

Integrated Assessment (IA) of the Fylde Local Plan

Regulation 19 Publication Plan
Integrated Assessment Non-Technical Summary

Fylde Borough Council

September 2026

Quality information

Prepared by	Checked by	Verified by	Approved by
BR Environmental Planner	IK Principal Planner	IM Associate Director	IM Associate Director
EB Environmental Planner			
EH Senior Environmental Planner			
AV Senior Environmental Planner			
CT Social Impact Consultant			

Revision History

Revision	Revision date	Details	Name	Position
V1.0	17.09.2026	Final for consultation	IK	Principal Environmental Planner

Prepared for:

Fylde Borough Council

Prepared by:

AECOM Limited
100 Embankment
Cathedral Approach
Manchester M3 7FB
United Kingdom

T: +44 161 601 1700
aecom.com

© 2026 AECOM Limited. All Rights Reserved.

This document has been prepared by AECOM Limited (“AECOM”) in accordance with its contract with Fylde Borough Council and in accordance with generally accepted consultancy principles and the established budget. Any information provided by third parties and referred to herein has not been checked or verified by AECOM, unless otherwise expressly stated in the document. AECOM shall have no liability to any third party that makes use of or relies upon this document.

Table of Contents

1.	Introduction	1
2.	Fylde’s environmental baseline.....	2
3.	How the Local Plan was assessed	8
4.	Assessment of reasonable alternatives	10
5.	What are the main findings of the IA?.....	14
6.	Next steps.....	16

1. Introduction

1.1 What is the Fylde Local Plan?

- 1.1.1 Fylde Borough Council is preparing a new Local Plan (referred to in this summary as 'the Local Plan') to guide development across the area to 2042. The Local Plan will set out where new homes, jobs, infrastructure, community facilities and green spaces should be located, and establish the planning policies that will be used to guide future development.
- 1.1.2 The Local Plan will replace the current Fylde Local Plan to 2032, and will help deliver the Council's long-term vision for the area. The vision and objectives of the Local Plan is set out in the main IA Report.

1.2 What is the Integrated Assessment?

- 1.2.1 The Local Plan has been supported by an Integrated Assessment (IA), which has been undertaken alongside plan preparation.
- 1.2.2 The purpose of the assessment is to understand how the Local Plan could affect the environment, local communities, health and wellbeing, equality, and the economy. It combines Sustainability Appraisal (SA), Health Impact Assessment (HIA) and Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) into a single process, helping to ensure that social, environmental and economic issues are considered together. The assessment also fulfils the requirements of [Strategic Environmental Assessment \(SEA\) legislation](#).

1.3 Why was the assessment carried out?

- 1.3.1 The IA has helped inform the development of the Local Plan from an early stage. It has been used to test different approaches, identify effects, and recommend changes where improvements could be made.
- 1.3.2 This process helps ensure that the Local Plan supports sustainable development by maximising positive outcomes and reducing or avoiding negative effects wherever possible.

1.4 What does this document cover?

- 1.4.1 This Non-Technical Summary (NTS) provides a concise overview of the main findings of the IA. The NTS:
 - Explains the key sustainability issues facing Fylde.
 - Outlines the alternatives considered during the preparation of the Local Plan.
 - Summarises the likely significant effects of the preferred approach; and
 - Describes how the Local Plan seeks to address potential environmental, social and economic impacts.
- 1.4.2 The NTS has been prepared to help residents, businesses, community groups and other stakeholders understand the findings of the assessment without needing to read the full IA Report.

2. Fylde's environmental baseline

2.1 Introduction

- 2.1.1 The IA was informed by a review of the current social, environment and economic conditions in Fylde. This baseline information helped to identify key sustainability issues that the Local Plan needs to address and provided the context for the assessment.

2.2 Fylde's key sustainability issues

- 2.2.1 The key issues identified through the IA scoping process are summarised below:

Biodiversity

- There are strong legal and policy requirements within Fylde that work to protect and improve wildlife and natural habitats. This includes the need to achieve an overall improvement in biodiversity through new development.
- There are several European designated sites within or in close proximity to Fylde. As such, future development could affect these areas, particularly through increased visitor pressure and impacts on the local environment.
- These important nature sites are connected by wider networks of habitats across the borough. While most protected sites are outside built-up areas, some are located within towns and settlements.
- The borough contains a range of important habitats and wildlife areas. The Local Plan should help restore and strengthen nature across the area and ensure that any impacts from development are properly addressed.

Water, soil and land resources

- Many rivers, streams and other water bodies in and around Fylde are not in good ecological condition. Pollution from farming is the main cause, although pollution from towns, wastewater and changes to watercourses also affect water quality and local wildlife.
- Fylde's designated bathing waters did not achieve a "good" water quality rating in 2025. Flooding can worsen water quality and may affect the safety and enjoyment of these areas.
- The borough contains large areas of high-quality agricultural land. Protecting this land from development is important for supporting local food production and wildlife.
- There are areas within the borough that contain important mineral resources. Development should avoid limiting access to or sterilising these resources.
- Some former landfill sites are located along the coast and may pose contamination risks. Any redevelopment will need to address potential pollution and ensure the land is safe for future use.

- As the population grows, more waste will need to be managed. The borough will need adequate facilities to reduce waste, increase recycling, and handle future demand.

Historic environment

- Fylde has a rich historic environment, with many important buildings, places and areas that reflect its industrial, coastal and urban heritage. These are particularly concentrated in Lytham St Annes and Kirkham.
- Historic buildings and areas can be affected by development, regeneration and population growth. Without careful planning, these changes could harm their character, setting or condition.
- Some conservation areas do not yet have up-to-date plans to guide their management. This can make it more difficult to ensure that change is handled appropriately and that historic areas are protected.
- Future growth could help improve and celebrate Fylde's historic environment through the restoration and reuse of historic buildings and better integration of heritage into new development. To achieve this, heritage considerations need to be built into planning decisions from an early stage.

Landscape

- Fylde is mainly a rural area with only limited Green Belt land. As a result, future development could place pressure on existing green spaces and the countryside, potentially affecting the area's character and identity.
- The borough's landscape is shaped by its farmland, coastline and natural habitats. Well-designed development can help protect and enhance this character, while poorly planned development could weaken it.
- There is currently no recent assessment of Fylde's landscape character, making it harder to fully understand which areas are most sensitive to change and where opportunities for improvement exist.
- Fylde's towns and centres are changing as shopping, working and travel habits evolve. These changes could improve local areas through better public spaces and active travel options, or lead to issues such as vacant units and a decline in appearance if not managed effectively.
- Parts of the borough's rural and coastal landscapes are closely linked to its history and local identity. Development and changing land uses could harm these valued qualities unless impacts are carefully considered and addressed.
- There is a risk that some settlements, particularly Wrea Green and Kirkham, and Kirkham and Newton, could gradually merge into one another. Protecting the green spaces between them will be important to maintain their separate identities.
- Green infrastructure, such as trees, parks, sustainable drainage systems and green roofs, play an important role in enhancing the environment and helping communities adapt to climate change. New development provides an opportunity to strengthen these features across the borough.

Air quality and noise

- Air pollution is generally higher in built-up areas compared to rural areas and along major roads and transport routes. New development in these locations could increase pollution levels if impacts are not carefully managed.
- While air quality across Fylde is generally good, future growth could create additional pressures, particularly if it leads to more traffic or increased emissions from homes and businesses.
- Noise can be a significant issue near major roads, railway lines and flight paths. Communities close to these transport routes, including parts of Lytham St Annes, Warton and Freckleton, can be particularly affected.
- New homes, jobs and infrastructure could increase traffic and activity levels, potentially leading to more air and noise pollution. However, well-planned development that supports public transport, walking and cycling can help reduce these impacts and improve quality of life for residents.

Climate change and flood risk

- Large parts of Fylde are at risk of flooding from rivers and surface water. Future development could increase this risk by reducing the amount of land available for natural drainage. The Local Plan should steer development away from the areas most at risk and ensure measures such as sustainable drainage systems are included in new developments.
- Climate change is expected to bring greater challenges to Fylde, including increased flooding, heatwaves, sea level rise and more extreme weather events. Building resilience and helping communities adapt will be important to reduce future risks.
- Transport and energy use in homes are the borough's largest sources of carbon emissions. There is an opportunity to reduce emissions by encouraging walking, cycling and public transport, supporting the switch to electric vehicles, improving the energy efficiency of existing homes and ensuring new development is built to high environmental standards.

Healthy and safe communities

- Fylde's population is growing and is expected to continue increasing. This will place greater demand on schools, community facilities and other local services, particularly as the population becomes older and requires additional support and infrastructure.
- Although life expectancy in Fylde broadly aligns with the national average, some health issues, including obesity, alcohol-related illness and poor mental health, are more common. Health inequalities also exist in some parts of the borough, creating additional pressure on healthcare services.
- Physical activity levels are relatively low, especially among children and young people. Improving access to walking, cycling and green spaces, and strengthening active travel connections, could help improve health and wellbeing.

- Educational attainment is generally high in Fylde, but there is a need to ensure that schools and educational facilities continue to meet local needs and are of a good quality.
- Concerns remain about road safety and increasing population growth could add pressure to the transport network. However, the number of traffic collisions has been falling in recent years.
- Crime levels in Fylde are lower than many comparable areas, but some locations experience higher levels of crime and crime-related deprivation. Supporting safe and inclusive communities will remain important as the borough grows.

Material assets

- Housing delivery in Fylde has been relatively consistent, but future housing growth relies heavily on a small number of large development sites. This means delivery could be affected by infrastructure requirements, site viability and market conditions.
- An ageing population and smaller households are increasing demand for smaller, accessible homes. At the same time, it remains important to provide enough family housing to support balanced and sustainable communities.
- The town centres of Kirkham, Lytham and St Annes are facing changes in shopping habits. To remain attractive and successful, they may need to accommodate a wider mix of uses, including leisure, services and housing.
- Economic inactivity is relatively high, largely because of the borough's older population. Supporting opportunities for younger and working-age residents to access employment will be important for the local economy.
- Fylde's economy is mainly based on the service sector, with limited local employment land and many residents commuting to nearby centres for work. Improving access to jobs and maintaining good transport connections will be important to support economic growth and opportunity.

Equalities

- While Fylde is not among the most deprived areas nationally, some communities experience particular challenges relating to the living environment, health, disability, and access to housing and services.
- A relatively high proportion of residents have a disability or long-term health condition that affects their daily lives. Ensuring access to employment, affordable living and suitable support services will remain important.
- Fylde has a significantly older population than regional and national averages, and the number of residents aged 80 and over is expected to increase substantially. This will increase demand for health, care and support services, while tackling loneliness and social isolation will become increasingly important.

- Many households in the borough are either older people living alone or couples without dependent children, reflecting the ageing population of the local area and influencing future housing and service needs.
- The borough has a relatively high proportion of married, divorced and widowed residents, which is also linked to its older age profile.
- Fylde is less ethnically and culturally diverse than many other parts of the region and country. As the community evolves, it will be important to ensure services and opportunities remain inclusive and accessible to all residents.
- Health outcomes are generally good, with life expectancy above the regional average, but there are still inequalities in health across the borough. Supporting healthy lifestyles and independent living can help improve quality of life and reduce future demand on services.
- Educational attainment is generally strong and performs well compared with regional averages, providing a positive foundation for future opportunities.
- Unemployment is relatively low, but economic inactivity is higher than average, reflecting the borough's older population and the number of residents with long-term health conditions. Supporting participation in employment where possible will remain important.
- Demand for affordable and accessible housing remains high, with a significant number of households seeking rehousing, including many residents with disabilities.
- A large proportion of households consist solely of older people, particularly in St Annes and Lytham. Meeting the housing and care needs of an ageing population will therefore be a key challenge.
- Many households requiring additional support have physical disabilities or mobility issues. Ensuring suitable housing, accessible services and community support will be important in helping residents live independently.

Transport

- Fylde benefits from good road and rail connections, particularly around Kirkham and, to a lesser extent, Lytham St Annes. These links provide access to nearby centres such as Preston and Blackpool and support travel beyond the borough.
- Rural areas are generally less well connected, with fewer public transport options available for rural communities despite good access to the road network.
- Major roads and the M55 motorway play an important role in supporting travel and economic activity. However, congestion is already an issue in some locations and is likely to increase as the population grows.
- Fylde's rail network provides important connections for residents and businesses, but some areas have limited access to rail services. Improving service provision could encourage more people to use public transport.

- Bus services are generally good across most of the borough but are limited in rural areas. Population growth is likely to increase demand for more frequent services and better coverage.
- Fylde attracts a significant number of people travelling into the borough for work. This highlights the importance of maintaining a reliable and well-connected transport network that supports both local and longer-distance journeys.
- Climate change presents increasing risks to transport infrastructure, with flooding and extreme weather potentially causing disruption to roads and rail services. Improving the resilience of the transport network will be important to reduce future impacts and maintain reliable connections.

2.3 What does this mean for the Local Plan?

- 2.3.1 These issues have helped shape both the Local Plan and the IA. They provide the basis for assessing the likely effects of the Local Plan and for identifying opportunities to improve sustainability outcomes as Fylde continues to grow.

3. How the Local Plan was assessed

3.1 Introduction

- 3.1.1 The IA was carried out alongside the preparation of the Local Plan. The assessment has informed plan-making as policies, site allocations and growth options have been developed and refined.
- 3.1.2 The purpose of the IA is to identify the likely environmental, social and economic effects of the Local Plan. This includes considering opportunities to enhance positive effects, as well as measures to avoid, reduce or mitigate potential adverse effects.
- 3.1.3 The assessment was informed by a wide range of evidence, including environmental studies, housing and employment evidence, flood risk information, health data and consultation responses received throughout the preparation of the Local Plan.
- 3.1.4 The IA uses a consistent scoring system to identify the likely significance of effects. Effects may be positive, negative, or neutral, and can range from minor to major depending on their scale, duration and importance.

3.2 Stage of assessment

- 3.2.1 The IA comprises two main stages of assessment. First, reasonable alternatives were assessed to consider different approaches to delivering the objectives of the Local Plan. Second, the publication version of the Local Plan was assessed to identify its likely environmental, social and economic effects, and to determine whether any mitigation or enhancement measures were required.

3.3 The IA Framework

- 3.3.1 To provide a consistent basis for assessment, the IA uses a framework of objectives covering the key environmental, social, and economic issues facing Fylde. The IA Framework acts as a set of assessment criteria against which the Local Plan, reasonable alternatives, and site allocations, have been assessed.
- 3.3.2 Further details of the IA Framework, including the supporting appraisal questions used during the assessment process, are provided in Chapter 2 of the main IA Report.

Table NTS1: IA framework

IA topic	IA objective
Biodiversity	Protect, restore and enhance habitats and species, including designated sites, locally important features and links between habitats.
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.
	Promote the efficient use of land.
	Promote sustainable waste and mineral resource management.
Historic environment	Preserve and enhance Fylde's historic environment, including designated and non-designated heritage assets and their setting.
Landscape	Protect and enhance the character and quality of Fylde's landscapes and townscapes.
Air quality and noise	Deliver improvements in air quality in Fylde.
	Reduce the impacts of noise on human health and the environment.
Climate change and flood risk	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.
Healthy and safe communities	Improve health and wellbeing of residents.
	Improve levels of educational attainment.
	Protect access to green spaces and leisure facilities.
Material assets	Promote coordinated land use planning across Fylde.
	Promote economic growth and job creation across the sub-region, and improve access to jobs for all.
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.
Transport	Reduce the need to travel by private vehicle and promote sustainable modes of transport.

4. Assessment of reasonable alternatives

4.1 Why were reasonable alternatives assessed?

- 4.1.1 As part of the IA, the Council considered whether there were different reasonable ways of meeting the objectives of the Local Plan. Assessing 'reasonable alternatives' is an important part of the Sustainability Appraisal process and helps ensure that different approaches are tested before a preferred approach is selected.

4.2 Reasonable alternatives considered

- 4.2.1 During the preparation of the Local Plan, consideration was given to whether reasonable alternatives existed 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.
- 4.2.2 The reasonable alternatives were developed as alternative strategies that could reasonably meet the objectives of the Local Plan and allow the sustainability implications of different scales and distributions of growth to be compared.

4.3 Housing growth and distribution options

- 4.3.1 The Local Plan identifies a housing requirement of 6,656 homes over the Plan period to 2042, based on the Government's Standard Method. The Council identified sufficient suitable sites to meet this requirement without the need for considering sites in the Green Belt. A lower level of housing growth was therefore not considered to be a reasonable alternative.
- 4.3.2 A higher level of housing growth was considered to be a reasonable alternative, taking account of the wider strategic context, including increased housing needs in neighbouring local authorities, as well as the potential to provide greater flexibility in housing delivery, support affordable housing needs and support population and economic growth. A 20% uplift was used to test the sustainability implications of a materially higher level of growth, equivalent to approximately 1,331 additional homes and an indicative requirement of approximately 7,987 homes.
- 4.3.3 The assessment also considered different ways of distributing housing growth across Fylde. Four reasonable alternatives were considered focused on how the identified housing requirement can be distributed across Fylde:
- Option 1: Emerging Local Plan approach
 - Option 2A: Maximise growth at Kirkham and Wesham, with remaining growth at higher-order sustainable locations (principally at Warton)
 - Option 2B: Maximise growth at Kirkham and Wesham, with remaining growth more widely distributed
 - Option 3: Increased dispersal across a wider range of settlements

4.3.4 Two further reasonable alternatives considered how the higher level of housing growth could be distributed:

- Option 4A: Higher growth focused principally at Kirkham, Warton and Newton
- Option 4B: Higher growth distributed across a wider range of settlements

4.3.5 Chapter 5 of the main IA report includes figures which illustrate the sites assumed to form part of each option.

4.4 Employment land and mixed-use site options

4.4.1 The Council also considered whether there were reasonable alternatives in relation to employment land. The Local Plan supporting evidence identified a need for 24.49 hectares of employment land from the April 2026 base date to 2042, taking account of employment land developed since 2023. The evidence found that the remaining elements of almost all existing employment allocations remained suitable and provided sufficient land to meet this identified need.

4.4.2 As a result, there was limited strategic choice over either the amount or spatial distribution of employment land. A materially lower level of provision would not meet the identified need, while a higher level was not supported by an identified additional requirement. The existing suitable employment allocations have therefore been carried forward as the basis of the emerging Local Plan, supplemented by a new employment allocation at 'Land south of Bradkirk Business Park' in Wesham, which responds to a specific local opportunity and identified gap in supply. No separate reasonable alternatives for employment land were identified for detailed assessment through the IA.

4.4.3 The assessment also considered the three strategic mixed-use sites at St Annes and Whyndyke/Whitehills, which provide opportunities for housing alongside employment, commercial uses, infrastructure and supporting facilities. At St Annes, Site SAS012 provides for 389 homes and commercial development, while at Whitehills/Whyndyke, Site WHY003 provides for 700 homes, commercial development, walking and cycling connections and substantial public open space, and Site WHY011 includes 20 hectares of employment land and provides an opportunity for a medium-to-large industrial user. Given their strategic role, scale and relationship with existing committed development, no separate reasonable alternatives were identified for these sites.

4.5 What did the assessment find?

4.5.1 The reasonable alternatives have been assessed against the IA framework to identify their likely effects. Effects range from major positive to major negative, with minor, neutral and uncertain effects also identified. **Table NTS2** summarises these findings for each housing growth and distribution alternative and shows their relative ranking against each IA topic.

- 4.5.2 The rankings indicate the relative performance of the alternatives, with better-performing alternatives ranked higher and equal rankings where alternatives perform similarly. The ranking should be considered alongside the significance of effects, as alternatives with the same significance rating may still perform differently relative to one another.

Table NTS2: Assessment scores for the reasonable alternative options

	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

- 4.5.3 The IA assessed the overall level and spatial distribution of housing growth, finding that alternatives which concentrate a greater proportion of growth within Kirkham and Wesham generally perform more favourably across a range of environmental, social and economic objectives. This reflects the role of these settlements as important service centres, their access to employment opportunities, services, community facilities and public transport, and the potential to make more efficient use of existing infrastructure.
- 4.5.4 However, the benefits of concentrating growth are not sufficient to rule out development elsewhere. A more balanced distribution can help support the vitality and viability of other settlements, meet local housing needs, increase housing choice and provide a wider distribution of investment and infrastructure benefits.
- 4.5.5 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. While this can support a wider range of communities, it reduces some of the sustainability benefits associated with concentrating growth in the Borough's most accessible locations. In some settlements, the scale of development could also result in more noticeable changes to settlement character and the relationship between villages and the surrounding countryside.
- 4.5.6 The higher-growth alternatives, Options 4A and 4B, would provide additional housing and could support wider choice in housing, economic activity, services and infrastructure. However, the higher level of growth would also increase environmental, transport and infrastructure pressures.

4.6 Selection of the Preferred Approach

- 4.6.1 The reasonable alternatives assessment identified trade-offs between concentrating development in the Borough's more accessible settlements and distributing growth more widely.
- 4.6.2 Taking account of the assessment, consultation feedback and the wider evidence base, the Council selected Option 1 as the preferred approach. The Council's reasons for selecting the preferred approach are set out in Chapter 6 of the main IA report.

5. What are the main findings of the IA?

5.1 Summary of appraisal findings

- 5.1.1 **Table NTS3** sets out a summary of the appraisal findings for each of the IA topics in relation to the Publication version of the Local Plan. This represents a conclusion on the significance of effects for the Local Plan considered ‘as a whole’.

Table NTS3: Summary of the Publication 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

- 5.1.2 The Plan is predicted to lead to broadly minor to significant positive effects, particularly in relation to social, economic and some environmental considerations. Whilst there is some uncertainty and potential for minor negative effects in relation to the historic environment and landscape IA topics, this reflects the sensitivity of heritage assets and landscape character to development. The Local Plan includes policy requirements to address these constraints and protect or enhance these assets where possible.
- 5.1.3 The Local Plan is likely to have moderate to major positive effects in relation to healthy and safe communities, equalities, transport and material assets. 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. This provides opportunities to improve accessibility, support active travel, maintain community vitality and deliver investment that benefits existing and future residents.

- 5.1.4 The Local Plan also supports the delivery of affordable and specialist housing, access to key services and facilities, sustainable transport connections and economic growth and investment. Focusing development within the strategic locations also provides opportunities to coordinate infrastructure delivery and secure developer contributions to support community, transport and employment infrastructure.
- 5.1.5 Whilst some environmental effects are inevitable when accommodating growth, the predicted effects through the Local Plan are generally limited and localised in nature. The Local Plan includes policies addressing 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. Neutral to minor positive effects are also anticipated in relation to water resources, reflecting the Local Plan's approach to water efficiency, water quality and flood risk management. The most notable residual adverse effect relates to the loss of good quality agricultural land. However, this is associated with meeting development needs and alternative locations are also subject to similar constraints.
- 5.1.6 There are also some localised effects on landscape character and the setting of heritage assets. These are expected to be moderated through site-specific and development management policies, which seek to ensure that growth is delivered sensitively. There is unlikely to be direct loss of sensitive heritage assets, with effects on their setting being the key consideration.
- 5.1.7 Taking the findings of the appraisal as a whole, the Local Plan provides a positive and balanced framework for accommodating future growth across Fylde, whilst recognising and seeking to manage the environmental and infrastructure impacts associated with development.

5.2 Recommendations

- 5.2.1 Mitigation and enhancement measures were identified through the iterative IA process during the preparation of the Local Plan. The recommendations were intended to strengthen the sustainability performance of the Local Plan by avoiding or minimising adverse effects and maximising positive outcomes across the IA objectives. The recommendations made and how these have been considered is set out in Chapter 9 of the main IA report.
- 5.2.2 Key recommendations that informed changes to the Local Plan included:
- Site-specific policy detail were introduced to steer development away from areas at flood risk while supporting biodiversity enhancement and green infrastructure.
 - The Plan was updated to reference the Local Nature Recovery Strategy, helping to align Biodiversity Net Gain delivery with local nature recovery priorities.
 - A requirement for masterplanning across adjoining sites was added to secure more coordinated habitat creation and biodiversity improvements across larger development areas.

6. Next steps

6.1 Consultation and examination

- 6.1.1 The IA Report (including this NTS document) 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.
- 6.1.2 The Publication Local Plan and the 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.
- 6.1.3 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.

6.2 Monitoring

- 6.2.1 Monitoring will draw on a range of indicators relating to topics such as housing delivery, economic growth, biodiversity, climate change, health and wellbeing, transport and environmental quality. This information will help the Council assess the effectiveness of the Plan and inform future reviews.
- 6.2.2 The full list of proposed monitoring indicators is set out in the main IA Report.

