing delivery balanced against a more dispersed pattern of growth.

Summary of effects

6.10.31 All alternatives are expected to generate positive effects through the delivery of new housing and support for the local economy. It is also worth acknowledging that significant levels of committed growth and 'constant' allocations at Lytham and St Annes continue to be part of the overall strategy (including the key areas for mixed use and employment growth). The principal differences between the alternatives relate to the extent to which further growth is concentrated within the borough's main settlements, supports existing infrastructure and services, contributes towards meeting identified housing needs and aligns with existing and planned employment opportunities.

6.10.32 Options 4A and 4B perform most favourably overall. Both deliver the highest levels of housing growth and provide strong support for economic activity, services and infrastructure. Whilst Option 4A concentrates more growth within key settlements and Option 4B distributes growth more widely, both are expected to result in major positive effects, and are ranked on par.

6.10.33 Options 1, 2A, 2B, and 3 all perform positively, although for different reasons. Options 2A and 2B maximise the use of existing infrastructure and access to employment opportunities through concentrated growth at Kirkham, Wesham and Warton. In contrast, Options 1 and 3 provide a more balanced distribution of growth, directing substantial development towards Wesham whilst also helping to sustain services, facilities and local communities across a wider range of settlements. Whilst the options achieve these benefits through different spatial approaches, each is expected to support economic activity, housing delivery and the efficient use of existing assets, resulting in broadly comparable positive effects.

	Option 1	Option 2a	Option 2b	Option 3	Option 4a	Option 4b
Significance	Moderate +Ve	Moderate +Ve	Moderate +Ve	Moderate +Ve	Major +Ve	Major +ve
Rank	=3	=5	=5	=3	=1	=1

6.11 Equalities

IA Objective:

- Promote equality and cater for existing and future residents' needs as well as the needs of all groups in the community including those with protected characteristics.

Key considerations

- 6.11.1 Fylde has an ageing population, a comparatively high proportion of residents with disabilities or long-term health conditions, and identified inequalities relating to health, access to services, housing and employment. Future population projections indicate a substantial increase in the number of older people, particularly those aged 80 and over, which is likely to increase demand for accessible housing, healthcare, social care and community support services. There is also evidence of deprivation associated with health, living environment and barriers to housing and services, particularly within parts of Warton, Freckleton and some rural areas.
- 6.11.2 All alternatives would provide additional housing and therefore have potential to contribute positively towards addressing housing needs, including those of older people, disabled residents and other groups with protected characteristics. Differences between the alternatives principally relate to the extent to which growth is directed towards settlements offering access to services, healthcare facilities, employment opportunities, education and public transport. Alternatives that focus growth within larger settlements are likely to provide the greatest opportunity to improve accessibility and reduce inequalities, whilst more dispersed alternatives may support a wider range of communities but can result in poorer access to services for some groups. Conversely, some growth in smaller communities can help to support affordability, rural services and the needs of existing communities (a balance needs to be achieved that does not overwhelm local services and / or place new homes in areas with poor accessibility).
- 6.11.3 All alternatives include development at St Annes (SAS012) and Whyndyke (WHY002, WHY003, WHY011 and WHY016). These locations benefit from relatively good access to services, healthcare facilities, education, public transport and employment opportunities and therefore establish a common baseline level of positive effects across all options.

Option 1: Proposed strategy

- 6.11.4 The proposed strategy directs substantial growth towards Wesham whilst also providing development within Warton, Wrea Green, Singleton, Newton, Weeton, Staining and Freckleton. This would increase housing choice in a range of locations and potentially contribute towards meeting the needs of a range of groups including families, older people and disabled residents. It should also help address affordability issues in some of the smaller, more expensive settlements.

- 6.11.5 Growth within Wesham would provide access to existing services, public transport and community facilities, whilst helping to support one of the borough's more accessible settlements. Development within a broader range of settlements may also help support local services and sustain community facilities in rural areas. However, some of the smaller settlements have more limited access to healthcare, employment opportunities and public transport, which may reduce benefits for residents who are less able to travel independently. Conversely, incremental growth in these smaller settlements will help to support the vitality and efficiency of services.
- 6.11.6 Overall, the option is expected to result in **moderate positive effects** through the provision of additional housing and support for a range of communities, although these benefits may be moderated by the distribution of growth across locations with varying levels of accessibility.

Option 2A: Maximise growth at Kirkham and Wesham, followed by concentrating growth in other higher-order sustainable locations

- 6.11.7 This option focuses growth within Kirkham, Wesham, and Warton. These settlements offer comparatively good access to healthcare services, education facilities, employment opportunities, public transport and other community infrastructure.
- 6.11.8 Concentrating growth in these locations is likely to improve access to services and facilities for older people, disabled residents and other groups who may experience barriers to accessing essential services. The option would also deliver a substantial amount of housing in locations capable of supporting specialist accommodation, affordable housing and wider community infrastructure. However, a significant focus of development in this location could potentially put pressure on services in Kirkham and Wesham (at least in the short term) unless sufficient infrastructure solutions are implemented. For example, GP capacity is a concern in this location (though growth could help to further justify the need for new health facilities in this location).
- 6.11.9 Overall, this option is likely to provide a good opportunity to address inequalities, and meet the needs of protected characteristic groups through improved accessibility and access to services. Conversely, concentration of growth in this area could be at the detriment of smaller settlements that do not see incremental growth (hence widening inequalities of access between those in the more rural communities) As such, **moderate positive effects** are predicted overall.

Option 2B: Maximise growth at Kirkham and Wesham while retaining the most suitable sites across Warton and Wrea Green

- 6.11.10 This option retains a strong focus on Kirkham and Wesham whilst also directing growth towards Warton and Wrea Green. The majority of development would therefore occur in settlements with relatively good access to services and facilities.

6.11.11 The inclusion of growth within Wrea Green provides opportunities to support rural communities and maintain local services. However, accessibility to healthcare, public transport and employment opportunities is generally more limited than within the larger settlements.

6.11.12 Overall, the option is likely to result in **moderate positive effects** by contributing towards meeting housing needs and improving access to services. Whilst accessibility benefits are marginally lower than under Option 2A, the differences are relatively limited. There are also benefits to incremental growth at Warton and Wrea Green that would not be realised under Option 2A, hence the overall picture is similar (but for different reasons).

Option 3: Increased dispersal across a wider range of sustainable settlements

6.11.13 As with Option 1, this option distributes growth across a range of settlements including Wesham, Newton, Singleton, Wrea Green, Weeton, Freckleton and Staining, whilst also directing substantial growth towards Kirkham.

6.11.14 The broader distribution of development could support local services and facilities across a wider range of communities and may assist in addressing some barriers to housing and service provision in smaller settlements. However, whilst substantial growth would occur at Kirkham and Wesham, a proportion of development would also be directed towards settlements with more limited access to healthcare, employment opportunities, public transport and specialist services required by older people and disabled residents.

6.11.15 As a result, the option generates **moderate positive effects**. Large growth at Kirkham and Wesham would support access to services and facilities, whilst the broader distribution of development would help support local services and communities across a wider geographic area. Although accessibility benefits would be less concentrated than under Options 2A and 2B, the option has potential to reduce inequalities across the borough through a combination of development in accessible settlements and incremental growth in smaller communities.

Option 4A: Focus additional growth at Kirkham, Warton and Newton

6.11.16 This option provides a higher level of housing growth than the proposed strategy and therefore offers greater potential to address housing needs (including a greater number of affordable units) across a range of groups, including older people, disabled residents and households in housing need.

6.11.17 Additional growth at Kirkham would be located within one of the borough's most accessible settlements, providing relatively good access to healthcare facilities, education, employment opportunities, public transport and day-to-day services. Growth at Warton would similarly be located close to employment opportunities and established community facilities, whilst Newton benefits from proximity to Kirkham and Wesham and access to the services available within these larger settlements.

6.11.18 The larger overall housing supply may also increase opportunities to provide affordable housing, specialist accommodation and a wider range of housing types capable of meeting the needs of older people, disabled residents and other groups with protected characteristics.

6.11.19 Overall, **major positive effects** are anticipated by contributing towards meeting identified needs across different groups and addressing housing inequalities in a range of settlements.

Option 4B: Higher growth distributed across a wider range of settlements

6.11.20 Like Option 4A, this option also provides a higher level of housing growth and therefore may provide greater opportunities to deliver affordable housing, specialist accommodation and a broader mix of housing to meet differing community needs.

6.11.21 However, compared with Option 4A, a greater proportion of the additional development is directed towards Wrea Green and Singleton, where access to healthcare facilities, employment opportunities, public transport and other services is generally more limited.

6.11.22 Whilst the option may support rural communities and improve housing choice in these locations, it is less likely to maximise accessibility benefits for older people, disabled residents and other groups reliant upon nearby services.

6.11.23 Overall, the option is expected to result in **major positive effects**, although these are moderated by the more dispersed distribution of growth.

Summary of effects

6.11.24 All alternatives are expected to generate positive effects against the equalities objective through the provision of additional housing and opportunities to support existing and future communities. In particular, all options could contribute towards meeting the needs of an ageing population, disabled residents and households experiencing housing need.

6.11.25 Options 4A and 4B perform most favourably overall. Both provide the highest levels of housing growth and therefore offer the greatest opportunity to address housing needs, including affordable housing needs and the provision of accommodation suitable for a wider range of groups within the community. Whilst Option 4A directs a greater proportion of growth towards accessible settlements, both options are expected to result in major positive effects across the borough.

6.11.26 Options 1 and 3 perform well against the equalities objective. Under these options, a substantial proportion of growth is directed towards Kirkham and/or Wesham, whilst the more balanced distribution of development also helps support a wider range of communities across the borough. Whilst some growth would occur in settlements with more limited access to services and facilities, this would be incremental and unlikely to overwhelm services or create significantly greater inequalities. Consequently, both options are considered to provide a good balance between maximising access to services and supporting communities across the borough, and are expected to result in moderate positive effects.

6.11.27 Options 2A and 2B also perform positively, although least favourably overall. Both concentrate substantial growth within Kirkham, Wesham and Warton, where access to healthcare, employment opportunities, public transport and community facilities is relatively good, helping to reduce barriers experienced by some groups. However, both options would see less growth directed towards smaller settlements and rural communities. Whilst this improves accessibility for many residents through concentration in more sustainable locations, it may reduce opportunities to support the vitality of local services, improve housing choice, address affordability pressures and sustain community facilities in other parts of the borough. On balance, this limits the borough-wide positive effects, so that moderate positive effects are predicted overall (and this is marginally less preferable than option 1).

	Option 1	Option 2a	Option 2b	Option 3	Option 4a	Option 4b
Significance	Moderate +ve	Moderate +ve	Moderate +ve	Moderate +ve	Major +ve	Major +ve
Rank	3	6	5	4	1	2

6.12 Transport

IA Objective:

- Reduce the need to travel by private vehicle and promote sustainable modes of transport.

Key considerations

- 6.12.1 Fylde is characterised by relatively high levels of car dependency and existing congestion on key routes, including the A583, A584, A585 and M55. Whilst the borough benefits from rail access at Kirkham and Wesham and along the South Fylde Line, access to sustainable transport options is generally strongest within the larger settlements and more limited within smaller rural settlements. As a result, the extent to which growth is focused within locations that are well connected by rail, bus and active travel infrastructure is likely to be an important factor in determining transport effects.
- 6.12.2 All alternatives have the potential to increase travel demand and place additional pressure on the local transport network through the delivery of new housing, if delivered without suitable mitigation. Existing congestion on parts of the strategic and local road network, means that additional traffic has potential to exacerbate existing transport constraints.
- 6.12.3 All alternatives include growth at St Annes (SAS012) and Whyndyke (WHY002, WHY003, WHY011 and WHY016). These locations benefit from relatively good access to public transport, services, employment opportunities and active travel routes and therefore establish a common baseline level of positive effects across all alternatives.

- 6.12.4 Differences between the options principally relate to the distribution of the remaining growth and the extent to which development is concentrated within Kirkham and Wesham or dispersed across smaller settlements where reliance on private vehicles is generally higher.

Option 1: Proposed strategy

- 6.12.5 The proposed strategy directs a substantial proportion of residual housing growth towards Wesham, which benefits from rail services, bus connections and opportunities for active travel. This provides opportunities for a proportion of journeys to be undertaken using sustainable modes and supports growth within one of the Borough's most accessible settlements.
- 6.12.6 However, the strategy also distributes development across a range of other settlements including Warton, Wrea Green, Singleton, Newton, Weeton, Staining and Freckleton. Whilst these locations provide access to some local services and employment opportunities (particularly in the case of Warton), they are generally more dependent on private vehicle use and have more limited public transport provision. Consequently, the strategy is likely to increase traffic movements across both the strategic and local road network and may reinforce existing patterns of car dependency in some areas.
- 6.12.7 A substantial proportion of growth is directed towards Wesham, which provides relatively good opportunities for travel by rail, bus and active modes. However, the distribution of a significant proportion of development across more car-dependent settlements limits the extent to which the option supports the transport objectives.
- 6.12.8 Overall, the option is expected to generate **neutral effects**.

Option 2A: Maximise growth at Kirkham and Wesham, followed by concentrating growth in other higher-order sustainable locations

- 6.12.9 This option directs the majority of additional growth towards Kirkham, Wesham and Warton. Kirkham and Wesham represent two of the borough's most sustainable locations in transport terms, benefiting from rail connectivity, bus services and opportunities for walking and cycling.
- 6.12.10 By concentrating growth within higher-order settlements and avoiding significant development within smaller rural locations, this option provides an opportunity to support modal shift and reduce reliance on private vehicles relative to the alternatives. However, it is important to note that several sites involved in this option between Kirkham and Newham currently have poor access to local services and would likely result in car-based travel.
- 6.12.11 Though spatial distribution of development is mostly aligned with the borough's most accessible locations, some of the sites involved are not currently accessible by sustainable means. A concentration of growth
- 6.12.12 within Kirkham and Wesham would also still generate additional travel demand and could contribute to congestion pressures on key routes if not accompanied by appropriate transport improvements.

- 6.12.13 Overall, this option is expected to result in **neutral effects**. Whilst it directs growth to some very accessible locations, there is also an element of growth likely to create increased car use and local concentrations of congestion.

Option 2B: Maximise growth at Kirkham and Wesham while retaining the most suitable sites across Warton and Wrea Green

- 6.12.14 This option retains the strong focus on Kirkham and Wesham whilst also directing growth towards Warton and Wrea Green. As a result, much of the development would be located within settlements that are comparatively well served by public transport, active travel infrastructure and local services. Although accessibility within Wrea Green is more limited than at Kirkham and Wesham in broad terms, some of the sites involved at Kirkham are not easily accessible by sustainable modes of transport and could result in car decencies' / usage.
- 6.12.15 Whilst the inclusion of growth at Warton and Wrea Green introduces a greater proportion of development within locations where service provision is generally more limited, the sites involved do have good access to local facilities by sustainable modes of transport. Whilst the option performs relatively well compared with more dispersed alternatives, it would still be expected to increase car-based travel and place additional pressure on the local highway network, including existing congestion hotspots and key strategic routes.
- 6.12.16 The option performs similarly to Option 2A. Though there is a greater proportion of growth in locations where reliance on private vehicles is likely to remain higher, local access to facilities (by walking and cycling) is better than some of the more peripheral sites at Kirkham / Newton. Therefore, the options rank similarly.
- 6.12.17 Overall, the option combines positive effects associated with concentration in sustainable locations with negative effects associated with increased travel demand and growth in more car-dependent settlements. Therefore, **neutral effects** are concluded.

Option 3: Increased dispersal across a wider range of sustainable settlements

- 6.12.18 Option 3 distributes housing growth across a range of settlements including Newton, Singleton, Wrea Green, Weeton, Freckleton and Staining. However, it also directs substantial growth towards Kirkham and Wesham, two of the borough's most accessible settlements in transport terms.
- 6.12.19 Whilst substantial growth is directed towards Kirkham and Wesham, the option also includes development across a wider range of smaller settlements. Many of these locations have relatively limited public transport provision, restricted opportunities for active travel and no direct rail access. Consequently, a greater proportion of journeys are likely to continue to rely on private vehicles, and opportunities to support efficient public transport provision may be reduced when compared with the more concentrated alternatives.

6.12.20 Although the overall quantum of growth is broadly comparable to Options 1, 2A and 2B, the more dispersed spatial pattern is likely to result in a less sustainable pattern of travel and a greater reliance on private vehicle journeys.

6.12.21 Overall, the option is likely to result in **minor negative effects**.

Option 4A: Focus additional growth at Kirkham, Warton and Newton

6.12.22 This option tests a higher overall level of housing growth and would therefore generate additional travel demand beyond that associated with Option 1. The concentration of additional development at Kirkham performs relatively well from a sustainable transport perspective due to its rail accessibility and connections to services and employment opportunities. However, it is also important to note that some peripheral sites perform poorly with regards to access to local facilities by sustainable means.

6.12.23 Substantial additional growth is also directed towards Warton and Newton, where opportunities to travel by sustainable modes are generally more limited compared to the higher order settlements in the borough. Furthermore, the significantly higher level of growth would place additional pressure on both the highway network and existing public transport infrastructure and could exacerbate existing congestion constraints on key routes if mitigation is not delivered. Having said this, a proportionate level of growth in these locations could promote sustainable access to local facilities, and in the case of Warton, a major source of employment.

6.12.24 Overall, whilst the concentration of growth within a limited number of settlements provides some transport benefits, these are offset by the scale of growth proposed and associated increase in travel demand, which could place additional pressure on existing transport constraints. The option is therefore predicted to result in **neutral effects** overall.

Option 4B: Higher growth distributed across a wider range of settlements

6.12.25 This option combines a higher overall level of housing growth with a more dispersed pattern of development focused on Kirkham, Newton, Wrea Green and Singleton.

6.12.26 Whilst some Kirkham sites provide opportunities for sustainable travel, some of the sites at the periphery are not currently well serviced and could encourage car-based trips, even for local services. Furthermore, a significant proportion of the additional growth would be accommodated within settlements which are less well served by public transport and where car dependency is likely to remain comparatively high. The combination of increased housing provision and a broader spatial distribution is likely to result in increased traffic generation and pressure on both local and strategic transport networks, including existing congestion hotspots.

6.12.27 Overall, this option is expected to perform least favourably against the transport objective due to the combined effects of higher growth, increased dispersal and a greater reliance on private vehicle travel. The option is therefore predicted to result in **minor negative effects**.

Summary of effects

- 6.12.28 The alternatives that focus additional growth within Kirkham and Wesham perform favourably against the transport objective in one respect due to the greater availability of rail services, public transport connections and opportunities for active travel. However, some of the sites involved at the periphery of Kirkham are not well serviced and could lead to car dependency, even for local service access.
- 6.12.29 Option 2A performs maximises growth within the borough's most accessible settlements whilst minimising development within smaller rural locations (with the caveat above that some sites are not accessible). Option 2B also performs positively, although the inclusion of growth within Wrea Green reduces means that sites with poorer access under Option 2A can be avoided. Overall, the options are marginal and are therefore ranked on par.
- 6.12.30 Option 1 is expected to result in positive effects due to the substantial proportion of growth directed towards Wesham, although these benefits are moderated by the distribution of development across more car-dependent settlements. Nonetheless, the sites involved in the smaller settlements do have good access to local services (albeit a more limited range).
- 6.12.31 Option 3 is the most dispersed option, which performs poorest given that it directs growth away from some of the most well-connected locations and is likely to drive greater car dependency (especially for higher order services and jobs access). Having said this, the sites involved would have good access to local services (albeit a more limited range) through sustainable means.
- 6.12.32 For the higher growth option 4a, though the level of development would generate additional travel demand and place greater pressure on the transport network, a significant proportion of growth is concentrated within Kirkham, one of the borough's most sustainable locations in terms of access to jobs and services. As discussed above though, several sites involved here could increase car dependency, though the collective scale of growth here might support delivery of some local services. This option also. The benefits associated with growth in accessible locations broadly offset the increase in travel demand and neutral effects are anticipated overall.
- 6.12.33 Option 4B performs least favourably as it combines a higher level of growth with the most dispersed pattern of development, resulting in a likely greater reliance on private vehicle travel and the weakest alignment with the transport objectives.

	Option 1	Option 2a	Option 2b	Option 3	Option 4a	Option 4b
Transport	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral	Minor -ve	Neutral	Minor -ve
Rank	1	2=	2=	5	4	6

6.13 Summary of appraisal findings

- 6.13.1 The appraisal indicates that alternatives which concentrate a greater proportion of growth within Kirkham and Wesham are generally expected to perform more favourably across a range of environmental, social and economic objectives. This reflects the role of these settlements as some of the borough's principal service centres, their accessibility to employment opportunities, services, community facilities and public transport, and their ability to support more efficient infrastructure provision. However, the advantages of concentration are not sufficiently pronounced to preclude a degree of growth elsewhere. More balanced strategies can help support the vitality and viability of other settlements, meet local housing needs, increase housing choice across the borough and provide a broader distribution of investment and infrastructure benefits.
- 6.13.2 Consequently, Option 1 performs marginally better than Options 2A and 2B against a small number of social and economic objectives. In contrast, Option 3 distributes a greater proportion of development across smaller settlements which generally have lower levels of accessibility. Whilst this may support a wider range of communities, it also reduces some of the sustainability benefits associated with concentrating growth within the borough's most accessible locations. In some settlements, the scale of development proposed could also result in more noticeable changes to settlement character and the relationship between villages and the surrounding countryside.

Table 6.1 Significance and rank of effects

	Option 1	Option 2a	Option 2b	Option 3	Option 4a	Option 4b
Biodiversity	Minor -ve	Minor -ve	Minor -ve	Minor -ve	Moderate -ve	Moderate -ve
Rank	=2	=1	=1	=2	4	3
Water Soil and land	Minor -ve	Minor -ve	Minor -ve	Minor -ve	Moderate -ve	Moderate -ve
Rank	3	1	2	4	5	6
Historic Environment	Moderate -ve	Minor -ve	Minor -ve	Minor -ve	Moderate -ve	Moderate -ve
Rank	=4	1	3	2	6	=4
Landscape	Moderate -ve	Moderate -ve	Moderate -ve	Major-ve	Major-ve	Major-ve
Rank	=1	=1	3	4	=5	=5
Air quality and noise	Minor -ve	Minor -ve	Minor -ve	Minor -ve	Minor -ve	Minor -ve
Rank	=3	=1	=1	=3	=5	=5
Climate change	Minor -ve	Neutral?	Neutral?	Moderate -ve	Moderate -ve	Moderate -ve
Rank	3	=1	=1	4	=5	=5
Healthy communities	Moderate +ve	Moderate +ve	Moderate +ve	Minor +ve	Moderate +ve	Moderate +ve
Rank	5	3	4	6	=1	=1
Material assets	Moderate +Ve	Moderate +Ve	Moderate +Ve	Moderate +Ve	Major +Ve	Major +ve
Rank	=3	=5	=5	=3	=1	=1
Equalities	Moderate +ve	Moderate +ve	Moderate +ve	Moderate +ve	Major +ve	Major +ve
Rank	3	6	5	4	1	2
Transport	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral	Minor -ve	Neutral	Minor -ve
Rank	1	2=	2=	5	4	6

6.14 Reasons for selecting the preferred strategy

- 6.14.1 The following section summarises the Council's reasons for selecting the preferred spatial strategy and discounting the principal alternatives.
- 6.14.2 The growth strategy for the Fylde Local Plan to 2042 has been developed with significant regard to the successful development strategy of the previous Local Plan. The adopted Fylde Local Plan to 2032 (incorporating Partial Review) focuses 90% of development in four strategic locations, these being Lytham and St Annes; Warton; Fylde-Blackpool Periphery; and Kirkham and Wesham. These were the four most sustainable locations for large amounts of development which were not affected by significant constraints.
- 6.14.3 The Fylde Local Plan to 2042 will necessarily take forward remaining existing commitments from the existing plan. These amount to 3,116 dwellings in total, including windfall sites with permission. Existing committed sites allocated in the 2032 plan (in the 2032 strategic locations) will provide 921 dwellings in St Annes, 2,147 dwellings in Whitehills and Whyndyke, 204 dwellings in Warton and 117 dwellings in Kirkham and Wesham. The committed dwellings therefore represent a significant element of the housing requirement of the new plan and the locations of these need to be recognised in any strategy.
- 6.14.4 The Council's approach in seeking to take forward a similar strategy with minor edits to the descriptions reflects the success of the existing strategy in bringing forward delivery. Each of the 2032 strategic locations has delivered large numbers of dwellings: at no location has delivery stalled due to market saturation, as has been the case in other boroughs with a strong focus on a single location. Therefore, the proposed strategy involving the four locations of St Annes (including Squires Gate), Whitehills and Whyndyke, Warton and Kirkham and Wesham will be most effective in ensuring sufficient delivery of housing to meet needs.
- 6.14.5 The balance of development proposed in the allocated sites reflects to some extent remaining site availability. Only a single developable site remains in St Annes and similarly only a small number of sites within the Borough boundary are available at Whitehills. Therefore, the focus of the Council's preferred strategy for the remaining sites has been a division between Warton and Kirkham and Wesham. No preference or target is given for these two strategic locations; whilst treated equally by the strategy, benchmark figures have been avoided – instead, the most sustainable sites in the Council's view have been chosen, based particularly on walkable access to local services. However, the Council has avoided concentrating development at one location rather than the other, in order to achieve a broadly balanced strategy. This approach aligns broadly with Option 1.
- 6.14.6 The Council also considered whether a greater proportion of the residual growth should be directed towards Kirkham and Wesham, as explored through Options 2A and 2B.

- 6.14.7 Whilst these two alternatives perform well against some sustainability objectives, the assessment identifies a mix of positive and negative effects across the objectives, and the Council considers that directing a substantially greater proportion of growth to Kirkham and Wesham would result in a less balanced distribution of development and would place greater reliance on one strategic location. It could also lead to partial coalescence between the settlements of Kirkham and Newton on sites that result in car dependencies. The preferred approach therefore retains Kirkham and Wesham as a focus for growth (at the most sustainable locations), whilst distributing the remaining development across other sustainable locations. The appraisal at this stage found that these two options perform marginally better than Option 1 for some factors, but marginally worse for others. The biggest difference between these options and Option 1 is that they perform better in terms of the Historic Environment topic. However, the Council considered that these effects were capable of mitigation through the policy framework, and did not present a sufficiently compelling reason to favour Options 2A or 2B over the preferred strategy
- 6.14.8 Sites outside the strategic locations have also been included, to make up around 10% of the overall plan total, but the choice of sites has again been based on those with walkable access albeit to a more limited range of services, in order to ensure support for the existing local services in those communities is maintained. The IA assessment identified that greater dispersal of growth would generally perform less well in sustainability terms, particularly where development would be directed towards locations with more limited access to services, facilities and sustainable transport opportunities. Whilst these sites represent a higher proportion of the element of the plan subject to a degree of choice, due to the existence of the committed sites and the sites at St Annes and Whitehills, in the context of the overall plan this represents a reasonable and achievable balance, between the four strategic locations and those non-strategic locations which the Council regards as sufficiently sustainable to support smaller quantities of development whilst providing effectively for the needs of their new residents.
- 6.14.9 The Council also considered alternatives involving higher levels of housing growth. The higher growth options would provide additional housing, but the Council does not consider that this additional provision is currently required or fully evidenced. Option 1 meets the identified housing need, including a small buffer, and this is considered to be sufficient to ensure a positively prepared, sound Plan. The IA also identified a range of additional adverse effects associated with higher levels of growth, including greater pressure on infrastructure and services and increased environmental and transport impacts. The Council has therefore selected an approach that provides for the identified housing requirement whilst avoiding the additional impacts associated with higher levels of growth.

Part 2: What are the IA findings at this Stage?

7. Introduction (to Part 2)

- 7.1.1 This part of the IA Report presents the findings of the appraisal of the Pre-Submission Local Plan. The appraisal considers the likely effects of the Plan against the IA Framework, concluding on the significance of predicted effects when considering the Plan 'as a whole'.
- 7.1.2 This part of the report also draws together the mitigation and enhancement measures identified through the IA process and outlines the next steps in both the plan-making and IA processes, including potential measures for the monitoring of the significant effects.

8. Appraisal of the Pre-Submission Local Plan

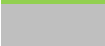
8.1 Introduction

- 8.1.1 This section presents an appraisal of the Pre-Submission Local Plan considered ‘as a whole’ (i.e. the proposed strategy including site allocations and all the supporting policies that will shape future development).

8.2 Approach and methodology

- 8.2.1 For each IA topic, the appraisal first considers the likely effects associated with the scale and spatial distribution of growth proposed through the Plan, including the cumulative effects arising from proposed site allocations. The appraisal then considers all the supporting policies before reaching an overall conclusion on the likely effects for each IA topic.
- 8.2.2 The appraisal has been undertaken on a whole-plan basis. Whilst all policies have been considered, the findings are presented by IA topic rather than as individual policy appraisals. This reflects the fact that policies should be read and implemented as part of the wider Plan rather than in isolation. The appraisal therefore considers the interactions between policies, including cumulative and synergistic effects, as well as the extent to which policies may mitigate or enhance the effects of other policies and proposals within the Plan. References to individual policies are included where these are particularly important in influencing the appraisal findings. This is a proportionate and appropriate approach to appraisal.
- 8.2.3 In determining the significance of effects, professional judgement has been applied having regard to the characteristics of effects identified in Schedule 2 of the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004 and relevant IA guidance. Consideration has been given, where relevant, to the magnitude, duration, frequency, likelihood, permanence and timescale of effects, together with the potential for cumulative and synergistic effects arising from the interaction of policies and proposals within the Plan. The appraisal also considers the relationship between the Local Plan and other relevant plans, programmes and strategies that may influence baseline conditions or the significance of effects.
- 8.2.4 The appraisal has been informed by a range of qualitative and spatial evidence sources, including:
- baseline information, trends and key sustainability issues identified through the IA Scoping Report;
 - Geographic Information Systems (GIS) analysis to identify spatial features, environmentally sensitive areas and relationships between development locations and likely effects;
 - supporting technical evidence prepared to inform the Local Plan;
 - professional observations; and
 - consultation responses received throughout the plan-making and appraisal process, where relevant.

- 8.2.5 The characteristics of effects are discussed proportionately within the appraisal and only where they are relevant to conclude on the significance of effects. As discussed above, it is not considered to be appropriate to conclude on the significance of effects for individual elements of the Plan (i.e. for individual policies). It can therefore be assumed that where effects have not been discussed within the appraisal text for certain policies, that these were not important factors in determining overall significance. Likewise, it is not proportionate or necessary to go through a 'tick box' exercise for every effect characteristic to conclude on significance.
- 8.2.6 Taking account of the above considerations, a conclusion is reached on the likely significance of effects for each IA topic. Effects are recorded using the scale below, ranging from neutral to major positive or major negative.

Major positive		Major negative	
Moderate positive		Moderate negative	
Minor positive		Minor negative	
Neutral		Uncertainty	?

- 8.2.7 The full list of Plan policies is set out in **Table 8.1** below for reference.

Table 8.1: The Pre-Submission Local Plan policies

Policy reference and title

The Development Strategy	
SET1	The Settlement Hierarchy
DST1	The Development Strategy
DST2	Settlement Boundaries
DST3	Green Belt
DST4	Areas of Separation
DST5	The Countryside
Locations for Development	
SLD1	St Annes (including Squires Gate) Strategic Location for Development
SLD2	Whitehills and Whyndyke Strategic Location for Development
SLD3	Warton Strategic Location for Development
SLD4	Kirkham and Wesham Strategic Location for Development
SLD5	Non-Strategic Locations for Development
Housing Policies	
HOU1	Housing Requirement and Supply
HOU2	Density and Mix of Housing
HOU3	Affordable Housing
HOU4	Housing for Older People
HOU5	Housing for Looked-After Children

Policy reference and title

HOU6 Housing for Adults Requiring Care, Support or Management

HOU7 Weeton Barracks Service Accommodation

HOU8 Gypsy and Traveller and Travelling Showpeople's sites

HOU9 HM Prison Kirkham

HOU10 Custom and Self-Build Homes

HOU11 Rural Workers' Homes

HOU12 Replacement of, and Extensions to, Existing Homes in the Countryside

HOU13 Conversions and Change of Use to Residential

HOU14 Houses in Multiple Occupation

Economic Development Policies

ECD1 BAE Systems, Warton

ECD2 Westinghouse Springfields

ECD3 Blackpool Airport and Enterprise Zone

ECD4 New Employment Land Provision

ECD5 Protection of Existing Employment Areas

ECD6 Employment Opportunities and Commercial / Employment Premises

ECD7 Town, District, Local and Neighbourhood Centres

ECD8 Leisure, Culture and Tourism Development

ECD9 Tourism Accommodation

ECD10 Demonstrating Viability

Protecting Environments and Assets Policies

ENT1 Historic Environment

ENT2 Local Green Space

ENT3 Protecting Existing Open Space and Sports Facilities

ENT4 Provision of New or Enhanced Open Space and Sports Facilities

ENT5 Loss of Community, Leisure and Cultural Facilities and Services

ENT6 Protected Coastal and Wetland Assets

ENT7 Coastal Change Management Areas

ENT8 Landscape

ENT9 Natural Assets on Development Sites

Infrastructure and Transport Policies

IFR1 Service Accessibility and Infrastructure

IFR2 Developer Contributions

IFR3 Protection of Strategic National Infrastructure

IFR4 Transport Infrastructure Projects

Policy reference and title

IFR5 Enhancing Sustainable Transport Choice

IFR6 Parking Provision

Design and Amenity Policies

DSA1 Achieving Good Design in Development

Climate Change, Renewable Energy and Flood Risk Policies

CCH1 Flood Alleviation, Water Quality and Water Efficiency

CCH2 Surface Water Run-Off and Sustainable Drainage

CCH3 Renewable and Low Carbon Energy Generation - excluding onshore wind turbines

8.3 Biodiversity

IA Objective:

- Protect, restore and enhance habitats and species, including designated sites, locally important features and links between habitats.

Growth strategy and allocations

- 8.3.1 The appraisal of the emerging spatial strategy in the preceding section identified potential for minor negative effects reflecting the potential impact of growth around Singleton on the Wyre Estuary designations, alongside the potential for habitat loss and fragmentation elsewhere and cumulative pressures on habitat sites. This section takes the assessment forward by considering the extent to which the wider Local Plan policy framework may influence this prediction, including consideration of the spatial strategy, allocations and relevant supporting policies.
- 8.3.2 The spatial strategy includes development across a range of settlements; however, Singleton is considered more constrained when it comes to potential adverse impacts on designated sites. Specifically, HA22 (Land west of Poolfoot Farm) lies approximately 90m from the Morecambe Bay and Duddon Estuary SPA, Morecambe Bay Ramsar site and Wyre Estuary SSSI, whilst HA23 (South of Garstang Road) and HA24 (Lodge Lane) lie approximately 270m and 314m respectively from these designated sites.
- 8.3.3 Development of HA22, HA23 and HA24 would result in the loss of areas of open agricultural land close to the estuary and could affect habitat connectivity and the wider ecological value of the area. The proximity of residential development to the estuary could also increase recreational activity and associated disturbance. However, the HRA findings have identified that the mitigation provided through the Local Plan policy framework should avoid adverse effects on the integrity of identified habitats through recreational pressure or through the loss or disturbance of functionally linked habitat, singularly or in combination with other plans and projects.

- 8.3.4 On a positive note, as these sites are located adjacent to one another there is potential for BNG, habitat creation and green infrastructure to be planned and delivered in a coordinated manner across the area. The site-specific policy requirements for the Singleton sites (Policy SLD5) support this by requiring the retention of existing hedges and trees, with HA23 and HA24 also requiring landscaping and tree planting that ties into existing woodland on and adjacent to the sites. This could provide opportunities to create more continuous areas of habitat, strengthen ecological corridors (particularly between existing biodiversity important habitats nearby), and improve connections with the wider ecological network.
- 8.3.5 At Wesham and Wrea Green, growth also provides opportunities to support habitat network enhancement opportunities around the settlement edges. This is reiterated in SLD4, particularly in relation to HA10 (East of Fleetwood Road), which requires development to deliver multiple public open spaces throughout the site which will be influenced by objectives relating to nature, wildlife and water management: areas of wetland within and at the edge of the site will be retained and developed for biodiversity benefit
- 8.3.6 Potential adverse effects are also identified elsewhere. At Warton, HA7 (Land north of Ennerdale Avenue) and HA3 (258 Lytham Road) lie approximately 737m and 923m respectively from the Ribble and Alt Estuaries SPA / Ramsar site and Ribble Estuary SSSI. In terms of direct habitat effects, approximately 23% of HA6 (Hill House, Hillock Lane) overlaps traditional orchard priority habitat. At Staining, HA15 (Land to the rear of Showmans Park Campsite, Chain Lane) lies approximately 676m from Marton Mere SSSI and 788m from Marton Mere LNR.
- 8.3.7 Several site-specific requirements provide opportunities to reduce effects on existing habitats. At Warton, the allocated sites forming the northern extension to the settlement (HA4, HA5, HA6 and HA9) and HA7 are required (through Policy SLD3) to maximise the retention of existing vegetation, including prominent boundary hedges and trees. HA9 also requires public open space to be influenced by nature, wildlife and water management objectives.
- 8.3.8 At Staining, HA15 similarly requires the retention of existing hedges and trees, with landscaping reflecting these existing features, while its proposed public open space is also required to respond to nature, wildlife and water management objectives (Policy SLD5). These measures should help reduce habitat loss and fragmentation, whilst supporting opportunities for habitat creation and enhancement and ecological connectivity through new open space, green infrastructure and BNG.
- 8.3.9 More broadly, Policy ENT6 (Protected Coastal and Wetland Assets) recognises the nationally designated sites present across the borough and that they are afforded the highest degree of protection. The policy also notes that locally designated sites will be conserved in accordance with the value of their contribution to biodiversity.

Other policies

- 8.3.10 The wider Plan policies provide a comprehensive framework for protecting existing biodiversity features and supporting habitat enhancement. Policy ENT9 is particularly important in this respect, requiring development to retain and protect trees and woodlands, provide appropriate buffers to woodland, retain hedges and ponds where practicable, and avoid engineering interventions to watercourses unless these would benefit flood risk, biodiversity and amenity. Policy ENT8 complements this by requiring existing landscape features, including trees, woodlands, hedgerows and field ponds, to be conserved, maintained and protected wherever possible, alongside native planting and replacement where loss is unavoidable. Policy ENT7 provides further opportunities for biodiversity enhancement within the Coastal Change Management Areas, requiring development to promote the conservation, restoration and enhancement of the coastline and seeking developer contributions towards the conservation, management and enhancement of important wildlife habitats and the creation of new habitats, including new Local Nature Reserves. Collectively, these policies should help to minimise habitat loss and fragmentation, retain features that contribute to ecological connectivity, and provide opportunities for habitat creation and enhancement.
- 8.3.11 Other policies are also likely to have a positive effect on biodiversity. This includes through protecting existing and providing new open spaces and public rights of way through policies ENT3 and ENT4, as multifunctional spaces such as allotments, churchyards / cemeteries and parks and gardens are likely to contribute towards the biodiversity network and connectivity across Fylde.
- 8.3.12 In addition, Policy CCH1 focuses on protecting watercourses and water quality and maximising the potential of green infrastructure. The incorporation of ponds or open features and sustainable drainage systems to manage excess water through Policy CCH2 is also likely to deliver features which contribute to biodiversity connectivity and habitats. Moreover, Policy IFR2 provides implementation mechanisms for nature recovery, such as green infrastructure network improvements and biodiversity enhancement.
- 8.3.13 Finally, Policy DSA1 requires development to protect existing landscape features and natural assets, protect and enhance habitats, integrate multifunctional green infrastructure and provide open spaces and links to wider ecological networks.
- 8.3.14 It is important to note that the HRA findings conclude that no adverse effects on the integrity of relevant habitat sites are anticipated in relation to water quality, or water quantity, level and flow, due to the provision of the wider Fylde Local Plan policies.

Overall effects

- 8.3.15 Overall, the plan is considered likely to lead to **minor positive effects**. Whilst it is recognised that there is potential for adverse impacts by delivering growth in proximity to designated sites for biodiversity, it is considered that the provisions made through the policy framework are likely to ensure that these are appropriately mitigated. In addition, BNG requirements are likely to ensure that development contributes to biodiversity improvements, including positively contributing to the local ecological network. Several plan policies support the achievement of enhancement, giving some confidence that effects will likely be positive in the longer term. However, it is noted that the plan is relatively silent on broader strategic issues such as nature recovery, green infrastructure and wildlife corridors. Improvements could be made by making explicit links to the Lancashire Local Nature Recovery Strategy and providing a more proactive approach to strategic nature recovery opportunities (including comprehensive approaches to masterplanning across site allocations that are located in close proximity (and could therefore provide strategic opportunities for enhancement)).

8.4 Water, soil and land resources

IA Objectives:

- Seek to deliver neutral, or where possible positive, impacts on water quality, associated biodiversity, and on the physical state of water bodies.
- Promote the efficient use of land.
- Promote sustainable waste and mineral resource management.

Growth strategy and allocations

- 8.4.1 The appraisal of the emerging spatial strategy in the preceding section identified potential for minor negative effects. This section takes the assessment forward by considering the extent to which the wider Local Plan policy framework may influence this prediction, including consideration of the spatial strategy, allocations and relevant supporting policies.
- 8.4.2 The spatial strategy distributes growth across a broad range of settlements, with a focus on the most sustainable locations. . As a result, additional pressures on water resources, wastewater infrastructure and waste-management capacity would be spread across a relatively wide geographic area. However, Policies IFR1 and IFR2 provide mechanisms to ensure that necessary infrastructure is delivered alongside development, including coordinated drainage infrastructure and, where appropriate, developer contributions towards utilities and waste provision. Therefore, no negative effects would be anticipated.

- 8.4.3 In relation to the above, Policy CCH1 (Flood Alleviation, Water Quality and Water Efficiency) seeks to improve water efficiency standards by minimising the use of potable mains water in new development and incorporating measures to recycle and conserve water resources. The policy also requires watercourses to be protected from encroachment and adverse effects, water quality to be maintained and improved, and development to avoid adverse effects on surface and groundwater resources. Likewise, CCH2 seeks to protect water quality and quantity from potential pollution events linked to excess surface water runoff, achieved through measures such as rainwater storage and increased infiltration. As such, both policies work well to ensure water quality protection and improvement and help reduce potable water demand associated with development at the site allocations. This will help to ensure that water quality does not deteriorate over the plan period, and that water infrastructure can be planned for in a coordinated way.
- 8.4.4 Whilst a large proportion of the spatial strategy involves committed sites and non-agricultural land. The spatial strategy also includes a number of allocations located wholly or partly on Best and Most Versatile (BMV) agricultural land. Whilst the plan seeks to avoid the loss of BMV (in line with national policy, e.g., Policy N1 and Policy N2 of the NPPF), once allocation decisions have been made, it is difficult to avoid the negative effects associated with such losses, and so negative effects will remain in this respect.
- 8.4.5 The broad distribution of growth means that losses of agricultural land would occur across a larger number of settlements. However, it is recognised that this is partially offset by the inclusion of previously developed land and a number of allocations located on Grade 3b agricultural land. Furthermore, a number of the allocations are located on urban land or predominantly lower-quality agricultural land. The spatial strategy performs well in this respect, prioritising the reuse and regeneration of previously developed land, thereby minimising further adverse impacts on soil resources.
- 8.4.6 As noted in Chapter 6, Fylde benefits from an established kerbside waste collection service and household waste recycling facilities. The spatial strategy would increase the amount of waste generated and place additional demand on collection services. However, the existing waste management network is expected to be capable of accommodating the level of growth envisaged, with any additional pressures likely to be addressed through ongoing service planning and operational investment (such as through Policy IFR2, which seeks to secure developer contributions where waste provision does not fall within the utility providers legislative obligations).

Other policies

- 8.4.7 Policies CCH1 and CCH2 provide the principal policy framework for managing effects on water resources arising from development. Policy CCH1 requires development to minimise potable water use, conserve and recycle water resources, protect watercourses and maintain and improve water quality, including surface and groundwater resources. Policy CCH2 requires sustainable surface-water management through SuDS and the attenuation of runoff, including opportunities for rainwater storage, infiltration and attenuation through ponds and other open features.

- 8.4.8 Policy ENT9 requires the retention of natural features such as ponds, watercourses, and hedgerows. This will help to safeguard water and soil quality by safeguarding soils adjacent to and under these features and provides natural drainage opportunities that can also contribute to water quality. This is reiterated through policies IFR2, ENT3 and ENT4 which seek to protect and enhance the functionality of green infrastructure and open spaces that contribute to the green network.
- 8.4.9 Resource efficiency is embedded into policies HOU2 and DSA1 which seek to ensure the efficient use of land by increasing densities on sites, as well as the efficient use of water through incorporating rainwater harvesting and grey water reuse in development design. This could help reduce land take from other locations within Fylde, protect higher quality agricultural land, and safeguard water sources.
- 8.4.10 Finally, it is noted that Policy CCH3 (Renewable and Low Carbon Energy Generation) seeks to ensure that renewable and low energy generation development is not located on higher quality land resources unless it is the most sustainable and appropriate place.

Overall effects

- 8.4.11 Overall, the plan is considered likely to lead to neutral to minor negative effects with regards to the water, soil and land topic. However, it is useful to note that the Plan performs variably against the different aspects of this appraisal topic.
- 8.4.12 From a soil and land perspective, the spatial strategy will lead to the loss of greenfield / BMV agricultural land and cumulatively this is a **minor to moderate negative** effect that is hard to mitigate.
- 8.4.13 Whilst the strategy will put additional pressure on water resources and waste infrastructure, there are a range of plan policies in place that will help to mitigate negative effects and promote positive enhancements. In this respect, **neutral to minor positive effects** are anticipated.
- 8.4.14 It is also acknowledged that growth is likely to come forward with or without the plan. In the absence of the plan development would likely be less sustainably located, and mitigation measures less widespread. In addition, the policy framework seeks to minimise adverse impacts on soil and water resources where possible.

8.5 Historic environment

IA Objective:

- Preserve and enhance Fylde's historic environment, including designated and non-designated heritage assets and their setting.

Growth strategy and allocations

- 8.5.1 The appraisal of the emerging spatial strategy in the preceding section identified potential for moderate adverse effects associated with potential effects on the setting of Wrea Green Conservation Area. This section takes the assessment forward by considering the extent to which the wider Local Plan policy framework may influence this prediction, including consideration of the spatial strategy, allocations and relevant supporting policies.
- 8.5.2 There are effects associated with carrying forward the existing plan allocations and continuing to focus growth in sustainable locations on the historic environment including effects on heritage assets and historic character. However, these effects are 'baked in' and were considered through the SA for the adopted local plan. It is presumed that these effects form part of the future baseline, and so the focus here is on the implications of residual growth.
- 8.5.3 The spatial strategy distributes growth across a range of settlements, with a focus on the most sustainable locations. Consequently, there is potential for adverse impacts on the setting of heritage assets across a relatively broad area. However, much of this growth is directed towards sites which are not associated with significant heritage constraints, including the allocations at St Annes and Whyndyke / Whitehills and Wesham, Staining and Freckleton. Where locally important heritage features exist, these will be considered and addressed through local plan policies such as ENT1.
- 8.5.4 At Wesham, there is a Grade II listed building to the north of HA10 (East of Fleetwood Road, Wesham), but this is relatively well screened and unlikely to be significantly affected by housing growth. Policy SLD4 requires soft landscaping, tree planting and landscaped buffers to be maximised at HA10 and requires existing vegetation and ponds to be retained, helping to maintain screening and reduce potential effects on the wider setting of the listed building.
- 8.5.5 There is also a Grade II listed building, 'Brad Kirk Hall Farmhouse', in proximity to HA13 (Land at Weeton Road, Wesham). Whilst development would reduce the open countryside in the surrounding area, there remains open greenspace that will act as a buffer to the setting of the farmhouse. This is solidified by Policy SLD4, which sets out requirements for development to incorporate soft landscaping, tree planting and landscape buffers, provide multiple areas of public open space, step building heights down towards the periphery and maximise the retention of existing vegetation and ponds.

- 8.5.6 A notable consideration is the inclusion of HA18 (Land off Moss Side Lane) and HA17 (Land west of Bryning Lane) at Wrea Green, both of which are located adjacent to Wrea Green Conservation Area. Development in these locations has the potential to affect the setting of the conservation area and the historic character of Wrea Green, especially through the loss of rural views to and from the conservation area on its southern boundary. Addressing this in broad terms, Policy ENT1 (Historic Environment) stresses that proposals within or affecting the setting of any conservation areas should conserve or enhance those elements that make a positive contribution to their special character and appearance and setting. In addition, Policy ENT2 (Local Green Space) recognises that The Green at Wrea Green is the heritage focus for the conservation area as part of its designated as a Local Green Space, which will be protected from inappropriate development.
- 8.5.7 Site-specific requirements within Policy SLD5 also provide opportunities to reduce effects. For example, this policy stipulates that development of site HA17 is required to incorporate positive elements of local identity into its design, layout and scale and to reflect established development density and separation distances, while boundary treatment and planting must contribute to local distinctiveness. Furthermore, at HA18, development is required to retain the existing hedge along Moss Side Lane as far as possible, be set back behind it and use materials, roofscape details and planting that contribute to local distinctiveness. Measures such as these should help development respond more sensitively to the established historic and rural character of Wrea Green. Together, these measures are likely to reduce the potential for significant negative effects, whilst seeking to maximise positive effects and to address any features that currently contribute negatively to existing settlement character.
- 8.5.8 The spatial strategy also includes HA16 (East of Church Road and South of Kirkham Road) at Weeton, which is in proximity to Grade II listed Knowsley Farmhouse. However, existing residential development is located between the site and the listed building, reducing the likelihood of negative effects on its setting. In addition, Policy ENT1 seeks to conserve or enhance Fylde's listed buildings and their settings. The policy does not permit development proposals which would result in any harm to, or loss of the significance of, a listed building, and/or its setting. Further consolidating this position, Policy SLD5 provides site-specific mitigation at HA16 through the retention of existing hedges and trees, enhancement of the tree belt along the southern boundary where appropriate, and the creation of new 'visual gateways' to provide a transition between the built-up area and the countryside. Taken together, negative effects are therefore considered to be unlikely.

- 8.5.9 At Newton, HA21 includes the Grade II listed Newton Hall, associated farm buildings and surrounding open land. Development therefore has the potential to alter the existing setting of the listed building through the introduction of new built form, including changes to its open character and the prominence of the Hall within its surroundings. However, Policy SLD5 responds directly to this sensitivity by requiring the brick agricultural buildings surrounding the listed hall to be retained and converted where they are included within a development proposal. Built development in the vicinity of Newton Hall must also enhance its setting, be limited in scale and remain subservient to the listed building, while boundary vegetation is required to be retained except where access is necessary. These requirements should help to maintain the prominence and significance of Newton Hall within the development and provide opportunities to enhance its setting, thereby reducing potential adverse effects.
- 8.5.10 The spatial strategy also includes development at Singleton; however, the proposed sites are not associated with the more significant heritage constraints and there will be a need to adhere to policies in the plan that address historic environmental features.

Other policies

- 8.5.11 In addition to the moderation of effects related to allocated sites / spatial strategy, Policy ENT1 will also help to manage impacts associated with other development across the borough. The policy seeks to protect, conserve and enhance the character, appearance, significance and historic value of designated and non-designated heritage assets across Fylde. The inclusion of non-designated assets is likely to contribute positively towards the historic environment due to the importance of such assets to the historic character and quality of the area, and their vulnerability to gradual erosion or loss. Policy ENT1 also requires public realm improvements to reflect the special quality of the historic environment and contribute to the character, quality and distinctiveness of heritage assets. This is supported by Policy IFR2, which supports developer contributions towards public realm improvements, including landscaping, street furniture and materials, providing a mechanism to help deliver such enhancements through new development.
- 8.5.12 Additionally, Policy ENT1 also has a focus on archaeology – ensuring that investigations are undertaken, remains are preserved where appropriate, and evidence is recorded where preservation is not possible. This works to ensure irreversible heritage loss is avoided and mitigated where it is not possible to avoid effects.
- 8.5.13 Also of note is Policy ECD8, which links economic development and tourism growth with the historic environment – such as conserving the historic resort character of St Annes, and promoting sustainable tourism linked to assets including Promenade Gardens and Ashton Gardens, and Lytham Windmill. This is considered a positive due to the creation of an economic driver for investment in historic assets, rather than simply protecting them from harm.

- 8.5.14 Wider plan policies also contribute towards the historic environment by ensuring good quality design that considers the presence and setting of heritage assets. Policy DSA1 requires development to conserve and enhance the built and historic environment and to respond to its wider context, including the presence of heritage assets. Policy ENT8 also requires development to respond appropriately to landscape character and existing landscape features, which may help conserve elements of the wider landscape setting of heritage assets.
- 8.5.15 Policy ENT2 is expected to be an important for the historic environment through the protection of a number of the Borough's most important historic green spaces. In particular, the policy will help safeguard Lytham Green, which forms the historic setting to Lytham and the Windmill, and The Green, Wrea Green, which is a key component of the character and setting of the Wrea Green Conservation Area.
- 8.5.16 The policy will also provide ongoing protection for other historic landscape assets, including Lowther Gardens, Fairhaven Lake and Gardens and Memorial Park, Kirkham, helping to maintain their contribution to local character, distinctiveness and sense of place. By protecting these designated spaces from inappropriate development, the policy will assist in conserving important heritage settings, historic landscape features and key views.

Overall effects

- 8.5.17 Overall, the plan is considered likely to lead to **minor negative effects**. Whilst the policy framework seeks to protect and enhance the historic environment where possible, it is recognised that there is still potential for adverse impacts due to the proximity of some sites to designated heritage assets. There are a range of site specific and general policies to manage impacts on settlement character, the condition and setting of heritage assets, and this will help to avoid significant implications. However, some residual minor negative effects are likely to remain (taking a precautionary approach).

8.6 Landscape

IA Objective:

- Protect and enhance the character and quality of Fylde's landscapes and townscapes.

Growth strategy and allocations

- 8.6.1 The appraisal of the emerging spatial strategy in the preceding section identified potential for moderate negative effects. This is due to the dispersed distribution of development and the potential effects on the character of smaller villages, particularly Weeton. This section takes the assessment forward by considering the extent to which the wider Local Plan policy framework may influence this prediction, including consideration of the spatial strategy, allocations and relevant supporting policies. There are landscape effects associated with carrying forward the existing plan allocations and continuing to focus growth in sustainable locations such as Whitehills. However, these effects are 'baked in' and were considered through the SA for the adopted local plan. It is presumed that these effects form part of the future baseline, and so the focus here is on the implications of residual growth.
- 8.6.2 Further growth is proposed for distribution across a range of settlements, including Wesham, Warton, Wrea Green, Singleton, Newton, Weeton, Staining and Freckleton. However, it is also recognised that the pattern of growth is relatively balanced, with no single settlement accommodating a substantial proportion of the overall requirement.
- 8.6.3 The planned growth strategy directs around 90% of development to four Strategic Locations for Development, increasing the importance of policies that safeguard the character of areas outside those locations. In this context, DST4 and DST5 provide an important landscape function by protecting the open countryside and maintaining key settlement gaps, helping to prevent the coalescence of settlements and ensuring that new growth does not erode the distinctive rural character of Fylde. Together, the policies support the delivery of planned development whilst retaining landscape openness, settlement identity and local distinctiveness.
- 8.6.4 Development at Wrea Green through HA18 (Land off Moss Side Lane), HA17 (Land west of Bryning Lane), and HA19 (Land east of Bryning Lane) would extend the settlement into the surrounding countryside and affect the rural setting of the village. The Plan recognises this risk and requires development to be sensitive to the historic village setting and relationship to The Green, including consideration of visual gateways into the settlement.
- 8.6.5 Growth at Singleton through HA24 (Lodge Lane), HA22 (Land west of Poolfoot Farm), and HA23 (South of Garstang Road) would similarly result in expansion at the edge of the settlement and loss of open countryside. However, for both settlements potential adverse impacts would be limited as the sites are located on relatively lower land than the existing respective established settlements.

- 8.6.6 At Newton, development is proposed at HA20 (Land south of Blackpool Road) and HA21 (Newton Hall). This would extend the settlement edge into undeveloped land. The accompanying policy requirements focus on minimising landscape impacts and understanding how they relate to heritage significance.
- 8.6.7 Growth at Warton, Wesham, Staining and Freckleton would also result in localised changes to settlement edges and the loss of open land, but generally within areas already influenced by adjacent development. Nonetheless, there are a range of site-specific policy measures to help manage impacts, including the need for appropriate transitions into countryside and creating new visual gateways (For example at HA15 IN Staining).
- 8.6.8 At Weeton, HA16 (East of Church Road and South of Kirkham Road) has capacity for approximately 163 dwellings within a settlement which contained approximately 183 dwellings at the time of the 2021 Census. As a result, the scale of growth proposed has the potential to noticeably alter the character and appearance of the village and its relationship with the surrounding rural landscape. In response to this, Policy SLD5 (Non-Strategic Location for Development) sets out that development will need to create new visual gateways on both Church Road and Kirkham Road, providing an appropriate transition between the settlement and countryside. In addition, existing hedges and trees along the existing settlement boundaries close to the site should be retained.
- 8.6.9 More broadly, there are common policy clauses associated with the allocated sites (as detailed through SLD1 – SLD5). For example, there is a need to:
- Maximise retention of existing hedgerows.
 - Maximise retention of trees and woodland features.
 - Retain existing vegetation on site boundaries.
 - Enhance retained landscape features.
 - Protect prominent roadside hedgerows.
 - Retain and enhance ponds where present.
- 8.6.10 In addition to all of these site-specific requirements, all developments will need to be in conformity to a range of other relevant plan policies, of which Policy ENT8 (Landscape) is particularly relevant.

Other policies

- 8.6.11 Policy ENT8 provides the principal policy framework for protecting and enhancing landscape character. It requires development to have regard to its visual impact and landscape context, respond appropriately to landscape character, and provide landscape buffers where development affects land in or adjacent to the countryside. It also seeks the retention, protection and enhancement of existing landscape features, including trees, hedgerows and field ponds, with appropriate replacement where their loss is unavoidable. This will help maintain and enhance landscape character quality, and as such is a key contributor to reducing potential adverse impacts.

- 8.6.12 Policy DSA1 is also an important contributor to landscape and townscape quality as it seeks to ensure development achieves high standards of design that takes into account the character and appearance of the local area. This includes protecting the built environment and seeking development that positively contributes to the character and local distinctiveness of the area. Furthermore, policies which work to retain and enhance open spaces and local green spaces are also likely to have a positive effect on landscape by providing screening effects, contributing towards settlement character and quality, and delivering infrastructure that ‘breaks up’ development (policies ENT2, ENT3 ENT4).
- 8.6.13 Policies also focus on retaining elements that contribute to landscape and townscape character and quality, such as mature trees, hedgerows and watercourses (Policy ENT9); protecting coastal character (Policy ENT7); supporting public realm improvements that contribute townscape enhancements (Policy ECD7); and reinforcing landscape value by protecting and enhancing key landscape assets, such as Fairhaven Lake (Policy ECD8). Furthermore, Policy IFR2 has the potential to support landscape and townscape character and quality through seeking to secure developer contributions, such as enhancing the green infrastructure network and public realm improvements such as landscaping. Again, this is anticipated to contribute positively by encouraging additional infrastructure and features to come forward that deliver visual benefits to an area.
- 8.6.14 Together, DST4 and DST5 complement the strategic growth approach by ensuring that development is directed towards planned locations whilst maintaining landscape openness, rural character and the visual separation of settlements. These policies establish the spatial framework within which Policy ENT8 (Landscape) operates, providing the basis for the conservation and enhancement of landscape character as growth is accommodated across the Borough.

Overall effects

- 8.6.15 Overall, the plan is considered likely to lead to uncertain **minor negative effects**. Whilst the policy framework seeks to protect and enhance landscape and townscape / villagescape character where possible, it is recognised that there is still potential for adverse impacts due to the delivery of greenfield sites at settlement edges. It is recognised that it is difficult to completely avoid this given the limited availability of brownfield sites. Impacts on landscape and townscape / villagescape character are partly dependent on the design and layout of development, which are influenced by several plan policies, but there will still remain an element of uncertainty until planning applications are developed.

8.7 Air quality and noise

IA Objective:

- Deliver improvements in air quality in Fylde.
- Reduce the impacts of noise on human health and the environment.

Growth strategy and allocations

- 8.7.1 The appraisal of the emerging spatial strategy in the preceding section identified potential for minor negative effects associated with increased traffic-related emissions and noise. This section takes the assessment forward by considering the extent to which the wider Local Plan policy framework may influence this prediction, including consideration of the spatial strategy, allocations and relevant supporting policies.
- 8.7.2 The concentration of growth at St Annes, Wesham and Whitehills present opportunities to maximise the benefits of existing rail and bus connectivity through policies promoting sustainable transport, active travel and integrated infrastructure provision. Policy IFR5 (Enhancing Sustainable Transport Choice) increases the likelihood of positive effects arising in terms of sustainable travel by requiring developers to provide footpaths and cycleways and contribute to the improvement of public transport, amongst other criteria. Therefore, effects on air quality are likely to be positive by minimising the need to travel by private car.
- 8.7.3 Conversely, growth at smaller settlements, where reliance on private vehicles (for services not provided locally) is likely to be greater, warrants consideration of the effectiveness of measures aimed at reducing car dependency and managing transport impacts. A relevant plan policy in this respect is IFR1 (Service Accessibility and Infrastructure), which outlines that proposals for development will be expected to demonstrate how access to services will be achieved by means other than the car.
- 8.7.4 Attention is also given to growth at Warton, given the presence of aviation-related noise associated with Warton Aerodrome, and at St Annes and Whyndyke / Whitehills, where development may be affected by existing airport and strategic transport noise. In response to this, Policy SLD2 (Whitehills and Whyndyke Strategic Location for Development) sets out that the use of soft landscaping and layout, including tree planting and landscaped buffers, will be prioritised when mitigating noise (and light) impacts to/from adjacent land uses. Policy SLD4 similarly requires consideration of noise impacts at the Kirkham and Wesham Strategic Location. These measures should help to reduce the potential for noise effects on new and existing residents, although the effectiveness of mitigation will depend on the detailed design and layout of development.
- 8.7.5 With regards to employment, Policy ECD4 (New Employment Land Provision) allocates nine sites to provide a minimum of 24.5ha of employment land. The majority of sites are carried forward from the adopted plan and are sustainably located so are unlikely to lead to significant adverse impacts on air quality and noise.

Other policies

- 8.7.6 Whilst there are no specific policies concerned with mitigating air quality and noise impacts, the wider plan policies do include provisions that are likely to contribute to reducing adverse effects. For example, policies that focus on maintaining and enhancing active and sustainable transport opportunities are likely to contribute to reducing air quality and noise pollution associated with new growth by helping to reduce car dependency (IFR5, DSA1, IFR1, IFR4, and IFR2).
- 8.7.7 By protecting and enhancing open space, it is anticipated that adverse air quality and noise effects can be avoided or reduced by retaining and contributing new features that can screen noise disturbances and can contribute to pollutant capture, such as green infrastructure, trees and hedgerows (policies ENT3, ENT4, ENT8, ENT9, CCH1, and IFR2). Furthermore, a focus on strengthening local centres and improving accessibility could contribute to a reduction in air and noise pollution by enabling residents to access services more locally, helping to reduce the need for rely on transportation to access key infrastructure (Policy ECD7).

Overall effects

- 8.7.8 Overall, the plan is considered likely to lead to **neutral effects** on noise and air quality as any identified issues are addressed satisfactorily through a range of site specific, strategic and development management policies that ought to ensure that air quality does not decline or a significant number of people would be exposed to poorer areas of air quality. In addition, a number of supporting plan policies are likely to indirectly improve the baseline position in relation to ambient air quality and levels of noise (thereby offsetting increased noise and air quality issues that might arise from growth).

8.8 Climate change

IA Objectives:

- Support climate change mitigation across Fylde through limiting greenhouse gas emissions.
- Support Fylde's resilience to the potential effects of climate change, in particular flooding.

Growth strategy and allocations

- 8.8.1 The appraisal of the emerging spatial strategy in the preceding section identified potential for minor negative effects associated with the potential for increased greenhouse gas emissions from growth and related travel, together with the inclusion of several allocations affected by flood risk. This section takes the assessment forward by considering the extent to which the wider Local Plan policy framework may influence this prediction, including consideration of the spatial strategy, allocations and relevant supporting policies.
- 8.8.2 The spatial strategy distributes growth across a range of settlements, with a focus on the most sustainable locations.

- 8.8.3 This involves substantial growth at St Annes, Wesham and Whitehills, although the carrying forward of existing local plan allocations means that some of this growth forms part of the future baseline and would have been considered through the SA for the adopted local plan. Therefore, the focus of this appraisal is on the implications of residual growth.
- 8.8.4 Whilst the concentration of growth at Wesham is likely to support more sustainable travel patterns than growth focused entirely within smaller settlements, the overall strategy is relatively dispersed and is therefore likely to generate a greater reliance on private vehicle travel (and thus marginally higher levels of greenhouse gas emissions could be anticipated).
- 8.8.5 In response to the above, Policy IFR1 (Service Accessibility and Infrastructure) sets out that proposals for development should demonstrate how access to services will be achieved by means other than the car. In addition, Policy IFR2 (Developer Contributions) states that developments may be required to provide contributions towards transport, including rail and tram infrastructure, bus, and cycle / footpath / bridleway network. Moreover, Policy IFR5 (Enhancing Sustainable Transport Choice) seeks to ensure that development provides and encourages the take-up of alternative means of transport such as walking and cycling.
- 8.8.6 This is further consolidated by the 'Locations for Development' policies, which require that pedestrian and cycling access needs to be effectively provided so that safe, direct and effective routes are created.
- 8.8.7 Taken together, these measures should help to promote sustainable modes of transport and reduce the potential for significant increases in emissions associated with transport.
- 8.8.8 Regarding flood risk, several sites contain areas of higher risk. Approximately 27% of HA3 (258 Lytham Road, Warton) overlaps with Flood Zone 3, whilst approximately 19% of the site overlaps with areas at high risk of surface water flooding. In addition, HA2 (Madhuban, Cropper Road, Whitehills) overlaps with areas at high risk of surface water flooding (approximately 23%), whilst approximately 15% of HA10 (east of Fleetwood Road, Wesham) overlaps with areas at high risk.
- 8.8.9 It is considered that national planning policy will sufficiently address on-site flood risk, ensuring that future development is not delivered in areas of flood risk or increase flood risk elsewhere. In addition, Policy CCH1 (Flood Alleviation, Water Quality and Water Efficiency) requires development to follow a sequential, risk-based approach and to minimise flood risk impacts, including by directing new development away from areas at high risk of flooding and incorporating appropriate mitigation in areas of lower risk.
- 8.8.10 Policy IFR2 (Developer Contributions) outlines that developments may be required to provide contributions towards flood risk management, whilst Policy DSA1 (Achieving Good Design in Development) does not permit inappropriate development in Flood Risk Zones 2 and 3. Notably, *"the layout of sites must recognise areas that are or will become affected by surface water flooding and plan for built development to be located away from such areas or otherwise mitigated without resulting in discharge of flood water from the site"*.

Other policies

- 8.8.11 The wider policy framework provides a range of measures to support both climate change adaptation and mitigation. Policy CCH1 requires all new development to minimise flood risk impacts, retain water efficiency and mitigate against the likely effects of climate change. It also seeks to minimise the use of potable mains water, promote water recycling and conservation, protect watercourses and maximise the potential of green infrastructure to reduce flood risk.
- 8.8.12 Policy CCH2 strengthens the approach to climate change adaptation through requirements for sustainable drainage, attenuation of surface water and the management of rainfall through storage, infiltration and open features. These measures should help to reduce the potential for development to increase surface water flood risk.
- 8.8.13 In relation to climate change mitigation, Policy CCH3 (Renewable and Low Carbon Energy Generation) states that opportunities for renewable and low-carbon energy development, including microgeneration, should be maximised, subject to consideration of potential environmental and other impacts. This provides a clear policy basis for supporting additional renewable and low-carbon energy generation within the Borough. These stipulations are likely to work positively to reduce flood risk and reduce greenhouse gas emissions originating in Fylde.
- 8.8.14 The Plan also provides opportunities to secure climate-related measures through development contributions. Policy IFR2 identifies climate change and energy initiatives as a potential area for developer contributions, alongside flood risk management, sustainable drainage, transport and enhancements to the Green Infrastructure network.
- 8.8.15 The policy framework also embeds climate considerations into development design including energy and resource efficiency (Policy DSA1); reducing impacts on flood risk and effects (Policy DSA1); ensuring connectivity to sustainable and active travel opportunities to reduce emissions linked to transportation (Policy IFR5); and maintaining and enhancing green and blue infrastructure to protect and increase levels of carbon capture and storage (policies ENT3, ENT4, ENT8, and ENT9).
- 8.8.16 This is also anticipated to be achieved through delivering services and important infrastructure in accessible locations that can be accessed via alternative transportation options to private vehicles (Policy IFR1).

Overall effects

- 8.8.17 Overall, the plan is considered likely to lead to **neutral to minor positive effects**. Whilst it is recognised that growth through the plan will likely increase greenhouse gas emissions produced within Fylde, it is acknowledged that growth is likely to come forward with or without the plan and therefore this is somewhat unavoidable. In addition, given the wider nature of climate change, overall impacts are not considered to be significant. Moreover, the spatial framework directs growth to sustainable locations where possible. In terms of flood risk, it is considered that the policy framework, alongside national planning policy, is likely to ensure that further new development is not at risk of flooding / does not increase flood risk elsewhere.
- 8.8.18 In terms of improvement, there is opportunity to specify that specific site allocations involving areas at risk of flooding will be designed to avoid sensitive areas and make proactive use as green infrastructure or flood storage areas. In terms of climate change mitigation, the plan is relatively silent on whole-life carbon, embodied carbon and sequestration. The inclusion of a policy that supports action against these issues and coordination with local climate change strategies would be beneficial and would give more confidence that positive effects will arise in practice as a direct result of this plan.

8.9 Healthy and safe communities

IA Objectives:

- Improve health and wellbeing of residents.
- Improve levels of educational attainment.
- Protect access to green spaces and leisure facilities.

Growth strategy and allocations

- 8.9.1 The development strategy supports health and wellbeing by directing the majority of new housing and employment to four strategic locations (St Annes, Warton, Whitehills/Whyndyke and Kirkham/Wesham). Concentrating development where residents can benefit from existing infrastructure, services and active travel opportunities can reduce reliance on private vehicles, limiting air and noise pollution and supporting access to existing services, such as health and social care. The emphasis on walkable communities can also have positive health impacts by encouraging physical activity, particularly as the prevalence of adult obesity is higher in Fylde than the national average (31.8% compared to 25.6%). The development strategy restricts development in rural areas and Areas of Separation (DST4). As access to green infrastructure is important for both physical and mental health, this is likely to have positive health and wellbeing impacts.

- 8.9.2 The concentration of developments within these strategic areas can run the risk of adding increased pressure to existing essential services which can result in negative health outcomes. However, Strategic Policy SET1 establishes that development should be appropriate to the scale and character of settlements at each level, with existing services and facilities enhanced to accommodate growth. This may include improvements to infrastructure and community facilities such as healthcare centres, schools, public transport infrastructure, green infrastructure, community facilities and leisure facilities, helping to ensure that increased demand arising from new development is appropriately managed. The Local Service Centres of Warton and Whitehills will be enhanced and Whyndyke will be developed as a new Local Service Centre.
- 8.9.3 The spatial details of the Local Plan are embedded throughout, including cycle and pedestrian routes, tree-lined streets and landscape buffers across the strategic locations. These measures support active travel which can provide physical health benefits and facilitate social interactions and community cohesion which can reduce the risk of social isolation. This may be particularly impactful for older people who are at greater risk of social isolation. Fylde has a larger proportion of residents over the age of 65 compared to the national average (27.8%), with age projections indicating a 113.3% rise in residents aged 80+ between 2022 and 2047. Where active travel infrastructure is designed to meet the safety and accessibility needs of a range of users, including children, older people, disabled people and those with reduced mobility, modal shift towards active travel may also reduce the risk of road traffic accidents (Lancashire has 5 fatalities per billion motor vehicle miles in 2024 compared to 4.7 in England as whole).
- 8.9.4 In St Annes, the policy focus on delivering new homes and employment land within the well-served urban area (SLD1) is anticipated to support access to healthcare and community services. This is of importance due to the aging population and higher prevalence of disability within St Annes. As established in the Scoping Report, there are concentrations of older residents and pockets of deprivation, particularly near Blackpool Airport. Furthermore, life expectancy is 11.1 years lower for men and 8.4 years lower for women in the most deprived areas of the borough compared to the least deprived areas. Therefore, policies that support accessible housing, green spaces and active travel within this area may help to reduce health inequalities.
- 8.9.5 As Whitehills and Whyndyke transitions into a more established and developed neighbourhood, the policy focus on coordinated infrastructure, such as active travel, open space and enhanced healthcare provision, is anticipated to promote physical activity, social cohesion and wellbeing (SLD2). There is a risk of short-term negative health impacts if essential service provision lags behind housing and employment development and therefore population growth. Careful phasing and monitoring can help support the realisation of positive health impacts.

Other policies

Housing:

- 8.9.6 The housing policies within the Local Plan are likely to have positive health impacts overall. Policy HOU4 requires that sites of 20 more dwellings provide 20% of housing units to accommodate older people specifically. The plan also supports the development of new care homes and extra-care flats within accessible locations and existing settlements, providing they do not require the loss of an existing community facility. As set out within the Scoping Report, in November 2025, there were 2,306 households on the register for rehousing in Fylde, with a strong need from middle-aged and older households. As Fylde has an ageing population, there is likely to be increased demand for homes that accommodate older people in the future. Therefore, the specific policies that consider housing for older people can reduce barriers to good health, support independence, reduce social isolation and improve quality of life and wellbeing for older residents.
- 8.9.7 Policy HOU5 addresses the needs of looked-after children and supports new children's care homes (provided they do not have adverse impacts on the amenity of neighbours). This is likely to have positive health and wellbeing impacts on children by supporting those who are vulnerable with access to required services. In addition, policy HOU6 supports the delivery of specialist and supported housing for adults with care needs and highlights the importance of accessible and adaptable homes, it also focuses on providing a range of houses that enable independent living for people with disabilities, including building homes to higher accessibility standards.
- 8.9.8 Furthermore, HOU3 requires that all market housing schemes of 10 or more homes provide 30% affordable housing. By improving access to secure, good quality, affordable homes, the policy is likely to support health and wellbeing by reduced housing related stress and tackling health inequalities linked to poor quality or insecure housing.

Economic development:

- 8.9.9 The Plan's economic development policies aim to promote high-value employment, protect town centres, advance leisure and tourism and encourage skills development. High-quality employment can reduce health inequalities by providing individuals with better incomes, job security and working conditions which in turn support healthier lifestyles and greater access to healthcare resources. Although Fylde has relatively high levels of employment, there are pockets of deprivation where improved employment opportunities may bring associated health and wellbeing impacts. For example, policy ECD3 which supports the development of Blackpool Airport and Enterprise Zone which could benefit those living in more deprived areas in proximity to the airport. Whilst no specific requirement has been identified for developers to prepare Employment and Skills Plans or targeted training commitments, employment growth associated with the strategic employment sites may provide opportunities for apprenticeships, training and career progression through the activities of major employers and associated businesses. This could support educational outcomes and skills development, particularly for young people within Fylde.

- 8.9.10 The economic policies that promote the growth of towns, tourism and leisure facilities have the potential to positively impact health. Enhancing local amenities and public spaces can encourage physical activity which may help to address relatively high levels of adult obesity and improve community cohesion and social interactions. This may in turn benefit older people who are at greater risk of social isolation. It is important to manage developments to town centres sustainable to prevent potential negative health impacts that may arise due to increased traffic pollution or pressure on local health services.

Protected assets and environment:

- 8.9.11 The policies under protected environment and assets aim to conserve and enhance the natural environment, biodiversity, landscape character, heritage assets, open and coastal spaces. By protecting and enhancing green spaces (ENT2), there may be positive mental and physical health benefits through opportunities for recreation, physical activity and engagement with nature. Policy ENT3 protects open spaces, including parks, children's play areas, areas for play, youth provision, allotments and sports pitches. This is likely to have positive health and wellbeing benefits, particularly for children, by supporting sports and recreational activities and encouraging physical exercise. Policy ENT5 commits to resisting the loss of community, leisure and cultural facilities and services (unless it can be demonstrated that the facility is no longer needed). The protection of health and leisure facilities is likely to support positive health outcomes for local communities.
- 8.9.12 In addition, the policies aimed at protecting environmental assets and promoting wider environmental benefits (ENT9) can have positive health and wellbeing impacts through clean air and water that benefit all communities, in particular, those with greater health sensitivities to poor air and water quality, such as pregnant people and disabled people.

Transport and infrastructure:

- 8.9.13 The transport and infrastructure policies aim to create a well-connected, healthy and resilient Fylde where infrastructure and transport underpin sustainable communities. Policy IFR5 'enhancing sustainable transport choice' aims to improve accessibility, safety and quality of life for residents, encouraging walking, cycling and public transport, prioritising safe pedestrian and cycle routes and enhancing access to key services. This is likely to have positive health impacts if the policy results in modal shift towards active travel methods (as intended). Where walking, wheeling and cycling infrastructure is designed to meet the safety and accessibility needs of a range of users, including children, older people and disabled people, the policy may also help to reduce road traffic accidents, particularly for more vulnerable users (such as children and older people). Promotion of low-cost transport methods like active travel and public transport may also help to reduce health inequalities for lower income households who may find healthcare and community facilities more difficult to access. However, this will also depend on supporting initiatives such as behaviour change and ticketing strategies.

- 8.9.14 There may be negative impacts associated with the construction of transport and infrastructure projects (such as increased noise, air pollution and access disruption) which can result in negative health impacts. For example, the specific transport projects outlined within policy IFR4. Consideration should be paid to health inequalities and impacts at a project level, and mitigation measures should be considered to reduce potential negative health and wellbeing impacts. The completion of HIAs for projects could help identify and address potential health impacts.
- 8.9.15 Policy IFR2 sets an expectation on developers to contribute towards the requirements of the community. The policy states that developments may be required to provide contributions towards community facilities for the health and wellbeing, social, educational, spiritual, recreational, leisure and cultural needs of the community. This is likely to have positive health and wellbeing impacts for the community. However, it should be noted that as developments are predominantly planned in the four strategic locations, consideration should also be paid to the needs of more rural communities to ensure they are not left behind.

Design and amenity policies:

- 8.9.16 Strategic Policy DSA1 is likely to deliver health benefits by integrating inclusive design priorities into developments. By requiring developments to integrate green infrastructure, provide well-connected pedestrian and cycle routes, and ensure access to high-quality public open spaces, the policy supports physical activity, mental wellbeing, and social cohesion. The emphasis on daylight, ventilation, climate adaptation, and the needs of vulnerable groups further enhances indoor and outdoor environmental quality, reducing risks associated with poor air quality, overheating, and social isolation. The focus on accessible design supports people with disabilities in accessing the facilities introduced through new developments.

Climate change, renewable energy and flood risk:

- 8.9.17 Finally, the policies included within climate change and flood risk help to reduce the risk of heat stress, water shortages and flood-related injuries. People with existing health conditions or disabilities can be more sensitive to insecure water supply and the effects of flooding, therefore the policies are likely to have a positive impact on health inequalities. Policies that address climate change may also result in improved air quality which has health benefits. Overall, climate and flood resilience can protect communities from environmental hazards and promote healthier, safer living environments.

Overall effects

- 8.9.18 The Local Plan is anticipated to have broadly positive health impacts by promoting active travel which can encourage physical activity, reduce air and noise pollution and support access to healthcare, green spaces and community facilities. The policies requiring affordable, specialist housing and promoting accessible design support older people and people with disabilities to live independent lives and may reduce health inequalities. The Plan also makes sufficient provision for employment land, which offers the potential for job opportunities and associated health benefits.

- 8.9.19 There may be negative health impacts from increased demand on services in concentrated developments, however this can be mitigated with careful planning and phased delivery. Climate, environmental and flood risk policies further protect health by improving air and water quality and reducing environmental hazards.
- 8.9.20 It is also worth acknowledging that there is some community resistance to development in a range of settlements. Therefore, wellbeing is likely to be affected negatively where such opposition continues and individuals are negatively affected.
- 8.9.21 On balance, having regard to the likely significant positive effects across the borough, and the minor negative effects, the overall picture is likely to be a **moderate positive effect**.

8.10 Material assets

IA Objectives:

- Promote coordinated land use planning across Fylde.
- Promote economic growth and job creation across the sub-region and improve access to jobs for all.

Growth strategy and allocations

- 8.10.1 The appraisal of the emerging spatial strategy in the preceding section identified potential for moderate positive effects. This section takes the assessment forward by considering the extent to which the wider Local Plan policy framework may influence this prediction, including consideration of the spatial strategy in its entirety, allocations and relevant supporting policies.
- 8.10.2 The spatial strategy would deliver growth across a range of settlements, with a significant proportion of allocations at the most sustainable locations. There are effects associated with carrying forward the existing plan allocations and continuing to focus growth in sustainable locations. However, these effects are 'baked in' and were considered through the SA for the adopted local plan. It is presumed that these effects form part of the future baseline, and so the focus here is on the implications of residual growth.
- 8.10.3 Growth at Wesham would support one of the borough's larger service centres and help sustain local facilities and employment opportunities. Wesham is also well connected to both Preston and the Fylde Coast by rail and road, providing good access to existing and planned employment opportunities.
- 8.10.4 The spatial strategy supports the distribution of housing widely across settlements in the Borough and therefore provides opportunities to meet identified housing needs while supporting the continued vitality of existing communities. The distribution of growth also provides opportunities for new and improved infrastructure, services and facilities to be planned alongside development, particularly where larger sites or several adjacent smaller sites are brought forward.

- 8.10.5 This could reduce the extent to which development supports the vitality of the borough's principal centres and may result in a less concentrated pattern of infrastructure investment. However, a degree of incremental growth within smaller settlements will help maintain the vitality and viability of local communities, support existing services and facilities, provide a balanced housing portfolio and contribute towards a more balanced pattern of development across the borough.
- 8.10.6 The site allocations also include a number of locations with an established employment role or opportunities for employment-generating development. In particular, growth at Warton is supported by the presence of BAE Systems and the Lancashire Advanced Engineering and Manufacture Enterprise Zone, while the wider Plan protects and supports key employment assets elsewhere in the Borough.

Other policies

- 8.10.7 There is a strong emphasis on supporting and protecting material assets in the wider Plan policies. This is demonstrated through the focus on supporting businesses and industries that contribute to the local economy in Fylde, including retaining and supporting the expansion of aerospace and advanced engineering activities and specialist advanced chemical processing activities (policies ECD1 and ECD2).
- 8.10.8 It also includes through supporting development of the identified Enterprise Zone and Blackpool Airport, including the development of the 'Silicon sands' data and technology campus (Policy ECD3). Focusing on these industries in particular is considered a positive in relation to maintaining and enhancing the local economy and expanding job opportunities within Fylde.
- 8.10.9 Material assets are further considered through policies ECD4, ECD5 and ECD6. Policy ECD4 allocates a minimum of 24.49 ha of employment land over the plan period, while ECD5 protects existing employment areas and ECD6 seeks to retain existing commercial/employment premises and supports the sustainable growth and expansion of businesses. Together, these policies provide a clear framework for maintaining the supply of employment land and supporting economic growth.
- 8.10.10 In relation to housing, Policy HOU1 provides for a minimum of 6,656 homes over the Plan period. Policy HOU2 requires developments of 10 or more dwellings to provide 30% affordable housing in accordance with Policy HOU3, supporting the delivery of a range of housing to meet local needs. The policy framework also requires 20% of homes on sites of 20 or more dwellings to be designed specifically to accommodate older people, while sites of 50 or more dwelling plots are required to provide 4% of dwellings as serviced custom or self-build plots.
- 8.10.11 Policies ECD7, ECD8 and ECD9 provide further support for the economic role of town centres, leisure, culture and tourism. ECD7 establishes the hierarchy of town, district, local and neighbourhood centres, while the tourism policies seek to protect and support tourism, cultural and leisure assets and encourage appropriate tourism-related development. This should help maintain the role of existing centres and support employment associated with the Borough's visitor economy.

8.10.12 Furthermore, securing developer contributions through Policy IFR2 provides a funding mechanism to further encourage employment and housing opportunities, for example through sustainable transport provision and community facilities.

8.10.13 Finally, supporting key transport infrastructure projects through Policy IFR4 is also likely to contribute positively towards material assets by improving access to employment opportunities across Fylde and the wider sub-region.

Overall effects

8.10.14 Overall, the plan is considered likely to lead to **major positive effects**. This is because it seeks to deliver growth across numerous settlements in the borough, broadly in line with the settlement hierarchy (acknowledging that some higher-order settlements are physically constrained and cannot grow). This provides good opportunities to deliver new homes, infrastructure, services and facilities in areas that most need it whilst avoiding pressure upon infrastructure. Combined with the provisions made in the policy framework, this will support local communities through provision of affordable homes, supporting settlement vitality, meeting day-to-day needs, and by strengthening local employment opportunities and accessibility to such opportunities.

8.11 Equalities

IA Objective:

- Promote equality and cater for existing and future residents' needs as well as the needs of all groups in the community including those with protected characteristics.

Growth strategy and allocations

8.11.1 The policies within the development strategy prioritise sustainable development in larger, well-served settlements while protecting rural areas, Green Belt and Areas of Separation. The focus on development within strategic locations aims to protect environmental, social and economic assets and encourage a mix of uses on larger sites. This is likely to reduce the need to travel to access services, employment opportunities and education. The site-specific policies also support improved accessibility by requiring connections to existing routes and local services, safe routes to schools and bus stops, and, where necessary, contributions towards off-site transport improvements (this includes policies HA4, HA5, HA9, HA10 and MA3). This can have positive equality effects by improving connectivity for groups less likely to have access to a private car (such as young people, older people, disabled people and lower-income households) and can bring wider positive socio-economic impacts. In addition, it may encourage modal shift towards active travel which brings physical health benefits. Easy connectivity to local assets can also reduce the risk of social isolation, which is a particular risk for older populations. As Fylde has a large proportion of people over the age of 65 and an ageing population, this is of particular importance.

- 8.11.2 In addition, the focus on protecting the green belt and areas of separation may positively impact protected characteristic groups such as children who may use these areas for recreational purposes and therefore experience health and wellbeing benefits.
- 8.11.3 As the majority of development is proposed within the identified strategic locations, this may negatively impact those living in more rural areas in accessing housing and employment opportunities. However, the Plan includes measures to support housing provision that responds to local needs in rural areas.
- 8.11.4 Policy HOU2 requires developments within or in close proximity to Tier 1 and Tier 2 Rural Settlements to include at least 33% one- or two-bedroom homes, while Policy HOU3 requires affordable housing in rural areas to primarily meet identified needs in the closest rural settlements. These provisions may support housing choice and access to affordable housing for households living in rural communities. Policy DST5 also supports appropriate development in the countryside, including rural businesses and services, tourism and development, as well as rural exception sites to meet identified local affordable housing needs. Together, these measures may help to reduce inequalities in access to housing, employment and services for people living in rural communities, although opportunities for development in the countryside remain restricted to specified circumstances.
- 8.11.5 As there are high concentrations of older people and disabled residents within St Annes, it is likely that there will be increased demand for accessible homes and extra care housing. Therefore, the development strategy may positively impact these groups by encouraging housing developments (including accessible homes) within this location.
- 8.11.6 Due to the proximity of Whitehills and Whyndyke to Blackpool, where there are higher levels of deprivation, increased developments, public transport and active travel links have the opportunity to address cross-boundary inequalities, particularly for those less likely to have access to a private car (such as older people and people with disabilities).
- 8.11.7 There may be indirect negative equality impacts due to potential displacement, for example, rising property costs in areas of development could negatively impact lower-income families. There could be negative impacts on religious groups through displacement of religious venues through new developments. However, the Plan does not contain measures that would directly contribute to displacement of religious venues, and Policy ENT5 seeks to protect existing community, health, leisure and cultural facilities from loss to alternative uses. Whilst the Plan contains a range of policies intended to protect community facilities and support sustainable communities, no specific requirement has been identified for project-level EqlAs for major developments. The introduction of EqlAs for larger development proposals could help identify and address potential impacts on protected characteristic groups, including impacts relating to access to services, community cohesion, health inequalities and potential displacement.

Other policies

Housing:

- 8.11.8 The Housing policies seek to deliver sufficient housing to meet identified needs across the borough whilst providing an appropriate mix of dwelling types, tenures and specialist accommodation. The policies place particular emphasis on affordability, housing for older people, supported housing and meeting the needs of specific groups within the community.
- 8.11.9 The policies are likely to generate significant positive equality effects through recognition of Fylde's ageing population and the increasing demand for accessible and adaptable housing. The borough has a notably older population profile than many areas nationally, with around 29% of residents aged 65 years or over, creating pressures for age-appropriate accommodation and support services.
- 8.11.10 Strategic Policy HOU4 requires larger developments to provide accommodation that meets the needs of older people and supports independent living. The Plan also supports care homes and extra-care accommodation in accessible locations where this does not result in the loss of important community facilities. These measures are likely to deliver positive equality benefits for older residents through improved housing choice and access to care and support services.
- 8.11.11 Policy HOU6 supports the provision of supported housing for adults with support needs where evidence demonstrates need. This is likely to have positive impacts for disabled people and other vulnerable groups by increasing access to suitable accommodation and supporting independent living within local communities.
- 8.11.12 Strategic Policy HOU8 recognises the accommodation needs of Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople and supports the provision of sites where appropriate. This may contribute positively towards equality of opportunity by recognising the housing needs of these communities and promoting social inclusion. However, delivery may be dependent on the availability of suitable sites and landowner willingness, so an element of uncertainty exists.
- 8.11.13 Requirements for affordable housing provision are also likely to generate positive equality effects. Affordable housing can improve access to suitable accommodation for lower-income households, younger people and those experiencing financial disadvantage, helping to address housing inequalities across the borough.
- 8.11.14 The Plan's emphasis on delivering a range of housing sizes and types reflects local demographic trends, including the high proportion of one and two person households. This may benefit people at different life stages and those with differing household circumstances, including single people, couples, families and older residents looking to downsize.

Economic development:

- 8.11.15 The economic development policies seek to support economic growth, investment and employment opportunities across Fylde whilst safeguarding existing employment land and supporting the visitor economy. The policies place particular emphasis on the borough's strategic employment locations, including BAE Systems at Warton, Westinghouse Springfields and the Blackpool Airport Enterprise Zone, which are identified as key drivers of economic growth, innovation and job creation.
- 8.11.16 The promotion of investment, business growth and employment opportunities has the potential to generate positive equality effects by supporting economic inclusion, improving household incomes and reducing socio-economic disadvantage.
- 8.11.17 Increased access to employment can contribute to improved wellbeing and may particularly benefit younger people, lower-income households and those seeking to enter or re-enter the labour market.
- 8.11.18 Policies ECD1-ECD3 seek to support the continued operation, growth and modernisation of Fylde's strategic employment sites. These locations provide significant employment opportunities across a range of sectors and skill levels and may support apprenticeships, training opportunities and career progression. This could have positive impacts for younger people and those seeking access to skilled employment opportunities within the borough. However, no specific policy requirement has been identified for developers to prepare Employment and Skills Plans or to target employment and training opportunities towards local residents or particular groups. Such measures could further enhance the equality benefits arising from economic growth and investment.
- 8.11.19 The policies also seek to improve accessibility and connectivity through the provision of sustainable transport links, active travel infrastructure and safe movement networks associated with employment growth. Improved access to employment locations may particularly benefit disabled people, older people, younger people and households without access to a private vehicle, helping to reduce barriers to employment and supporting equality of opportunity.
- 8.11.20 Policy ECD5 protects existing employment areas from inappropriate alternative uses unless it can be demonstrated that such uses are compatible with the continued operation of the employment area. This may provide positive equality benefits through protecting existing jobs and safeguarding opportunities for local workers, particularly in areas where employment opportunities are an important source of community resilience and economic stability.
- 8.11.21 Policy ECD9 supports the visitor economy through the protection of high-quality hotels and guesthouses, the provision of a diverse range of visitor accommodation and requirements for accessibility and inclusivity within tourism developments. These measures may help ensure that tourism opportunities are available to people from a wide range of backgrounds and abilities whilst also supporting local employment opportunities. The policy's focus on sustainable locations and protection of residential amenity may help balance economic benefits with the needs of existing communities.

- 8.11.22 By strengthening the local economy and encouraging investment across Fylde, the policies may also generate wider socio-economic benefits including increased spending within local centres, support for community services and improved economic resilience. These benefits may extend across a range of protected characteristic groups and communities.
- 8.11.23 There may be some localised adverse impacts associated with employment growth, including increased traffic movements, noise and pressure on local infrastructure in areas surrounding major employment sites. These effects could have implications for equality where people living close to employment areas are more exposed to increased traffic and noise, particularly older people, disabled people and households with young children. Increased pressure on local infrastructure could also affect access to services where existing provision is constrained.
- 8.11.24 However, these effects are likely to be mitigated through development management requirements, transport improvements and infrastructure investment associated with new development.

Protected environment and assets:

- 8.11.25 The Plan's policies for protecting the environment and assets cover natural habitats, heritage sites, facilities (ENT3) and green spaces (ENT2). The policies are likely to have positive equality impacts through the protection of green infrastructure and public open facilities as these spaces support health and wellbeing, particularly for older people, children, disabled residents, and those experiencing social isolation, by providing safe, inclusive spaces for recreation. The safeguarding of local green spaces and community assets can also foster a sense of belonging and social cohesion, benefiting minority groups and those at risk of exclusion.
- 8.11.26 Policy ENT3 offers protection to open spaces such as parks, children's play areas, allotments and sports pitches and policy ENT4 highlights the need for new or enhanced open spaces and sports facilities. Children in particular may be positively impacted by this policy as these spaces are likely to be used for recreational and social purposes.
- 8.11.27 Further, the focus on inclusive design and accessibility in public spaces and heritage assets also help reduce barriers for disabled people and older adults, ensuring equitable access to community facilities and cultural heritage.
- 8.11.28 Policy ENT5 protects existing community, health, leisure and cultural facilities from loss to alternative uses, helping to maintain access to facilities that support the needs and wellbeing of local communities. This may have positive equality impacts for protected characteristic groups who rely on these facilities, including older people, disabled people, children and lower-income households. Maintaining accessible local facilities can help reduce barriers to participation and access to essential services, recreation and social opportunities, particularly for people who may have greater reliance on facilities within their local community.
- 8.11.29 There may be minor negative impacts if the protection of certain assets or restrictive development policies inadvertently limits the supply of accessible, affordable housing or community facilities in areas of greatest need.

8.11.30 This can disproportionately affect low-income households, younger people, or disabled residents. However, this risk is limited where the Plan is planning to meet identified housing needs, and the Plan includes policies supporting affordable housing and protecting existing community facilities. Nevertheless, it remains minor issue worth noting and monitoring upon plan implementation.

Infrastructure and transport:

8.11.31 The protection of existing infrastructure and development of new infrastructure (IFR1) and the expectation for developments to mitigate potential impacts on existing services, infrastructure and environment by contributing to community needs (IFR2), may have positive equality impacts. IFR2 highlights the potential for developments to contribute towards community facilities providing for health, social, educational, culture and leisure facilities. This may positively impact children in accessing education and those who rely more heavily on healthcare facilities, such as older people, pregnant people and people with disabilities. This may also reduce the risk of existing services becoming strained as a result of new developments.

8.11.32 The promotion of walking, wheeling, cycling and public transport (IFR5) can have positive health and wellbeing impacts through increased physical activity, improved air quality and reduced congestion. These benefits may be particularly significant for children and young people, older people, disabled people and lower-income households who may be more reliant on sustainable transport options.

8.11.33 Furthermore, improved public transport and accessible transport infrastructure can enhance access to employment, education, healthcare and community services. This may have positive equality impacts for people who are less likely to have access to a private vehicle, including younger people, older people, disabled people and those experiencing economic disadvantage through increased educational, employment and social opportunities which can result in wider socio-economic benefits. The positive equality impacts can be enhanced by ensuring transport infrastructure has adequate lighting, step-free access, safe crossing points and clear wayfinding measures. This can also improve perceptions of safety for protected characteristic groups at greater risk of discrimination and harassment.

Design and amenity:

8.11.34 DSA1 states that all development proposals should be accompanied by a Design and Access Statement and that developments should take into account the character and appearance of the local area. High quality, accessible design can have positive equality impacts by supporting public spaces that are accessible for all including older people, disabled people and children. This can reduce barriers for independent movement and accessing services and community facilities.

8.11.35 Furthermore, responding positively to local character can support community identity, sense of place and social cohesion. Retaining and appropriately integrating existing features of settlements may help maintain the character and accessibility of established communities, including older people and other groups who may have stronger reliance on familiar local environments and facilities.

8.11.36 More widely, high-quality accessible design may encourage tourism and local spend which could benefit the local economy including locally run businesses and support local employment opportunities.

Climate change, renewable energy and flood risk:

8.11.37 The climate change, renewable energy and flood risk policies are likely to have positive equality impacts as the negative impacts of climate change (such as extreme weather events including flooding) can disproportionately harm protected characteristic groups. Encouraging development in lower-risk areas can positively impact community safety and reduce the financial risks associated with flood events.

8.11.38 Furthermore, actions that support renewable energy and reduced carbon emissions can improve air quality which can reduce negative health effects, disproportionately benefitting groups with greater vulnerability (such as older people, disabled people and children).

Overall effects

8.11.39 The overall effects for protected characteristic groups are presented in **Table 8.2** below. It is evident that the Plan is mostly positive in relation to equalities, and whilst some negative effects are highlighted, it should be possible to mitigate / manage these. Therefore, on balance a **moderate positive effect** is predicted.

Table 8.2: Summary overall effects

Protected Characteristics	Summary of impacts
Age	The Plan is likely to positively impact children by protecting and enhancing access to green space, sports venues, recreation and educational opportunities, supporting health and wellbeing. Potential negative impacts may arise for children in more rural areas due to a lack of access to services as development is concentrated elsewhere, further, children may experience temporary negative disruption during construction. Older people are likely to benefit from improved connectivity to services, reduced social isolation, increased accessible housing and care homes and protection from climate and flood risk. They may be disproportionately negatively impacted by construction disruptions, face limited access in more rural areas and risk displacement if property values rise as a result of new developments. However, the Plan's emphasis on incorporating affordable housing within developments provides some mitigation for this risk.

Protected Characteristics

Summary of impacts

Sex	Overall, men and women are anticipated to benefit from the Plan. Improved access to employment, education, community facilities and safer public spaces can positively impact all. As women are at greater risk of discrimination and harassment when making journeys, the public realm and active travel improvements may provide benefits through improved perceptions of safety.
Sexual orientation	Inclusive design and improved access to community facilities and enhanced social cohesion benefit people of all sexual orientations. Risks include exclusion if community identity is not considered.
Gender reassignment	As above, inclusive design and improved access to community facilities and enhanced social cohesion can benefit all. There may be benefits for people of minority genders if development results in improved healthcare facilities that provide gender affirming care.
Disability	The strategy increases provision of accessible and adaptable housing, improves transport and public space accessibility, and enhances access to health and community facilities. Disabled people may be disproportionately impacted by construction disruptions, risk loss of accessible community facilities, and have limited access in rural areas. However, the plan distributes a proportion of growth to smaller settlements which include community facilities and therefore provides a degree of mitigation for such risks.
Marriage and civil partnership	Improved access to community facilities and housing and enhanced social cohesion are positive outcomes for people in marriage or civil partnerships. The provision of dwellings in a range of sizes can support households of different compositions.
Pregnancy and maternity	The Plan supports enhanced access to health facilities, safe public spaces, improved transport, and reduced air pollution for pregnant people and those with young children. They may be disproportionately affected by construction disruptions and face limited access to services in rural areas.
Race	Minority ethnic groups may experience positive impacts through improved access to community facilities, employment, inclusive design and enhanced social cohesion. The Plan recognises the accommodation needs for Gypsies, Travellers and travelling Showpeople, supporting site provision for accommodation. Delivery is predicated on site intensification and expansion, which is considered a reasonable way to meet needs (as identified in the GTAA). There remains a small residual risk of exclusion given that the Plan itself does not contain a specific policy to support the expansion and intensification of existing sites. However, national policy can be applied.

Protected Characteristics

Summary of impacts

Religion and belief	The protection of places of worship and community assets, improved access to cultural facilities and enhanced social cohesion can positively impact religious groups. There is a risk of displacement of religious venues and limited access in rural areas if development is concentrated elsewhere. However, the plan distributes a proportion of growth to smaller settlements which include religious facilities and therefore provides a degree of mitigation for such risks.
Socio-economic status	There may be positive socio-economic impacts through increased access to affordable housing, employment opportunities and improved low-cost travel methods (public transport and active travel). However, negative impacts include potential displacement if property values rise in development areas which can disproportionately impact lower-income households, particularly those in rental accommodation. The Plan's incorporation of affordable housing within new developments offers some mitigation.

8.12 Transport

IA Objective:

- Reduce the need to travel by private vehicle and promote sustainable modes of transport.

Growth strategy and allocations

- 8.12.1 The appraisal of the emerging spatial strategy in the preceding section identified potential for minor positive effects. This section takes the assessment forward by considering the extent to which the wider Local Plan policy framework may influence this prediction, including consideration of the spatial strategy, allocations and relevant supporting policies. The emerging Infrastructure Delivery Plan is being prepared to identify infrastructure requirements arising from planned development and will include measures to address transport impacts from growth proposed through the Local Plan.
- 8.12.2 The spatial strategy also carries forward a number of existing plan allocations and continues the established approach of focusing a substantial proportion of growth in sustainable locations. The effects associated with these existing allocations and the broad spatial approach have previously been considered through the SA of the adopted Local Plan and are therefore presumed to form part of the future baseline for this assessment. The focus of this assessment is consequently on the implications of the residual growth (considered alongside committed growth) and the extent to which the emerging policy framework can influence its effects.
- 8.12.3 The spatial strategy directs a substantial proportion of housing growth towards Wesham, which benefits from existing rail services, bus connections and active travel infrastructure.

- 8.12.4 This provides opportunities for a proportion of journeys to be undertaken using sustainable modes and supports growth within one of the Borough's most accessible settlements. It also directs new homes into locations that are relatively well served for day-to-day services, preventing a need to travel long distances. St Annes and Whitehills are also particularly good locations for active travel, providing good opportunities for walking and cycling. Warton benefits from local employment opportunities and good opportunities for active travel within the settlement, while the range of local facilities is also improving, supporting the ability of residents to meet some day-to-day needs locally.
- 8.12.5 However, the spatial strategy also distributes development across a range of other settlements including Wrea Green, Singleton, Newton, Weeton, Staining and Freckleton. Whilst these locations provide access to some local services and employment opportunities, the extent of public transport and active travel provision varies between these settlements and residents at these locations are generally more dependent on the private car. Consequently, the strategy is likely to increase traffic movements across both the strategic and local road network and may reinforce existing patterns of car dependency in some areas. The proportion of growth directed to these locations is relatively small though in the context of the overall growth, and so the magnitude of effects would not be anticipated to be major.
- 8.12.6 The policy framework further addresses the issue of accessibility and sustainable travel through several policies. Firstly, Policy IFR1 (Service Accessibility and Infrastructure) sets out that proposals for development should demonstrate how access to services will be achieved by means other than the car and requires development to contribute towards infrastructure improvements needed to meet development requirements. In addition, Policy IFR2 (Developer Contributions) states that developments may be required to provide contributions towards transport, including rail and tram infrastructure, bus, and cycle / footpath / bridleway network.
- 8.12.7 Moreover, Policy IFR5 (Enhancing Sustainable Transport Choice) seeks to ensure that development provides and encourages the take-up of alternative means of transport such as walking and cycling. It requires developments to provide pedestrian and cycle routes through sites and connections to adjoining development, the public rights of way network, bus stops, schools and local or neighbourhood centres. It also requires contributions towards improvements to public transport where existing provision is sub-standard or requires further support, and requires travel plans for developments generating significant amounts of movement.
- 8.12.8 These requirements are reinforced through the site allocation policies. For example, the Warton allocations require interconnected pedestrian and cycle routes linking development with adjoining sites, Harbour Lane and existing services, with HA9 also required to contribute towards transport links along Hillock Lane and Harbour Lane. At Wesham, HA10 and HA13 require accessible pedestrian and cycle routes connecting to existing routes and local services, while HA10 also requires connections to the existing pedestrian crossing on Fleetwood Road and linkage through to HA13. Similar requirements are included for allocations at Newton, Singleton and Wrea Green.

Other policies

- 8.12.9 The policy framework seeks to improve the accessibility of key infrastructure and secure viable alternative means of transport such as enhanced footpath and cycle provision (policies IFR5, DSA1 and IFR1). This is also demonstrated through a focus on developing transport infrastructure projects, such as delivering improvements to the South Fylde Railway Line (Policy IFR4). These policies work to not only accommodate future traffic demand, but also seek to influence travel behaviour, support sustainable transportation enhancements, and reduce a reliance on private vehicles.
- 8.12.10 Additional positive effects are also likely to come forward linked to directing development to the most sustainable locations, which reduces the need to travel (Policy ECD7). Furthermore, policies that focus on providing new development with active travel links are anticipated to bring forward positive effects by reducing a reliance on private vehicles (policies ENT3 and ENT4).
- 8.12.11 Finally, policies that deliver transport infrastructure through developer contributions are also likely to impact upon transport in Fylde through increasing the connectivity of public and active travel networks and making them more viable options (Policy IFR2).

Overall effects

- 8.12.12 The Plan directs the majority of growth to sustainable and accessible locations where possible. In addition, the policy framework seeks to encourage the use of public transport and active travel, and includes the use of existing, and delivery of new, transport services / infrastructure. Whilst some growth is dispersed to smaller settlements, this helps to maintain services and facilities in those locations, and is unlikely to create widespread increases in car reliance that significantly outweigh the benefits discussed above. Therefore, on balance, **moderate positive effects** are predicted.

8.13 Summary of effects

- 8.13.1 **Table 8.3** sets out a summary of the appraisal findings for each of the IA topics in relation to the Pre-Submission version of the Plan. This represents a conclusion on the significance of effects for the Plan considered 'as a whole'.

Table 8.3: Summary of the Pre-Submission Plan effects

IA topic	Summary of Plan effects
Biodiversity	Minor positive
Water, soil and land resources: <i>Water</i>	Neutral to minor positive
Water, soil and land resources: <i>Soil</i>	Minor to moderate negative
Historic environment	Uncertain minor negative
Landscape	Uncertain minor negative
Air quality and noise	Neutral
Climate change	Neutral to minor positive
Healthy and safe communities	Moderate positive
Material assets	Major positive
Equalities	Moderate positive
Transport	Moderate positive

- 8.13.2 The plan is predicted to lead to broadly minor to significant positive effects, particularly with regard to social, economic and certain environmental considerations. Whilst a degree of uncertainty / potential minor negative effects are anticipated under the historic environment and landscape IA topics, it is recognised that this is difficult to avoid given the sensitivity of heritage assets / landscape character to development. In addition, the policy framework sufficiently addresses these constraints and outlines how development could protect or enhance these assets.
- 8.13.3 Overall, the Plan performs particularly strongly in relation to healthy and safe communities, equalities, transport and material assets, where moderate to major positive effects are anticipated. The strategy focuses the majority of growth within the Borough's most sustainable locations, supporting the delivery of new homes, employment opportunities, infrastructure and services where they can be most effectively accommodated. This approach provides opportunities to improve accessibility, support active travel, maintain the vitality of communities and deliver investment that benefits both existing and future residents. In particular, the Plan is expected to support the delivery of affordable and specialist housing, enhance access to key services and facilities, strengthen sustainable transport connections and provide a clear framework for economic growth and investment. The concentration of development within the strategic locations also provides opportunities to coordinate infrastructure delivery, secure developer contributions and maximise the benefits of existing and planned community, transport and employment assets.

- 8.13.4 Whilst some environmental effects and trade-offs are inevitable when accommodating growth, these are generally limited and localised in nature. The Plan includes a comprehensive framework of policies relating to biodiversity, green infrastructure, landscape, heritage, climate change, design and infrastructure delivery, helping to avoid, reduce or mitigate adverse effects and maximise opportunities for enhancement. Positive effects are anticipated in relation to biodiversity and climate change, reflecting the emphasis on biodiversity net gain, habitat creation, green infrastructure, sustainable drainage and climate resilience measures. Neutral to minor positive effects are also anticipated in relation to water resources, reflecting the Plan's approach to water efficiency, water quality and flood risk management. The most notable residual adverse effects relate to the unavoidable loss of agricultural land (some of which is categorised as Best and Most Versatile). However, this is required to meet development needs, and alternative locations are also sensitive in this regard.
- 8.13.5 As mentioned above, there are localised impacts on landscape character and the setting of heritage assets. However, these effects are broadly moderated through site-specific requirements and development management policies which seek to ensure that growth is delivered in a sensitive and sustainable manner. There is unlikely to be any direct loss of sensitive heritage assets, with effects on setting being the key consideration.
- 8.13.6 Taking the findings of the appraisal as a whole, the Plan is considered to provide a positive and balanced framework for accommodating future growth across Fylde.

9. Mitigation and Enhancement

9.1 Introduction

- 9.1.1 This section summarises the key mitigation and enhancement measures identified through the iterative IA process during the preparation of the Plan. The recommendations are intended to strengthen the sustainability performance of the Plan by avoiding or minimising adverse effects and maximising positive outcomes across the IA objectives. A summary of the recommendations made and how these have been considered in the plan-making process is set out in the **Table 9.1** below.

Table 9.1: Recommendations made at Reg19 stage

Recommendation	Council response
Climate change Consider the inclusion of a strategic Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation policy to strengthen support for local and national climate objectives. Such a policy could address embodied carbon, whole-life carbon reduction, carbon sequestration, energy efficiency, climate resilience, sustainable construction, overheating, water conservation and urban greening. This could provide a more comprehensive framework for delivering positive climate outcomes over the plan period. Such a policy would also better link the Plan to local and regional climate change ambitions.	It is considered that much of the material covered would duplicate existing policies, particularly the specific elements of design policy, water management and landscape policies that contribute to climate change mitigation. Whilst whole-life carbon impacts have been considered by the Council, it is unlikely to be of regular significance to Fylde, compared to large urban centres, as it relates principally to considerations around the redevelopment of existing buildings, which is only occasionally a significant issue for development proposals in Fylde. It also requires a degree of technical understanding from applicants and agents that would involve difficulty in effective implementation.
Climate change There is opportunity to specify that specific site allocations involving areas at risk of flooding will be designed to avoid sensitive areas and make proactive use as green infrastructure or flood storage areas.	Site-specific policies have been included to direct development away from flood risk areas and provide for biodiversity in these
Equality Introduce a specific policy requirement for developers to prepare Employment and Skills Plans or to target employment and training opportunities towards local residents or particular groups.	It is not considered that the Council has evidence to justify the introduction of specific requirements on individual companies, nor that it is necessarily desirable.

Recommendation

Council response

Equality

The introduction of EqlAs / HIAs for larger development proposals could help identify and address potential impacts on protected characteristic groups, including impacts relating to access to services, community cohesion, health inequalities and potential displacement.

Requirement for Equalities Assessments for large development sites. This could be appropriate if the plan included very large sites that included a full range of new facilities to serve it; however, for this plan it is considered to have no practical applicability.

Biodiversity

Consider the inclusion of a strategic Nature Recovery and Ecological Networks policy. Such a policy could complement existing biodiversity protection policies by promoting habitat restoration, ecological connectivity, delivery of the Lancashire Local Nature Recovery Strategy priorities, landscape-scale nature recovery and multifunctional green infrastructure. This could strengthen positive effects for biodiversity (and other topic areas).

Following up on this recommendation (amongst other consultation feedback) the Plan was amended to include measures to:

- Reference the Local Nature Recovery Strategy to ensure opportunities for Biodiversity Net Gain to meet priorities are taken up.
- Require Masterplanning across adjoining sites to improve opportunities for biodiversity enhancement.

Introduce site-specific policies to direct development away from flood risk areas and provide for biodiversity in such appropriate locations.

10. Monitoring and next steps

10.1 Introduction

- 10.1.1 The SEA Regulations⁹ require the significant environmental effects of implementing a plan to be monitored in order to identify any unforeseen adverse effects and enable appropriate remedial action to be taken where necessary. Monitoring should therefore focus on the significant effects identified through the appraisal, rather than attempting to monitor every predicted effect.
- 10.1.2 Monitoring measures should be proportionate and practical, taking account of the availability of data and existing monitoring measures. In developing the proposed monitoring framework, consideration has therefore been given to the indicators already established through the Local Plan monitoring framework, together with relevant monitoring measures, indicators and targets contained within related plans, programmes and strategies. This approach helps to minimise duplication whilst ensuring that the key sustainability effects of the Plan can be effectively monitored. Where necessary, new indicators are proposed to complement any existing / proposed monitoring measures.
- 10.1.3 **Table 10.1** summarises the effects of the Plan together with the proposed monitoring indicators. Measures will be finalised once the Plan is adopted and will be set out in an SA Adoption Statement in accordance with the SEA Regulations.

Table 9.1: Proposed monitoring indicators

IA topic and summary of effects	Proposed monitoring indicators
Biodiversity	• Number of BNG consents and contributions. • Condition of European, national and local sites. • Changes in areas of biodiversity importance. • Contribution towards opportunities identified in the Lancashire Local Nature Recovery Strategy.
Water, soil and land resources	• Ecological statuses of waterbodies. • Bathing water quality. • Development of Grade 2 and Grade 3a provisional agricultural land. • Development of brownfield sites.
Historic environment	• Number of heritage assets on the Heritage at Risk Register. • Number of listed building consent applications that are approved or refused.

⁹ Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004.

IA topic and summary of effects**Proposed monitoring indicators**

	• Number of Conservation Areas with up-to-date Conservation Area Appraisals and Management Plans.
Landscape	• Number of completed public realm enhancement schemes. • Area of previously developed land regenerated through development.
Air quality and noise	• Annual mean nitrogen dioxide (NO₂) concentrations at monitoring locations. • Number of enforcement cases recorded regarding noise or opening hour restriction breaches for evening economy uses.
Climate change	• Total greenhouse gas emissions by sector. • Territorial greenhouse gas emissions (ktCO₂e). • Number of major developments incorporating renewable/low-carbon energy. • Number of planning applications permitted including the use of solar panels. • Number of major developments with on-site renewables. • Number of completed developments within Flood Zone 3. • Number of planning permissions within flood zones. • Number of developments delivering natural flood management or blue-green infrastructure. • Percentage net increase in tree canopy cover. • Area of new green infrastructure delivered. • Mode share for journeys to work (walking, cycling and public transport).
Healthy and safe communities	• Number of Health Impact Assessments submitted. • Area of new public open space delivered through development. • Amount of indoor, outdoor recreation and open space gained or lost.
Material assets	• Net additional dwellings completed. • Proportion of net homes completed in strategic and non-strategic locations. • Five-year housing supply. • Housing types, tenures and densities.

IA topic and summary of effects

Proposed monitoring indicators

	• Affordable housing completions. • Employment floorspace completed (by use class). • Loss of designated employment land to non-employment uses. • Quantity of employment land. • Cumulative additional jobs created as a direct consequence of incentives provided by the Warton Enterprise Zone and the Blackpool Enterprise Zone. • Developer contributions secured and spent on infrastructure. • Number, type and location of infrastructure projects delivered. • Percentage of working age population in employment. • Unemployment rate and growth in Fylde's economy (GDP). • Cumulative additional jobs from the start of the plan period.
Equalities	• Number and type of older people accommodation delivered. • Delivery of traveller pitches. • Number of new or enhanced community facilities delivered.
Transport	• Mode share for journeys to work (walking, cycling and public transport). • Length of new walking and cycling routes delivered. • Public transport patronage (bus and rail). • Number of major developments providing active travel infrastructure in accordance with policy. • Number of new homes within walking distance (800m) of a frequent public transport service. • Delivery of strategic transport infrastructure schemes.

11. Next steps

- 11.1.1 This IA Report accompanies the Publication (Regulation 19) version of the Fylde Local Plan and brings together the findings of the assessment undertaken throughout the preparation of the Plan.
- 11.1.2 The Publication Local Plan and this IA Report will be subject to consultation under Regulation 19 of the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012. Following consultation, the Council will consider all representations received before submitting the Plan, together with the supporting evidence base, for independent Examination.
- 11.1.3 During Examination, the appointed Planning Inspector will consider whether the Plan has been prepared in accordance with the relevant legal and procedural requirements and whether it is sound. Where changes to the Plan are proposed during the Examination process, further Integrated Assessment work may be undertaken, where necessary, to assess the likely significant effects of any modifications.

