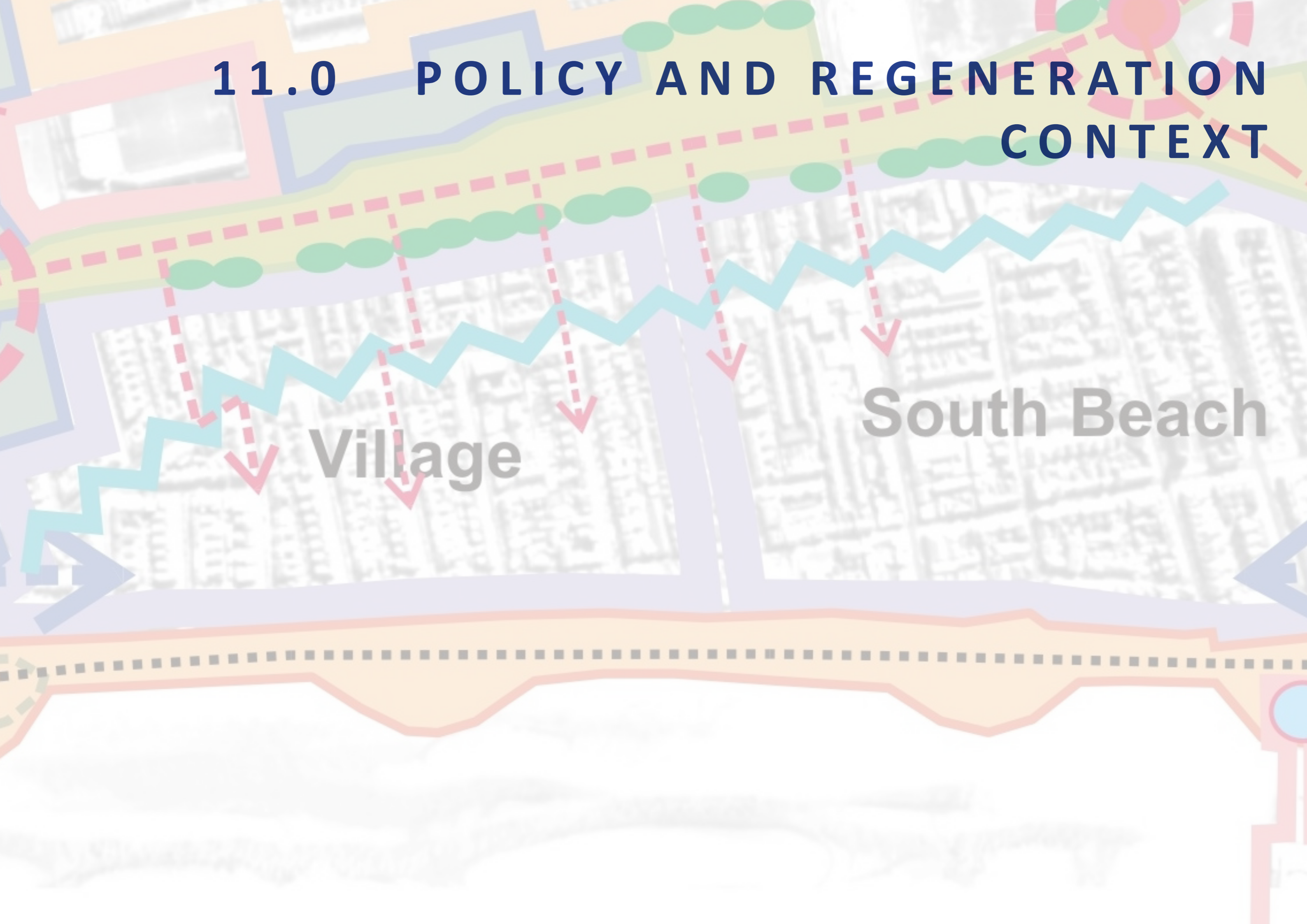


11.0 POLICY AND REGENERATION CONTEXT

Village

South Beach



11.0 POLICY & REGENERATION CONTEXT

Key Facts

Policy and Regeneration Context

- ❑ Regeneration proposals for the South Beach area need to be consistent with a wide range of national, regional and local planning policies and investment strategies
- ❑ Proposals for an Area Action Plan (AAP) in South Beach are contained in the Council's approved Local Development Scheme (LDS)
- ❑ The preparation of Area Action Plans must follow government guidance set out in Planning Policy Statement 12: creating strong safe and prosperous communities through Local Spatial Planning (PPS12)
- ❑ The South Beach area already benefits from a number of key strategies hence the context for regeneration is already in place
- ❑ The study area falls within the area covered by the Urban Regeneration Company "ReBlackpool"

11.1 Introduction

11.1.1 The regeneration of the South Beach area will need to be guided by an overarching project and land use policy intervention strategy or framework. The Council's Local Development Scheme currently foresees this intervention strategy being embodied in a formal Area Action Plan.

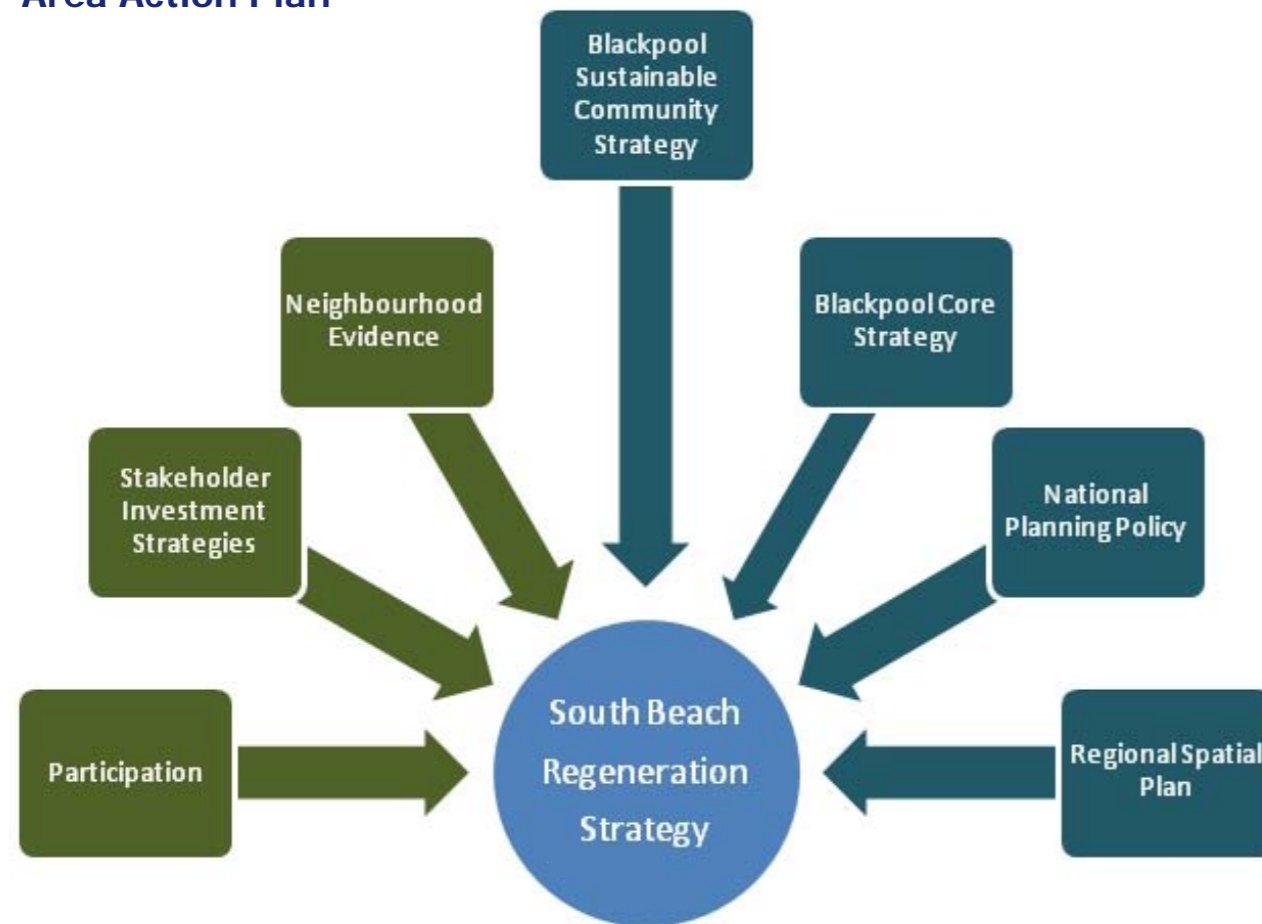
The policies and proposals which are set out in a South Beach AAP must be considered "sound" and to be formally adopted must:

- ❑ Have regard to national policy;
- ❑ Be consistent with the Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS); and
- ❑ Have regard to the Blackpool Sustainable Community Strategy

11.1.2 The policy context for plan making in the UK is complex. The purpose of this section is to summarise the key national, regional and local policies which will influence the development of a regeneration strategy for the South Beach area.

11.2.3 **Figure 11.1** shows the various policy and evidence influences on the development of a regeneration strategy for South Beach. Full details of all relevant policies which the AAP must have regard are set out at www.blackpool.gov.uk/southbeachaap.

Figure 11.1: Policy and Evidence Influences on the South Beach Area Action Plan



11.2 Shaping Blackpool's Future -Blackpool's Sustainable Community Strategy 2008 to 2028

11.2.1 The key reference point for the development of local planning policy in the town is the new Blackpool Sustainable Communities Strategy (published in May 2008) which sets out the overarching vision for the town as follows:

Creating a sustainable future for Blackpool – a great place to visit, an even better place to live.

'Our aspiration is for Blackpool to have a prosperous, vibrant, high quality, all year round economy; generating healthier, better skilled and educated communities, enjoying a safer and more pleasant place. A place where children and young people are proud to grow up; where people aspire to live, play, work and establish business in; a place that brings prosperity to all local citizens and contributes to the long-term sustainable growth of the North West economy; a place that the UK is proud to proclaim as a great, high quality, culturally rich resort destination'

11.2.2 The document sets out a series of Goals, Objectives and Transformational Agendas, which must be embraced by the spatial planning process including this Area Action plan. (see Table 11.1)

11.3 Blackpool Local Development Framework - Core Strategy

Emerging Blackpool Local Development Framework

11.3.1 The Council is currently developing a new 'Spatial Plan' under the new UK plan making process called the Local Development Framework (LDF), which will include the South Beach Area Action Plan. Full details of the various documents that will make up the Blackpool LDF are set out in the adopted Local Development Scheme (see www.blackpool.gov.uk).

11.3.2 Various elements of this spatial plan are being produced in parallel. The key document is the Core Strategy which sets out a spatial vision for the area based on the Sustainable Community Strategy and will set out the key development and regeneration principles for the town. The Core Strategy is expected to be adopted in 2010.

11.3.3 The **Blackpool Core Strategy –Issues and Options Report (May 2008)** gives emphasis to sustainable development issues, and sets out a series of key issues of which the following will be of particular relevance to the development of sustainable development policies and proposals in the AAP.

Lifting Quality In The Built Environment

Key Issue: To address the poor quality of the urban environment, improve the streetscape and make better places and spaces.

High quality building and public space are increasingly the norm for popular seaside resorts around the world. Much of Blackpool's own success as a residential community and a mass visitor destination will also depend on the quality of its built environment.

Many aspects of the built environment are failing to meet people's expectations through poor condition, age and under-investment. Transformational change is now required. The need is to encourage high quality design in new developments and to improve existing streets and spaces. The aim must be to make Blackpool a much more attractive, memorable and enjoyable place to live or visit.

The Core Strategy will be fundamental in setting out the importance placed on achieving high quality new design and the valued historic character of the resort.

A Greener Blackpool

Key Issue: To manage change to make the most of Blackpool's natural assets, balancing the requirement for new development with environmental interests, including the impact on climate change and our carbon footprint.

"A Greener Blackpool" is much more than ensuring sufficient provision of greenspace and envelops a wide range of cross-cutting transport, housing, economic and other development issues.

In broadest terms it is about directing development to the most sustainable sites in the most energy efficient and less polluting way, whilst safeguarding Blackpool's environmental assets.

On a wide level, there is consensus that human activity is changing the world's climate in a harmful way and there will be profound costs for global and national prosperity, people's health and the natural environment.

This means the layout and form of future development and the design and materials used in buildings will need to optimize the potential for energy and resource conservation by the efficient use of materials, renewable energy and natural daylight.

Water resources conservation and sustainable drainage systems will also be important in helping reduce the impact of built development and ensuring a greener and more sustainable Blackpool.

Much of the planning policy framework for climate change is already set out at national and regional level. Blackpool therefore has no choice on certain policy issues – but the role of the Core Strategy will be crucial in determining where and how best to provide for new homes, jobs and infrastructure in locations and in a way most resilient to climate change.

The Core Strategy policies and proposals therefore need to:

- ❑ Guide development to the most sustainable locations and reduce the need to travel.

- ❑ Encourage sustainable modes of transport.
- ❑ Direct development away from areas liable to flooding.
- ❑ Promote new buildings and layouts that are energy, light and water efficient.
- ❑ Exploit the potential for accommodating renewable and low carbon technologies.
- ❑ Protect and enhance our natural environment and sites of biological significance.

11.4 Planning Policy Statement 12: Creating Strong Safe and Prosperous Communities through Local Spatial Planning (June 2008)

11.4.1 This document provides important information on the process to be followed in preparing and Area Action Plan. Key themes include:

- ❑ Participation and partnership approach to delivery including infrastructure,
- ❑ Achieving consensus,
- ❑ Flexibility,
- ❑ Sustainability; and
- ❑ Deliverability

11.4.2 PPS12 advises that Area Action Plans should be used when there is a need to provide the planning framework for areas where significant change or conservation is needed. Area action plans should:

- ❑ deliver planned growth areas;
- ❑ stimulate regeneration;
- ❑ protect areas particularly sensitive to change;
- ❑ resolve conflicting objectives in areas subject to development pressures; or
- ❑ focus the delivery of area based regeneration initiatives.

11.5 The Blackpool Local Plan (2001-2016)

11.5.1 The intention to produce Area Action Plans for the Village and South Beach Resort Neighbourhoods (the two areas are now combined under name of South Beach) is set out within Policy RR8 of the Council's 2006 Local Plan. This Plan was developed under eight themes (shown below) that provide an important context for the objectives that will drive the regeneration of South Beach:

- ❑ Reshaping the Resort;
- ❑ Establishing a Thriving Sub-Regional Centre;
- ❑ Lifting Quality in the Built Environment;
- ❑ Providing Homes for Every Need;
- ❑ Developing Balanced and Healthy Communities;
- ❑ Diversifying the Local Economy;
- ❑ Conserving the Natural Environment; and
- ❑ Improving Accessibility and Providing Safe Journeys for All

Key Policies Affecting South Beach

11.5.2 The Local Plan contains a number of policies ("saved until 2009) which are relevant to the regeneration of South Beach as follows:

LP Policy RR2 states: "The Council will promote and seek to facilitate hotel development proposals that replace low quality, older holiday accommodation with new or improved accommodation of a high standard and that contribute to resort neighbourhood regeneration."

Text states: "All development must safeguard or enhance liveability and the character and appeal of such areas as a visitor destination."

Policy RR9 states: (within resort neighbourhoods) - changes of use or redevelopment of holiday accommodation for permanent residential use will only be permitted where:

- (i) there are already permanent residential uses directly adjoining or abutting both sides of the proposed development and a significant incidence of such uses in the immediate vicinity; or
- (ii) there is already permanent residential use on one side and a substantial concentration of such uses in the immediate vicinity; and

(iii) the proposal relates well in use, scale and appearance to neighbouring properties.

In terms of locations on the Promenade frontage, these will only be permitted:

- (i) where it can be demonstrated that the property has no viable future in holiday accommodation use, or
- (ii) exceptionally where the loss of holiday accommodation forms part of wider redevelopment proposals that will deliver clear and substantial regeneration benefits.

Blackpool's Plans for its Key Tourism Investment Sites

11.5.3 The northern tip of the current South Beach AAP boundary falls within a larger site which the Local Plan designates as the Rigby Road Key Tourism Investment Site as can be seen on **Plan 11.1**. The Council is promoting that part of the site allocation inland from Seaside Way for the relocation of Blackpool and The Fylde College. The future of the western end of the site lying within the South Beach study area is less certain and its future use will emerge from the Council's Core Strategy and any South Beach Regeneration Strategy.

Plan 11.1: Extract of Blackpool Local Plan 2001/16 Proposals Map

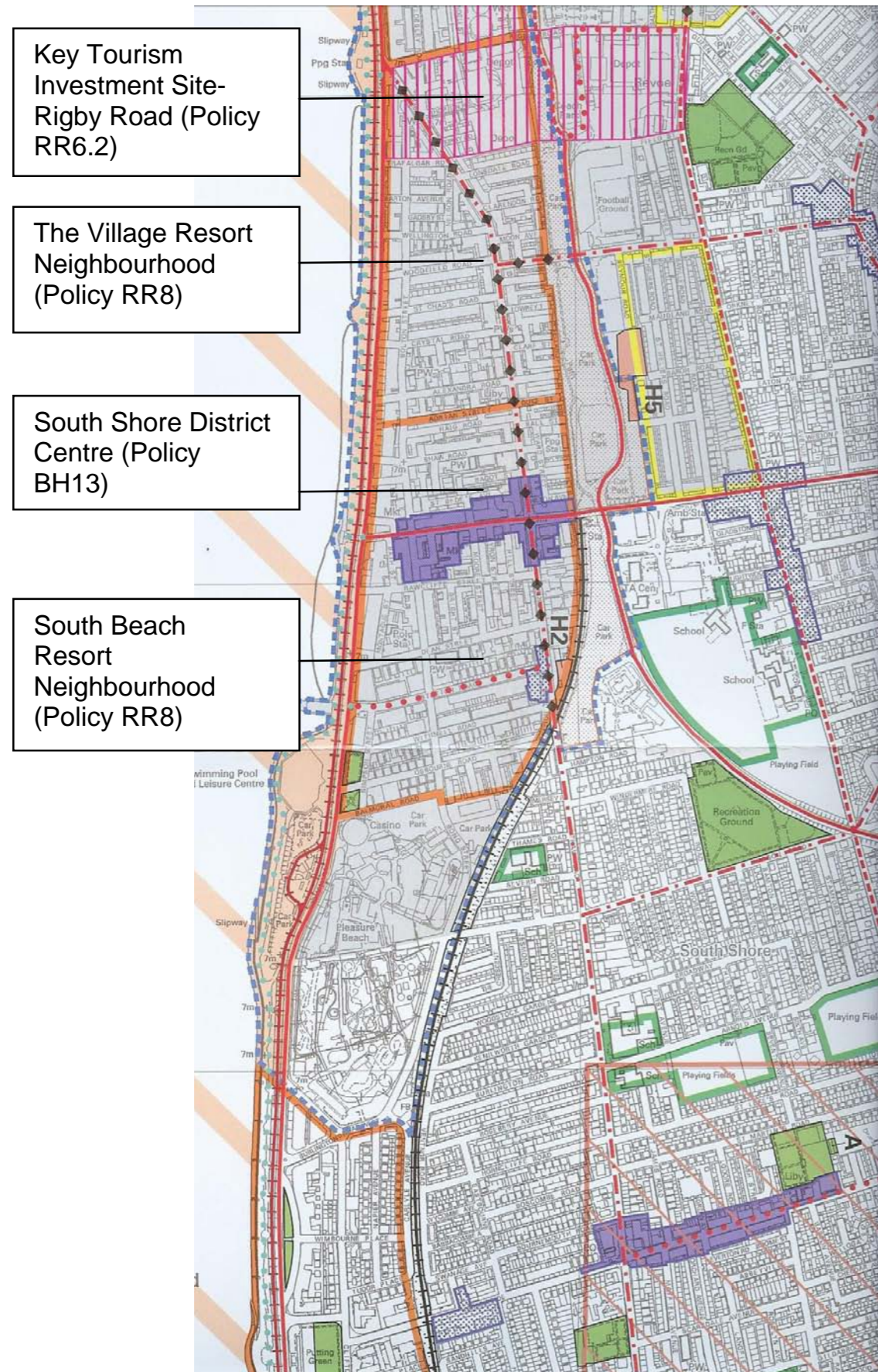


Table 11.1: Blackpool's Sustainable Community Strategy: 2008 to 2028 -Summary

Goal 1: Improve Blackpool's Economic Prosperity - creating jobs and opportunities for local people	Goal 2: Develop a Safe, Clean and Pleasant Place to Live, Work and Visit	Goal 3: Improve Skill Levels and Educational Achievement	Goal 4: Improve the Health and Well-Being of the Population
<p><i>Objectives:</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Create high quality, all year-round reasons to come to Blackpool 2. Establish Blackpool town centre as the sub-regional centre of the Fylde Coast 3. Promote enterprise 4. Improve sustainable transport and increase accessibility 	<p><i>Objectives:</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 5. Provide high quality housing in sustainable, mixed communities 6. Create a safer Blackpool 7. Create a cleaner and greener Blackpool 8. Create thriving and active communities 	<p><i>Objectives:</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 9. Improve educational achievement and aspirations of Blackpool's children and young people 10. Support people into work 11. Ensure that the whole population has at least basic literacy and numeracy skills 12. Foster a workforce with the vocational skills to meet the needs of Blackpool's economy 	<p><i>Objectives:</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 13. Reduce the difference in health outcomes between Blackpool's communities and others in the North West and the UK 14. Encourage healthy lifestyles and emotional well-being for the whole population 15. Provide quality adult social care services to enable vulnerable adults and older people to live independently 16. Reduce teenage conception rates and improve sexual health
Transformational Actions	Transformational Actions	Transformational Actions	Transformational Actions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Deliver the Talbot Gateway project which will include a new civic centre, residential areas, a library and learning centre, leisure facilities, retail units and transport interchange <input type="checkbox"/> Renew the Tramway delivering a modern tram system <input type="checkbox"/> Complete the construction of the sea wall reshaping the promenade as a key attraction <input type="checkbox"/> Improve St Johns Square and Cedar Square creating a vibrant pedestraised area <input type="checkbox"/> Deliver the Blackpool Gateway scheme improving access to the resorts attractions <input type="checkbox"/> Market the Central Station Site to secure private investment <input type="checkbox"/> Increase Blackpool International Airport's capacity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Reshape the Housing Market in inner Blackpool <input type="checkbox"/> Refurbish 3,837 social housing properties <input type="checkbox"/> Transform Foxhall, South Beach and Clarendon areas by developing regeneration Area Action Plans <input type="checkbox"/> Create a new Town Centre multi-agency team to enforce standards, tackle anti-social behaviour, and enhance safety 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Deliver Building Schools for the Future providing new and refurbished secondary school buildings <input type="checkbox"/> Deliver the Primary School Capital Programme refurbishing or rebuilding all of Blackpool's schools <input type="checkbox"/> Build a Studio School focusing on vocational learning <input type="checkbox"/> Develop a new Higher Education Campus within the town centre and a new Further Education Campus at a more central location <input type="checkbox"/> Redevelop the total estate of Blackpool Sixth Form College to provide a high quality learning environment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Build 3 new Primary Care Centres on Whitegate Drive, South Shore Hospital and Bispham <input type="checkbox"/> Increase the number of GPs in Blackpool with 3 new practices <input type="checkbox"/> Establish a training school for dentistry training 8 students per year <input type="checkbox"/> Help smokers quit <input type="checkbox"/> Raise awareness on the harm that alcohol can cause harm and improve access for people dependent on drugs and alcohol <input type="checkbox"/> Encourage healthy lifestyles by providing communities with access to healthy eating, lifestyle and general activity and walking programmes <input type="checkbox"/> Reduce Teenage Pregnancy

11.6 National Policy Context for Intervention in South Beach

An Action Plan for Sustainable Growth (Report of the Blackpool Task Force, July 2007)

- 11.6.1 In March 2007 following the Government's decision not to award the "Super Casino" to Blackpool the Government established a Task Force of representatives from the NWDA, GONW and ReBlackpool to examine Blackpool's improvement plans
- 11.6.2 After reviewing existing economic, social and environmental regeneration plans for Blackpool, the Task Force concluded that Casino-led regeneration would have produced the optimum level of economic regeneration and private sector investment. However, the failure to secure a regional casino means that the ambition to transform Blackpool into a world class resort must now be set within the context of a more diversified economy, with sustainable communities and a high quality environment. Regeneration in the South Beach area can clearly contribute to these aims.
- 11.6.3 The Task Force Report in July 2007 set out an Action Plan based on:
- ❑ Improving the environment and visitor offer so Blackpool appeals to more visitors throughout the year;
 - ❑ Identifying and serving a niche in the conference market, recognising the intensified competition from other centres;
 - ❑ Building Blackpool's role as a sub-regional centre, with the shops, facilities and services befitting a major English town;
 - ❑ Transforming the connectivity of the town with the rest of the region and wider world, with 21st century transport facilities and linkages;
 - ❑ Improving the quality and mix of housing to build stronger communities and reduce the overhang of obsolete housing and guest house accommodation; and
 - ❑ Significant investment in education facilities and services at all levels – primary, secondary, tertiary, further and higher education.

Blackpool Task Force Report: An Action Plan for Sustainable Growth. The Government's Response- February 2008

- 11.6.4 In February 2008 the Government published its Response to the Task Force Report
- 11.6.5 It acknowledges that all involved in regenerating Blackpool accept that we cannot rewrite history or change the long-term patterns in leisure and tourism that have so eroded its economic base. Government cannot at a stroke rebuild any town or transform its economy as there are not enough public funds. Even if there were, it would arguably not be effective.
- 11.6.6 The Government's response is based on the overarching premise that there are limitations to what it can do. What it will do is to work closely with Blackpool to make the best of what Government and the rest of the public sector can achieve when they unite to support a common vision.
- 11.6.7 The report summarises existing and proposed policy and funding commitments to Blackpool.
- 11.6.8 In terms of major housing intervention the Report states that:

English Partnerships and the Housing Corporation will invest in key sites to tackle inter-locked problems identified by the Task Force concerning the quality of housing and operation of the local housing market. The aim is that there will be fewer houses of multiple occupation, fewer guest houses and more mixed and stable communities. All this investment will take place within a regeneration strategy, and needs to work alongside improved hotels, better shops and a more attractive and sustainable physical environment. Longer-term investment plans will be agreed once initial investments announced here are underway, in recognition of the

English Partnerships are responding to the report by committing to work within an overall Housing Intervention Strategy. This strategy will be agreed using the Area Action Planning Process, and will be delivered through a co-ordinating body involving Blackpool Council and the URC, (Re Blackpool). English Partnerships will work with the Housing Corporation to improve the overall quality and mix of housing in line with the economic development needs of Blackpool.

11.7.4 ReBlackpool's recent and current investment projects within and adjoining the study area include (see also Plan 2.2):

Table 11.2: Relevant ReBlackpool Investment Initiatives

Project	Summary	Status
Central Corridor Phases 1 & 2	Comprehensive Improvements to Main Resort Car and Coach Parks as a new Arrival Experience. Includes new central open space and youth facilities, pay and display parking, landscaping and signage	Largely Completed
Central Corridor Phases 3	Study to improve access and arrival experience from central Corridor and Yeadon Way to Blackpool Pleasure Beach, through the South Beach area.	Study ongoing (May 2008).
Blackpool and Fylde FE College Site	Site assembly and infrastructure works to facilitate relocation of Blackpool and Fylde FE College onto a site East of Sands Way.	Ongoing

Key Issues

Policy and Regeneration Context

- ❑ There are a number of key issues arising from the various national, regional and policies:
 - ❑ A need to tackle issues relating to long term decline of tourism economy- transforming Blackpool as year round resort
 - ❑ A need to address the failing holiday accommodation sector
 - ❑ Improve residential neighbourhoods/ tackling failing housing markets and regenerating the inner core of Blackpool
 - ❑ Embrace sustainable development principles including tackling climate change,
 - ❑ The importance of High quality design and Environments and the encouragement of healthy lifestyles.
 - ❑ The need for early engagement of community and partnership working
- ❑ Creation of Vibrant Sustainable Neighbourhood requiring an holistic approach to tackle deprivation, social stress and economic decline
 - ❑ Need for a long terms partnership approach involving Community/ Central and Local Government/ Multi Service Agencies/ and the private sector to deliver permanent regeneration.
 - ❑ Public sector financial resources are likely to be limited and the any regeneration proposals for South Beach will need to develop innovative ideas to use these to best effect.
 - ❑ Whilst any regeneration strategy for the South Beach area should identify a range of deliverable early actions it should also be a prospectus for long term change

Key Evidence Sources

- ❑ Various national, regional, local policy and strategy documents (See Appendix 4)

