

Blackpool Local Plan 2012 – 2027
Part 2: Site Allocations and Development
Management Policies

Duty to Co-operate
Draft Statement of Common Ground

December 2020

This Draft Statement of Common Ground is being consulted upon alongside the consultation on the Blackpool Local Plan Part 2: Site Allocations and Development Management Policies Publication Version (Proposed Submission) Regulation 19 (January 2021).

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Introduction

- i. This Statement of Common Ground (SoCG) has been produced in support of the Blackpool Local Plan Part 2 – Site Allocations and Development Management Policies document. The Regulation 18 consultation on Part 2 of the Local Plan was undertaken in 2017 followed by an informal consultation paper in January 2019, which set out proposed site allocations and draft development management policies. Consultation on the Publication version of the Plan is anticipated January 2021.
- ii. This draft SoCG is being circulated to neighbouring authorities and prescribed bodies to provide an opportunity to comment on the statement prior to its submission alongside the Local Plan Part 2.
- iii. This draft SoCG comprises the following:
 - **Section One** - provides an explanation of the strategic position of Blackpool and neighbouring councils in relation to those cross-boundary strategic matters which fall within the extent of the Local Plan Part 2 and explains the engagement that has been undertaken in relation to these matters;
 - **Section Two** - covers the engagement with ‘prescribed bodies’;¹
 - **Section Three** - provides a summary table of the strategic issues relevant to the Blackpool Local Plan Part 2, the collaboration undertaken and the outcomes
 - **Section Four** - Signatories
- iv. The Duty to Co-operate (the Duty) was introduced by the Localism Act 2011 and is set out in Section 33A of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004. It places a legal duty on local planning authorities and county councils in England and prescribed public bodies to engage constructively, actively and on an ongoing basis to maximise the effectiveness of local plan and marine plan preparation in the context of strategic cross boundary issues relevant to the area.
- v. Paragraph 26 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (February 2019) states that effective and on-going joint working between strategic policy-making authorities and relevant bodies is integral to the production of a positively prepared and justified strategy. Relevant bodies include Local Enterprise Partnerships, Local Nature Partnerships, the Marine Management Organisation, County Councils and infrastructure providers. Paragraph 27 requires the production of a Statement(s) of Common Ground (SoCG) documenting the cross boundary matters being addressed and progress in cooperating to address these to be made publically available throughout the plan making process.
- vi. Planning Practice Guidance under ‘Plan Making’ sets out how SoCGs should be produced and

¹ Town and Country Planning (Local Planning)(England) Regulations 2012 as amended Regulation 4

provides advice on their scope and explains their purpose:

'A statement of common ground is a written record of the progress made by strategic policy-making authorities during the process of planning for strategic cross-boundary matters. It documents where effective co-operation is and is not happening throughout the plan-making process, and is a way of demonstrating at examination that plans are deliverable over the plan period, and based on effective joint working across local authority boundaries. In the case of local planning authorities, it also forms part of the evidence required to demonstrate that they have complied with the duty to cooperate'.

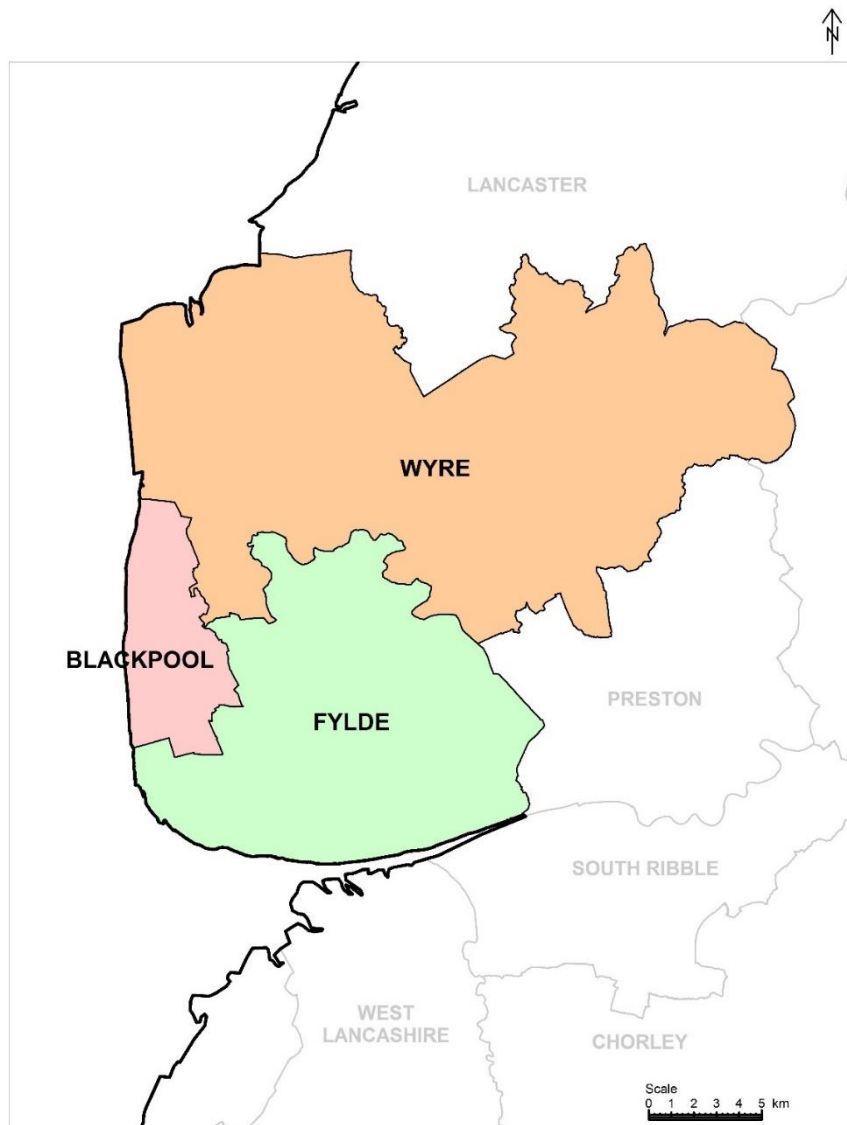
- vii. The content and format of this SoCG has been informed by the guidance and the strategic matters considered are restricted directly to those relating to the Blackpool Local Plan Part 2.

Section One – Neighbouring Authorities

Area Context

- 1.1 Blackpool is a unitary authority located in the North West of England on the Fylde Coast Peninsula. The neighbouring two-tier authorities of Fylde and Wyre Borough Councils with Lancashire County Council (LCC) as the upper tier authority lie to the north, east and south of Blackpool with the Irish Sea to the west.

Figure 1 - Fylde Coast Sub-Region



- 1.2 The Fylde Coast sub-region demonstrates a high level of self-containment in terms of housing markets, travel to work patterns and economic functionality. The economic functionality of the Fylde Coast is apparent through the strong travel to work patterns and a

shared tourism and cultural offer; regionally and nationally significant advanced engineering and manufacturing (AEM) sector at the three Enterprise Zones in the sub-region (Blackpool Airport, Hillhouse in Wyre and BAE Systems at Warton) and nuclear processing at Westinghouse, Springfields; the Department for Work and Pensions; and a shared infrastructure including Blackpool Airport, coastal tramway and strategic highway and rail networks.

- 1.3 This economic coherence was reflected in the establishment of the Multi Area Agreement in April 2009 and the Blackpool, Fylde and Wyre Economic Development Company in April 2010 (rebranded the Blackpool Bay Company (BBC) in 2011), to support local authority partnership working, co-ordinate and drive forward shared objectives and deliver a co-ordinated programme of capital investment. The BBC has subsequently been superseded by the Blackpool, Fylde and Wyre Economic Prosperity Board for the Fylde Coast in 2018 with a remit to help shape and drive economic development across the sub-area.
- 1.4 The landscape across the sub-region is broadly similar, largely falling within the Lancashire and Amounderness Plain National Character Area (NCA), but with a portion of the North Wyre coast within the Morecambe Coast and Lune Estuary NCA. The sub-region encompasses part of the Forest of Bowland AONB.
- 1.5 In addition, with respect to seascape, the coastline lies within Marine Character Area 34: Blackpool Coastal Waters and Ribble Estuary. This MCA is a shallow, coastal area no more than 20m deep on its western side, shelving very gently down from the low-lying Lancashire coastal plain. It encompasses the Fylde Coast to the north, terminating at the southern edge of Lune Deep, and the Sefton Coast as far as Formby Point to the south. Between these two coasts the Ribble Estuary, between Lytham St Anne's and Southport, cuts inland to Preston. The overall character of the MCA is wide, sandy beaches, resulting from a combination of shallow waters and a high tidal range, but with distinct differences between the Sefton Coast, which is dominated by sand dunes, and the more urban coastline to the north of the Ribble, centred on Blackpool. The Ribble Estuary is noted for its wildfowl, waders and seabirds.
- 1.6 Blackpool itself is intensely urban and compact, largely built up to its boundaries. The local economy is underpinned by the tourism and service sectors, with a small manufacturing sector including local specialism in food, drink and plastics. The Blackpool Airport Enterprise zone which became operational in 2016 straddles the borough's southern boundary with Fylde.
- 1.7 The inner areas of the town are densely populated and experience a high concentration of acute deprivation leading to extreme health, social and economic inequalities. Open land in the east of the town has important landscape, nature conservation and amenity value. Designated Green Belt and Countryside Areas on the edge of Blackpool define the limit of urban development to retain separation between Blackpool and St. Annes and Staining in Fylde and between Blackpool and Poulton (including Carleton) in Wyre.

Governance Arrangements

- 1.8 This Statement of Common Ground has been developed under the Fylde Coast Duty to Co-Operate Memorandum of Understanding (MOU). The MOU (2015 update) is a document jointly created by Blackpool Council, Wyre Council, Fylde Council and Lancashire County Council which formalises the dialogue that takes place between the four authorities, providing for cross-border co-operation and collaboration regarding relevant strategic matters to the area and ensuring that the requirements of the statutory Duty to Co-operate are met (refer to Appendix A).
- 1.9 The Memorandum of Understanding provides for regular meetings under the Fylde Coast Duty to Co-Operate banner. Quarterly Fylde Coast Duty to Co-operate Officers' Group meetings are held between officers from the Fylde Coast Authorities and LCC, where strategic planning issues are discussed. The Lancashire Enterprise Partnership (LEP) and representatives of Lancashire County Council and Blackpool Council transport authorities are also invited to attend these meetings.
- 1.10 In addition to the officers' meetings, the Memorandum of Understanding also provides for the Fylde Coast Authorities Joint Member and Officer Advisory Steering Group, which comprises councillors and senior officers from the Fylde Coast Authorities and LCC, to oversee the work under the Duty to Co-operate. A key remit of the Advisory Steering Group is to resolve difficult and sensitive issues, reaching common understanding.
- 1.11 This Statement of Common Ground will be subject to discussion leading to agreement at the Officers' Group and if necessary the Advisory Steering Group meetings and any changes to it will be subject to ratification by those groups as appropriate.
- 1.12 The Fylde Coast Authorities officers and members Duty to Co-operate meetings are effective mechanisms for ensuring that strategic planning issues that cross council administrative boundaries between the Fylde Coast Authorities are given due consideration, are planned for and are delivered effectively through the plan making process.

Local Plan Context

Blackpool Local Plan 2012 – 2027

- 1.13 The Blackpool Local Plan comprises 2 parts. **Part 1 is the Core Strategy** which was adopted by the Council on 20 January 2016 and provides the overall spatial vision, goals and objectives, spatial strategy and strategic policies for the Borough to 2027. This includes a housing requirement of 4200 new homes and an employment land requirement of 31.5 hectares for the plan period.
- 1.14 **The Local Plan Part 2 is the Site Allocations and Development Management Policies** document which provides land allocations and further detailed development management policies which support the strategic goals, objectives and policies in the Core Strategy to provide a comprehensive policy framework to deliver sustainable development across the Borough.
- 1.15 Cross boundary strategic issues² have primarily been addressed through the preparation of the Core Strategy. **A Statement of Compliance (SoC) was submitted with the Core Strategy** and accompanies this Statement of Common Ground (SoCG) at Appendix B which includes the Fylde Coast Authorities MOU (2013 version).
- 1.16 Since the adoption of the Core Strategy, Blackpool Council has continued to engage with neighbouring authorities and other bodies to ensure that the strategic issues set out in the SoC and MoU continue to be taken into account where appropriate in the development of the policy framework in Part 2 of the Local Plan.

Fylde and Wyre Local Plans

- 1.17 **The Fylde Local Plan to 2032** is a single local plan containing strategic and non-strategic policies and was adopted on 22nd October 2018. No requests to accommodate any unmet need was received by Blackpool from Fylde Borough Council in the development of their plan.
- 1.18 **The Wyre Local Plan (2011-2031)** is also a single local plan which was adopted on 28th February 2019. During the development of their plan a formal request in May 2015 was received by Blackpool Council to assist Wyre in meeting their objectively assessed need for housing. Blackpool Council was not in a position to be able to assist Wyre in accommodating any of its unmet need which was detailed in formal correspondence between the authorities during 2016 and 2017. With the adoption of the Wyre Local Plan in February 2019 the position remains unchanged in that it is not possible for Blackpool to accommodate any of Wyre's unmet housing need. This is the agreed position between the two authorities.

² Paragraph 20 NPPF (February 2019)

- 1.19 Both Fylde and Wyre have commenced partial reviews of their plans. Fylde published their Regulation 18 document in April 2019 and Wyre in February 2020.
- 1.20 The Fylde Local Plan partial review relates to the necessary changes to the Local Plan to accord with NPPF19 as required by paragraph 212 of the framework; and considers the issue of unmet need in Wyre as required by paragraph 1.27 of the Fylde Local Plan 2032. This paragraph states:

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

- 1.21 This paragraph was introduced in response to the uncertainty during the Fylde Local Plan examination as to the position in Wyre regarding meeting its objectively assessed housing need.
- 1.22 Policy LPR1 of **the Wyre Local Plan (2011-2031)** requires that Wyre Council undertake a partial review of the plan “with the objective of meeting the full Objectively Assessed Housing Needs”. Policy LPR1 requires that the partial review includes an update of housing needs and a review of highways and transport issues. The partial review is required if necessary, to allocate sites to meet the full OAN (following the review of that number) taking into account the review of transport and highways issues. It is for the partial review to address the shortfall against the identified OAN in accordance with Policy LPR1, as stated in paragraph 10.4.2 of the Wyre Local Plan (2011-2031). The Partial Review will assess whether unmet need remains in the light of policy changes in NPPF19, with if necessary, a review of transport and highway issues and allocation of sites. The Partial Review will demonstrate whether any of Wyre’s need cannot be met.

Relevant Strategic Matters

Context

- 1.23 The matters on which cooperation is required are covered in paragraphs 20 to 23 of the NPPF (2019). The list set out in a) to d) below is not exhaustive and it is stated that authorities will need to adapt the list to meet their specific need. Included are:
- a) *Housing (including affordable housing), employment retail leisure and other commercial development;*
 - b) *Infrastructure for transport, telecommunications, security, waste management, water supply, wastewater, flood risk and coastal change management, and the provision of minerals and energy (including heat);*
 - c) *Community facilities (such as health, education and cultural infrastructure) and;*
 - d) *Conservation and enhancement of the natural, built and historic environment, including landscapes and green infrastructure and planning measures to address climate change mitigation and adaption*
- 1.24 Under the Duty to Cooperate an authority has to determine whether development requirements can be met wholly within the plan area or if this is not possible due to a lack of physical capacity or because to do so would cause significantly harm to the principles and policies in the NPPF.

The Local Plan Part 1: Core Strategy

- 1.25 As previously stated (paragraph 1.14), collaboration on cross boundary issues was undertaken during the preparation of the Blackpool Local Plan Part 1: Core Strategy. **The Local Plan Part 1: Core Strategy ‘Statement of Compliance (SoC) with the Duty to Cooperate (November 2014)** can be found at Appendix B to this SoCG. Table A of the SoC provides a summary of the collaborative work that Blackpool Council undertook in preparing the Core Strategy. The table sets out a summary of each of the strategic issues which have cross boundary implications, along with who is affected/obliged to co-operate on that issue, who has co-operated with whom and how this was done and finally the outcome of that co-operation for that strategic issue. The broad strategic matters in the SoC cover:
- **Homes and Jobs**
 - **Retail Leisure and other Commercial development**
 - **Infrastructure**
 - **Health, security, community and cultural infrastructure**
 - **Climate change and natural and historic environment**
- 1.26 In relation to the objectively assessed housing need set out in the Core Strategy, Blackpool was able to meet its need within the borough boundaries and hence no unmet need for housing was identified.

- 1.27 With respect to employment land a need for around 31.5 hectares is identified in the Core Strategy. Due to the highly constrained nature of Blackpool and the lack of future employment sites within Blackpool's administrative area, only 17.5 hectares could be identified within the borough. Blackpool Council therefore requested Fylde to accommodate 14 hectares of Blackpool's employment land requirement to which Fylde Borough Council agreed and this has subsequently been incorporated into the employment land requirement in the Fylde Local Plan which was adopted October 2018.

Local Plan Part 2 – Site Allocations and Development Management Policies

- 1.28 The SoC sets out how the Duty was met and how any strategic matters have been dealt with in the preparation of the Core Strategy. However, there are a number of these strategic matters which remain relevant to the preparation of **the Local Plan Part 2**:

Strategic Matter – Homes and Jobs

- supporting the delivery of the Blackpool Airport Enterprise Zone which was approved in November 2015 its location partly lies within both Blackpool and Fylde authority areas;
- meeting the needs of Travellers and Travelling Showpeople across the Fylde Coast Sub region to ensure the needs identified in the updated 2016 Joint Fylde Coast Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showperson Accommodation Assessment are met;
- ongoing collaboration relating to planning obligations on cross boundary housing development sites

Strategic Matter – Retail, Leisure and other Commercial Development

- ensuring the Local Plan Part 2 policy framework supports Blackpool Town centre as the sub-regional centre for the Fylde Coast;

Strategic Matter - Infrastructure

- ensuring the Local Plan Part 2 policy framework supports the sustainable development of Blackpool Airport including improvements to surface access by public transport;
- addressing cross boundary transport and highway infrastructure needs related to major applications;
- to ensure the required water-related infrastructure is delivered

Climate Change and Natural and Historic Environment

- managing impacts on habitats and/or landscape character designations in relation to the Blackpool Airport Enterprise Zone;
- addressing cross boundary natural environment issues related to major applications;

Cooperation and Collaboration Arrangements

Fylde and Wyre Borough Councils and Lancashire County (LCC)

- 1.29 Working together with the neighbouring authorities of Fylde and Wyre and LCC on strategic planning issues is long established and pre-dates the Duty to Co-operate. Engagement on issues of common concern with respect to housing, employment land, transport infrastructure, minerals and waste has been ongoing for many years.
- 1.30 To assist in meeting the requirements of the Duty and in the context of the Fylde Coast it was agreed between the four authorities to establish a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU)³ to formalise the ongoing dialogue and co-operation that exists for those strategic planning issues which require cross boundary co-operation and collaboration to ensure the requirements of the Duty are met (refer to Appendix A for MOU).
- 1.31 The collaboration which is undertaken by the four authorities is summarised in the table below:

Table 1.1 – Summary of Cooperation

Authority	Type of Authority	Nature of Co-operation
Fylde Borough Council Wyre Borough Council	Neighbouring Authority	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Duty to Cooperate Officer Working Group and Joint Member and Officer Advisory Steering Group; → The Fylde Peninsula Water Management Partnership; → Fylde Coast Economic Prosperity Board; → Quarterly Lancashire Development Plan Officer working Group meetings; → Consultation at key stages of Local Plan → Developing joint evidence base
Lancashire County Council	Neighbouring transport authority, highway authority, education authority, public health authority, lead local flood authority and minerals and waste authority	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Duty to Cooperate Officer Working Group and Joint Member and Officer Advisory Steering Group → The Fylde Peninsula Water Management Partnership → The Making Space for Water Group → Quarterly Lancashire Development Plan Officer working Group meetings → Highway Authority officer meetings → Consultation at key stages of Local Plan

³ Latest edition – Update 2015

- 1.32 **The Duty to Cooperate Officer Working Group and the Joint Member and Officer Advisory Steering Group** are referenced on page 9 of the SOCG under Governance Arrangements.
- 1.33 **The Fylde Peninsula Water Management Partnership** was set up in 2011 as a collaboration between Blackpool Council, Fylde and Wyre Councils, LCC, Environment Agency, United Utilities and Keep Britain Tidy. The aim of the partnership which meets on a quarterly basis is to improve water quality; improve the quality of beaches and bathing waters on the Fylde coast; improve coastal protection and reduce the risk of surface water flooding from Fleetwood to Lytham, including Blackpool.
- 1.34 **The Making Space for Water Group** is a partnership including, Blackpool Council, Lancashire County Council, Environment Agency and United Utilities. The meetings which take place every two months are used to identify local flood hotspots and discuss potential solutions. They also enable partners to identify larger schemes which can be put forward into the bidding process for funding opportunities
- 1.35 **Blackpool, Fylde and Wyre Economic Prosperity Board (EPB)** is a joint committee of the Blackpool, Fylde and Wyre authorities. The nominated members of the committee comprise the three Councils' leaders as well as a private sector representative for each of the three authorities. The EPB meets quarterly and is also attended by the chief executives and other senior officers from the three authorities. The remit of the EPB is to consider major economic and development issues where cross boundary interests are involved or involve interests which go beyond the sub-region. The EPB also performs the role of programme board for the Hillhouse (Wyre) and Blackpool Airport (Blackpool & Fylde) Enterprise Zones (EZ) superseding the role of the Blackpool Fylde and Wyre Economic Development Company which was wound up in March 2018. The requirement for a programme board was established in the EZ Memorandum of Understanding signed by the relevant authorities MHCLG and Lancashire LEP on 9th November 2016 which sets out the governance and cooperation principles behind the grant of EZ status.
- 1.36 **Lancashire Development Plans Officer Group** which is attended by the Fylde Coast Authorities and LCC along with colleagues from across Lancashire meet every quarter to discuss matters that affect the whole County and that are cross-boundary and strategic in nature.
- 1.37 **Highway Authority officer meetings** as highway and transport authorities Blackpool and Lancashire County Council work closely together in considering the highways/traffic and public transport implications of proposed development on the Blackpool/Fylde/Wyre boundaries and in the development of the Fylde Coast Highways Masterplan 2015. Currently Blackpool Council is jointly working with Lancashire County Council and Blackburn with Darwen Borough Council on the Local Transport Plan 4 (LTP4). A MOU has been agreed between the three authorities in November 2017 to set the context for collaborative working and establish a framework for making informed decisions on the production of a

joint LTP and the subsequent process to establish agreement between the three transport authorities.

- 1.38 **Table A set out in Section Three** of this document provides an overview of the cooperation undertaken by the Fylde Coast authorities and Lancashire County Council in relation to the strategic matters relevant to the Blackpool Local Plan Part 2 (refer paragraph 1.27) and the subsequent outcomes.

Joint Evidence Base

- 1.39 In addition to the existing evidence base which supports the Blackpool Local Plan⁴ (refer to link in footnote) the work on the Local Plan Part 2 has been informed by an updated **Blackpool, Fylde and Wyre Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment (GTAA) 2016** which supercedes the 2014 joint study. The 2016 update was primarily undertaken in response to the revised version of Planning Policy for Traveller Sites (PPTS) in August 2015. This included a change to the definition of Travellers for planning purposes which necessitated an update study to be undertaken.
- 1.40 The primary objective of the Blackpool, Fylde and Wyre GTAA Update is to provide a robust assessment of current and future need for Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople accommodation in the three Fylde Coast local authorities.

Other Evidence Base with Strategic Implications

- 1.41 **The Blackpool Retail, Leisure and Hotel Study 2018** assists in the formulation of future development plan policy in the emerging Blackpool Local Plan Part 2 and the delivery of the vision, objectives and policies set out in the Blackpool Local Plan Part 1: Core Strategy (2012-2027). **The Study draws on the previous joint Fylde Coast retail and commercial leisure study 2011 to inform the study area of the 2018 assessment of resident shopping habits.** The study also reaffirmed the sub-regional role of Blackpool Town Centre on the Fylde Coast.
- 1.42 **Blackpool Airport Enterprise Zone Masterplan**⁵ sets out the context for delivery and growth and identifies the challenges, opportunities and actions needed for each element of the development that will play a unique and important part in realising the overall vision for the site. The Enterprise Zone is being delivered through partnership working between Blackpool Council, Fylde Council and the Lancashire Enterprise Partnership.

⁴ <https://www.blackpool.gov.uk/Residents/Planning-environment-and-community/Planning/Planning-policy/Blackpool-local-plan/Evidence-base.aspx>

⁵ <https://blackpoolez.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/11/EZ-Blackpool-Masterplan-Summary.pdf>

Section Two – Cooperation with Prescribed Bodies

Context

- 2.1 In addition to the collaboration undertaken with neighbouring planning authorities Blackpool Council has co-operated with the relevant bodies prescribed in regulation 4(1) of the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012 (as amended).
- 2.2 All appropriate “prescribed” bodies have been consulted in the preparation of the Local Plan Part 2 (in line with the relevant regulations) and this is set out in the Council’s Statement of Consultation (April 2020) and the Summary of Representations and Council’s Response to the Regulation 18 consultation and the Informal Consultation Paper – Blackpool Local Plan Part 2 – Site Allocations and Development Management Policies (January 2019).
- 2.3 **Table A in Section Three** of this SoCG includes a summary of the collaboration and cooperation with the prescribed bodies that Blackpool Council has carried out in relation to the strategic matters relevant to the Blackpool Local Plan Part 2.

Cooperation and Collaboration Arrangements

The Environment Agency (EA)

- 2.4 The Environment Agency is a statutory consultee in the DPD preparation process and Blackpool Council has collaborated and consulted with the EA on a number of matters relating to flood risk, drainage and waste water treatment throughout the preparation of the Local Plan, including the preparation and update of the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA).
- 2.5 In addition an ongoing dialogue takes place with the EA through the ‘Making Space for Water Group which meets once every two months and quarterly meetings of the Fylde Peninsula Water Management Partnership.
- 2.6 Representations have been received from the Environment Agency on the emerging policies in the Local Plan Part 2 which relate to the strategic priorities of water-related infrastructure and the natural environment (refer Table A in Section 3). The EA concerns have been met by introducing an additional policy DM32 relating to Surface Water Management and amending policy DM36 to make reference to net gains in biodiversity where appropriate.

Historic England

- 2.7 Historic England has been consulted during the preparation of the Blackpool Local Plan Part 2 including formal and informal consultation, the latter involving email correspondence to inform emerging policy. The representations received from Historic England have been related to local historic issues rather than cross boundary strategic matters.

Natural England

- 2.8 Natural England has been involved as a statutory consultee and has had the opportunity to comment on the Local Plan Part 2. The representations received from Natural England are mainly general in nature or site specific rather than cross boundary strategic matters.

Marine Management Organisation (MMO)

- 2.9 The MMO license, regulate and plan marine activities in the seas around England so that they are carried out in a sustainable way. The MMOs planning jurisdiction includes the mean high water spring tide and waters of any estuary, river or channel so far as the tide flows at mean high water spring tide, and out to 200nm or the maritime borders. Under the Marine and Coastal Access Act 2009, public authorities must make authorisation or enforcement decisions in accordance with the relevant Marine Plan unless relevant considerations indicate otherwise. Any decisions that relate to the exercise of any function capable of affecting the whole or any part of the UK marine area, but which is not an authorisation or enforcement decision, must have regard to the relevant Marine Plan. In this case the relevant Marine Plan is the North West Marine Plan. The MMO is currently producing the North West Marine Plan⁶ and Blackpool Council has been involved in the consultation and workshops hosted by MMO on the emerging Plan.
- 2.10 The Council has also engaged with the MMO in consultation on the Local Plan Part 2 and a representation from MMO was received to the informal consultation document, which set out the MMO's remit but did not raise any specific strategic issues.

Homes England

- 2.11 Homes England (and previous equivalent bodies) has been consulted as a statutory consultee since 2009. They have co-operated mainly on matters relating to the inner area housing intervention including the Rigby Road development (Foxhall Village) and various sites and locations in Blackpool Town Centre including the strategic Central Business District site (Talbot Gateway) and the Leisure Quarter site (Blackpool Central). No representations have been received from Homes England objecting to the emerging policies or site allocations in the Local Plan Part 2.

⁶ <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/north-west-marine-plan#developing-the-plans>

Blackpool Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) and NHS England

- 2.12 The Blackpool CCG and NHS England have been consulted as a statutory consultee throughout the preparation of the Local Plan Part 2. No representations have been received from these bodies objecting to the emerging policies or site allocations in the Local Plan Part 2.

Civil Aviation Authority and the Office of Rail and Road

- 2.13 These prescribed bodies have been consulted at all stages of the preparation of the Local Plan Part 2 and no representations have been received objecting to the emerging policies or site allocations.

Highways England (HE)

- 2.14 Highways England has been consulted on the January 2020 Informal Consultation Paper and comments have been received which has informed policy set out in the Publication version of the Local Plan Part 2 where appropriate. An ongoing dialogue has been established with Highways England to assess the impact the proposed site allocations within the South Blackpool Growth area may have on the Strategic Road Network (SRN).

The Lancashire Enterprise Partnership (LEP)

- 2.15 There is ongoing dialogue with the LEP on various strategies and initiatives and Blackpool Council worked closely with the LEP and LCC in the development of the Strategic Economic Plan (SEP) submitted to Government in March 2014. Currently the Council is engaging with the LEP on the emerging Local Industrial Strategy 2020 and an emerging Lancashire wide Plan which is at the early stages of development. The latter to provide a sub-national whole-place based approach, across the economic, public reform and environmental agendas, setting out a Lancashire specific long term vision for the future and a single strategic framework for Lancashire. In addition Blackpool Council is a member of the LEP Transport for Lancashire Committee which oversees strategic transport policy for Lancashire and provides the strategic signoff and scrutiny for major transport schemes. A representative from LEP is invited to attend the Fylde Coast Authorities and LCC Duty to Co-operate officer meetings.
- 2.14 No representations have been received from LEP objecting to the emerging policies or site allocations in the Local Plan Part 2.

Local Nature Partnership (LNP)

- 2.15 The Local Nature Partnership was dis-established in Lancashire but has recently been re-established with its inaugural meeting on 30th March 2020. Blackpool Council will resume consultation with the LNP as the Blackpool Local Plan Part 2 progresses.

United Utilities

- 2.16 Blackpool and United Utilities have worked together to understand the capacity constraints of the borough. This has been through liaison meetings, The Making Space for Water Group and the Fylde Peninsula Water Management Partnership in addition to the more formal consultation process.

- 2.17 Representations have been received from United Utilities on the emerging policies in the Local Plan Part 2 which relate to the strategic priority of water-related infrastructure (refer Table A in Section 3). United Utilities concerns have been met by introducing an additional policy DM32 relating to Surface Water Management.

Section Three – Summary Table of Strategic Matters, Co-operation and Outcomes

- 3.1 The following table summarises how Blackpool Council has engaged with neighbouring authorities and prescribed bodies set out in the Town and Country (Local Planning)(England) Regulations 2012 (as amended) to ensure relevant strategic matters are addressed in the preparation of the Blackpool Local Plan Part 2 to fulfil the Duty to Cooperate.

Table A: Strategic Issues for Blackpool and Evidence of Co-operation in preparing the Blackpool Local Plan Part 2: Site Allocations and Development Management Policies			
Terminology			
BC	Blackpool Council	NE	Natural England
Neighbouring Authorities	Fylde Borough Council and Wyre Borough Council	HE	Highways England
LCC	Lancashire County Council	MMO	Marine Management Organisation
LEP	Lancashire Enterprise Partnership	DPOG	Development Plans Officer Group – Lancashire Authorities
EA	Environment Agency	DtC	Duty to Co-operate
UU	United Utilities	MOU	Memorandum of Understanding between Blackpool Council, LCC, Fylde and Wyre Borough Councils
BC	Blackpool Council		

Table B: Summary table of Strategic Matters

Strategic Priority	What is the nature of the strategic Issue?	Who is affected/ Obligated to Co-operate	Who has co-operated With whom and How was this done	Evidence	Outcome	Further Actions
<p>1. Homes and Jobs</p>	<p>a) Housing Delivery: to meet identified needs in the context of the wider sub regional housing market and to establish a more balanced and wider housing choice in the housing market area.</p>	<p>BC and neighbouring authorities</p>	<p>Blackpool has cooperated with neighbouring authorities in:</p> <p>→ Identifying additional housing site allocations in the Blackpool Local Plan Part 2 to meet the housing requirement set out in the Blackpool Local Plan Part 1: Core Strategy and to meet the requirements of the strategic issue in establishing a more balanced and wider housing choice in the housing market area.</p> <p>Co-operation with neighbouring authorities has been through:</p>	<p>Documents:</p> <p>→ Blackpool Local Plan Part 1: Core Strategy (adopted January 2016);</p> <p>→ Blackpool Local Plan Part 2 – Site Allocations and Development Management Policies – Informal Consultation Paper (January 2019);</p> <p>→ Updated Blackpool SHLAA 2020;</p> <p>→ Blackpool Local Plan Part 2: Site Allocations and Development Management Policies – Viability Assessment 2020;</p> <p>→ Blackpool Local Plan Part 2 – Housing Topic Paper 2020;</p>	<p>Local Plan Part 2 Site Allocations HSA1 to HSA29.</p> <p>The proposed housing allocations contribute to enabling Blackpool to meet its housing requirement as set out in the Core Strategy.</p> <p>No objections in principal were received to the proposed housing site allocations in the Informal Consultation Paper (2019) from neighbouring authorities.</p>	<p>Blackpool continues to work collaboratively with Fylde and Wyre Borough Councils in relation to housing provision across the Fylde Coast Peninsula.</p> <p>In meeting its housing requirement figure, Blackpool is not able to accommodate any unmet need from neighbouring authorities.</p>

Strategic Priority	What is the nature of the strategic issue?	Who is affected/ Obligated to Co-operate	Who has co-operated With whom and How was this done	Evidence	Outcome	Further Actions
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Formal dialogue through Fylde Coast DtC officer meetings; → Informal dialogue and formal consultation at each stage of the preparation of the Local Plan Part 2 → Consultation on the viability assessment through invitation to the viability workshop for the Local Plan Part 2; → Consultation on the update draft SHLAA methodology to ensure a consistent approach 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Blackpool Housing Strategy Update 2019; → Blackpool Council's Affordable Housing Study Update 2019 		
	b) Blackpool Airport Enterprise Zone	BC, neighbouring authorities, LCC, LEP, HE	Blackpool Council has co-operated with Fylde and Wyre Borough Councils, LCC and the Local Enterprise Partnership to:	Documents: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Blackpool Airport EZ Masterplan → Blackpool Local Plan Part 1: Core Strategy 	DM8 - Blackpool Airport Enterprise Zone Supportive representation on Policy DM8 received from Fylde Borough	BC continues to work with Fylde Borough Council, LCC, LEP and HE to deliver the EZ Masterplan.

Strategic Priority	What is the nature of the strategic Issue?	Who is affected/ Obligated to Co-operate	Who has co-operated With whom and How was this done	Evidence	Outcome	Further Actions
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → establish the Blackpool Airport Enterprise Zone; → develop a policy framework within the Local Plan Part 2 to support the delivery of the EZ Masterplan <p>Cooperation through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> → formal dialogue through the Fylde Coast Authorities and LCC DtC officers → informal dialogue with the EZ delivery team; → Dialogue through the Fylde Coast Economic Prosperity Board → Formal consultation with neighbouring authorities LCC and the LEP <p>BC has cooperated with the HE to ensure that the</p>	<p>(Adopted January 2016);</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Blackpool Local Plan Part 2 – Site Allocations and Development Management Policies – Informal Consultation Paper (January 2019); → Local Employment Land update (2020) <p>Other:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Comments received from HE 	<p>Council on the Informal Consultation Paper (2019).</p> <p>Additional wording included in Policy DM8.</p>	

Strategic Priority	What is the nature of the strategic Issue?	Who is affected/ Obligated to Co-operate	Who has co-operated With whom and How was this done	Evidence	Outcome	Further Actions
			impact on the SRN is appropriately taken into account with future development.			
	c) Provision for Travellers: Delivery of sites to meet the identified needs of Travellers in the wider sub-area context	BC, neighbouring authorities and LCC.	<p>Blackpool has co-operated with neighbouring authorities to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Identify and provide for the accommodation needs of Gypsy, Traveller and travelling Showpeople communities across the Fylde Coast sub-region. <p>Co-operation with neighbouring authorities has been through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> → the preparation of joint evidence documents for the Fylde Coast; 	<p>Documents:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Blackpool Local Plan Part 1: Core strategy (January 2016); → Blackpool Local Plan Part 2 – Site Allocations and Development Management Policies – Informal Consultation Paper (January 2019); → Joint Fylde Coast Authorities Gypsy and Traveller and Travelling Showpeople Accommodation Assessment 2014 (GTAA); → Joint Fylde Coast Authorities Gypsy and 	<p>A Traveller and Travelling Showman site was proposed at Faraday Way in the Informal Consultation Paper (January 2019) to accommodate the identified outstanding Traveller and Travelling Showperson accommodation needs of 2 pitches and x 5 plots respectively.</p> <p>Representations in support of the proposed allocation were received from Fylde Borough Council.</p> <p>Wyre Borough Council submitted</p>	<p>No impact on neighbouring authorities.</p> <p>BC will continue to work with Fylde and Wyre Councils in meeting the future needs of Travellers and Travelling Showpeople across the Fylde coast sub-region to ensure the requirements of these communities are met.</p>

Strategic Priority	What is the nature of the strategic Issue?	Who is affected/ Obligated to Co-operate	Who has co-operated With whom and How was this done	Evidence	Outcome	Further Actions
			<p>→ formal meetings through DtC Officer Group meetings and informal dialogue;</p> <p>→ formal consultation at each stage of preparation of the Blackpool Local Plan Part 2: Site Allocations and Development Management Policies.</p>	<p>Traveller and Travelling Showpeople Accommodation Assessment 2016 (GTAA);</p> <p>→ Planning permissions granted post 2016.</p> <p>Other:</p> <p>→ DtC Officer Group Meetings</p> <p>→ DPOG</p>	<p>representations raising concerns.</p> <p>Subsequent to the informal consultation in January/February 2019 further planning permissions have been granted for Traveller Pitches and Travelling Showpeople plots in the sub-region. Consequently the outstanding need identified in the 2016 GTAA has been met as agreed by the three authorities.</p> <p>There is no longer a need to identify a site/s within the Blackpool Local Plan Part 2 and the proposed allocation at Faraday Way will therefore not be carried forward in to the Local Plan Part 2</p>	

Strategic Priority	What is the nature of the strategic Issue?	Who is affected/ Obligated to Co-operate	Who has co-operated With whom and How was this done	Evidence	Outcome	Further Actions
					Publication document. This approach addresses the concerns raised by Wyre Borough Council.	
<p>2. Retail, Leisure and other commercial development</p>	<p>a) Retail provision and sub-regional hierarchy of centres: to establish the role of town centres within the Fylde Coast and their position in the retail hierarchy and future retail growth.</p>	<p>BC, neighbouring authorities.</p>	<p>BC has co-operated with neighbouring authorities to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> → establish the retail hierarchy across the Fylde Coast and the appropriate retail needs in terms of future comparison and retail floorspace which is reflected in the adopted Local Plans for the Fylde Coast; → ensure policy in the Blackpool Local Plan Part 2 supports the established retail hierarchy. 	<p>Documents:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Blackpool Local Plan Part 1 Core Strategy (January 2016) → Blackpool Local Plan Part 2 – Site Allocations and Development Management Policies – Informal Consultation Paper (January 2019); → Blackpool Retail, Leisure and Hotel Study (2018) → Blackpool Town Centre Strategy 2013 → Blackpool Town Centre - Retail & 	<p>The Core Strategy establishes Blackpool Town Centre as the sub-regional centre for the Fylde Coast and identifies retail growth of comparison goods to supports this sub-regional role.</p> <p>Local Plan Part 2 Publication document provides a suite of policies to enhance the vitality and viability of Blackpool Town Centre to underpin its identified role as the Sub-Regional Centre for the Fylde Coast in line</p>	<p>Blackpool Town Centre as the sub regional centre for the Fylde Coast will serve the needs of residents across the sub-area. BC will continue to work with neighbouring authorities on cross boundary retail matters.</p>

Strategic Priority	What is the nature of the strategic Issue?	Who is affected/ Obligated to Co-operate	Who has co-operated With whom and How was this done	Evidence	Outcome	Further Actions
			<p>Co-operation with neighbouring authorities has been through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> → formal meetings through DtC Officer Group meetings and informal dialogue → formal consultation at each stage of preparation of the Blackpool Local Plan Part 2. 	<p>Vacancy Survey (Quarterly updates)</p> <p>Others:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> → DtC Officer Working Group meetings 	<p>with the findings of the 2018 Retail, Leisure and Hotel Study.</p> <p>Neighbouring authorities, LCC and Lancashire authorities' raised no objection to the proposed retail policies in the Blackpool Local Plan Part 2– Informal Consultation Paper (January 2019).</p>	
3. Infrastructure	<p>a) Transport: National and regional connectivity is important to Blackpool due to its reliance on the tourism economy as the UK's largest seaside resort therefore there is a need to manage the impact of development</p>	<p>BC, neighbouring authorities, LCC, HE, MMO</p>	<p>BC has co-operated with neighbouring authorities and LCC to address:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> → improvements to the highways access and transport connectivity to the Blackpool Airport EZ → cross boundary transport and 	<p>Documents:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Blackpool Local Plan Part 1: Core Strategy (January 2016); → Blackpool Local Plan Part 2 – Site Allocations and Development Management Policies – Informal 	<p>Policies DM 8 Blackpool Airport Enterprise Zone and DM39 – Transport Requirements for New Development.</p> <p>No objections have been received from neighbouring authorities, transport authorities, or</p>	<p>BC will continue to work with neighbouring authorities, LCC, HE and MMO to ensure ongoing strategic improvement to the infrastructure on the Blackpool/Fylde/Wyre boundaries and the SRN to benefit sub-regional connectivity.</p>

Strategic Priority	What is the nature of the strategic Issue?	Who is affected/ Obligated to Co-operate	Who has co-operated With whom and How was this done	Evidence	Outcome	Further Actions
	on the strategic transport network		<p>highways infrastructure needs related to major applications including Whyndyke Farm</p> <p>This has been through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Duty to Cooperate Officer Group meetings; → Ongoing collaboration with LCC as the Transport Authority for Lancashire → formal consultation at each stage of the preparation of the Local Plan Part 2 → Meetings on major cross boundary applications. <p>BC and the MMO have cooperated through formal consultation and on-going</p>	<p>Consultation Paper (January 2019);</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Blackpool Infrastructure Delivery Plan Update 2020; → Blackpool Airport EZ Masterplan → North West Marine Plan <p>Other:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> → DtC Officer Working Group meetings; → Meetings on major cross boundary applications. → Comments received from HE → Comments received from MMO 	<p>HE to the draft transport policies.</p> <p>Minor additional wording to DM8 in relation to HE representation.</p>	

Strategic Priority	What is the nature of the strategic Issue?	Who is affected/ Obligated to Co-operate	Who has co-operated With whom and How was this done	Evidence	Outcome	Further Actions
			<p>email correspondence to ensure that proposals are in line with the NW Marine Plan Policy NW-ACC-1: Access</p>			
	<p>b) Water-related infrastructure is a key cross boundary issue which directly affects the delivery of built development across the Fylde Coast.</p> <p>The main issues relate to surface water drainage; the capacity of the existing sewerage network and the need to ensure that proposals for new development have no adverse effect on bathing water quality along the Fylde Coast.</p>	<p>BC, including as Lead Flood Authority, neighbouring authorities, LCC as a Lead Flood Authority, EA, UU, MMO</p>	<p>BC has co-operated with neighbouring authorities, LCC and EA to :</p> <p>→ Agree a common approach to cross boundary surface water and waste water management to ensure the delivery of the required infrastructure improvements needed to accommodate future development requirements are not compromised.</p> <p>This has been through:</p>	<p>Documents:</p> <p>→ Blackpool Local Plan Part 1: Core Strategy (January 2016);</p> <p>→ Blackpool Local Plan Part 2 – Site Allocations and Development Management Policies – Informal Consultation Paper (January 2019);</p> <p>→ Blackpool Infrastructure Delivery Plan (2014) and update 2020</p> <p>→ Surface Water Management Plan – Assessment of Options (2014)</p>	<p>New policy DM31 – Surface Water Management included in the Publication version of the Local Plan Part 2 in response to representations received from EA and United Utilities on the Local Plan Part 2 Informal Consultation Paper (January 2019) to specifically include a policy on Surface Water Management in addition to Core Strategy Policy CS9 - Water Management.</p>	<p>Ongoing collaboration with neighbouring authorities, LCC, EA, UU, and MMO to ensure the required water-related infrastructure is delivered.</p>

Strategic Priority	What is the nature of the strategic issue?	Who is affected/ Obligated to Co-operate	Who has co-operated With whom and How was this done	Evidence	Outcome	Further Actions
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → The Fylde Peninsula Water Management Partnership; → The Making Space for Water Group → Individual meetings with EA → Duty to Co-operate Officer Working Group meetings <p>BC and the MMO have cooperated through formal consultation and on-going email correspondence to ensure that proposals are in line with the NW Marine Plan Policy NW-WQ-1: Water Quality; and NW-INF-1: Infrastructure</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Surface Water Management Plan – Modelling Report (2013) → Surface Water Management Plan – Risk Assessment (2013) → Fylde Peninsular SUDS Study (Atkins 2013) → Beach Management Activities along the Fylde Coast – Possible Measures to Control Local Bathing Water Quality (January 2013) → An Action Plan to Improve Bathing Waters across the Fylde Peninsula (Draft Feb 2013) → Draft Lancashire and Blackpool Local Flood Risk Management Strategy (2014) → Central Lancashire and 		

Strategic Priority	What is the nature of the strategic Issue?	Who is affected/ Obligated to Co-operate	Who has co-operated With whom and How was this done	Evidence	Outcome	Further Actions
				<p>Blackpool Outline Water Cycle Study (December 2010)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> → North West Marine Plan <p>Other:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> → DtC Officer Working Group meetings → DPOG → Officer meetings with respect to current major planning application at Whyndyke Farm → Comments received from the EA and United Utilities including formal representations to the consultation. → Meetings with EA on various issues both strategic and planning application related. → Comments received from MMO 		

Strategic Priority	What is the nature of the strategic Issue?	Who is affected/ Obligated to Co-operate	Who has co-operated With whom and How was this done	Evidence	Outcome	Further Actions
<p>4. Climate Change and natural and historic environment</p>	<p>a) Natural Environment - Managing impacts on habitats and/or landscape character designations and seascape</p>	<p>BC, neighbouring authorities, LCC, Natural England, EA and MMO</p>	<p>BC has co-operated with neighbouring authorities, LCC, Natural England and the EA to:</p> <p>Conserve and enhance natural habitats, biodiversity and landscapes of importance including in relation to the designation of the Blackpool Airport Enterprise Zone and the major development at Whyndyke Farm</p> <p>This has been through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> → formal DtC Officer Working Group meetings; → consultation at each stage of preparation of the draft Local Plan Part 2 and → informal and formal consultation with 	<p>Documents:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Blackpool Local Plan Part 1: Core Strategy (January 2016) → Blackpool Local Plan Part 2 – Site Allocations and Development Management Policies – Informal Consultation Paper (January 2019); → Blackpool Infrastructure Delivery Plan update 2020 → Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) Screening Reports – Blackpool Local Plan Part 2 → Sustainability Appraisal of the Blackpool Local Plan Part 2 → Blackpool Nature Conservation 	<p>DM35 Biodiversity has been amended to reflect representation received from EA.</p> <p>The HRA and SA has informed the Local Plan Part 2 taking into account the wider cross boundary implications of development on habitats within the Borough and elsewhere in the Fylde Coast sub-area.</p> <p>The HRA concludes that none of the policies or associated allocation sites were considered to have a likely significant effect on any of the European sites alone, or in combination.</p>	<p>Collaboration is ongoing with neighbouring authorities and Natural England and the MMO to manage cross -boundary impacts on the natural environment.</p>

Strategic Priority	What is the nature of the strategic Issue?	Who is affected/ Obligated to Co-operate	Who has co-operated With whom and How was this done	Evidence	Outcome	Further Actions
			<p>Natural England and EA</p> <p>→ Meetings on major cross boundary applications.</p> <p>BC and the MMO have cooperated through formal consultation and on-going email correspondence to ensure that proposals are in line with the NW Marine Plan Policy NW-MPA-1, NW-MPA-2, NW-MPA-3, NW-MPA-4: Marine Protected Areas; NW-CC-1, NW-CC-2, NW-CC-3: Climate Change; NW-BIO-1: Biodiversity; and Marine Character Area 34: Blackpool Coastal Waters and Ribble Estuary</p>	<p>Statement update 2012</p> <p>→ North West Marine Plan</p> <p>→ Seascape Character Assessment for the North West Inshore and Offshore marine plan areas</p> <p>Other:</p> <p>→ DtC Officer Working Group meetings</p> <p>→ DPOG</p> <p>→ Officer meetings with respect to current major planning application at Whyndyke Farm</p> <p>→ Consultation on the Blackpool Green and Blue Infrastructure Strategy 2019</p> <p>→ Comments received from MMO</p>		

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Section Four - Signatories

Plan-Making Authorities

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

Blackpool Council

Signed:

Dated:

(INSERT NAME AND POSITION)

Fylde Council

Signed:

Dated:

(INSERT NAME AND POSITION)

Wyre Council

Signed:

Dated:

(INSERT NAME AND POSITION)

Lancashire County Council

Signed:

Dated:

(INSERT NAME AND POSITION)

Other signatories:

To be listed once agreement is received.

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DUTY TO CO-OPERATE

MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING

BETWEEN

BLACKPOOL COUNCIL,

LANCASHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL,

FYLDE BOROUGH COUNCIL AND

WYRE BOROUGH COUNCIL

April 2015

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1.0 PURPOSE OF THE MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING

- 1.1 This Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) updates the first MOU dated August 2013 between Blackpool Council, Fylde Council, Wyre Council (to be referred to as the Fylde Coast Authorities (FCAs) for the purpose of this MOU) and Lancashire County Council (LCC).
- 1.2 This update refreshes the evidence base; the strategic issues, in particular with reference to housing and transport matters; the governance arrangements; and also includes some minor textual changes to improve clarity.
- 1.3 The MOU provides for those strategic planning issues which require cross boundary co-operation and collaboration to ensure the requirements of the Government's 'Duty to Cooperate' are met and that the local plans of the FCAs are sustainable, deliverable and found 'sound' at examination. It formalises the ongoing dialogue and co-operation that currently exists between the four authorities.
- 1.4 The MOU will also guide the approach that the FCAs and LCC take with respect to responding to strategic planning applications and nationally significant infrastructure projects.
- 1.5 The following sections of the MOU provide:
 - Context on the Government's requirement regarding the Duty to Cooperate;
 - Background on the Fylde Coast Peninsula and its geographical and economic characteristics;
 - Cross Boundary Issues - highlighting strategic areas of agreement, including existing co-operation and collaboration between the FCAs and LCC and areas for continued and future co-operation, to fulfil the Duty to Co-operate;
 - Governance arrangements.

2.0 CONTEXT

- 2.1 The Government introduced through the Localism Act and the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) a 'Duty to Co-operate' on strategic planning and cross boundary issues.
- 2.2 The Duty to Co-operate applies to all local planning authorities, County Councils and a number of other public bodies and requires a continuous process of engagement and cooperation on planning issues that cross administrative boundaries. This is to ensure strategic priorities across local boundaries are properly coordinated and the process should also involve consultation with Local Enterprise Partnerships and Local Nature Partnerships.
- 2.3 Local planning authorities are expected to demonstrate evidence of having effectively cooperated to plan for issues with cross-boundary impacts when their plans are submitted for examination. If this is not achieved the Government has indicated that authorities run the risk of their Local Plans being found 'unsound' at Examination.

- 2.4 In particular, the Duty:
- relates to sustainable development or use of land that would have a significant impact on at least two local planning areas or on a planning matter that falls within the remit of a county council;
 - requires that councils set out planning policies to address such issues;
 - requires that councils and other bodies engage constructively, actively and on an ongoing basis to develop strategic policies in the preparation of local plan documents and activities that can reasonably be considered to prepare the way for such documents;
 - requires councils to consider joint approaches to plan-making.
- 2.5 Paragraphs 178 -181 of the NPPF gives further guidance on ‘planning strategically across local boundaries’ and highlights the importance of joint working to meet development requirements that cannot be wholly met within a single local planning area, through either joint planning policies or informal strategies such as infrastructure and investment plans.
- 2.6 The NPPF requires that each local planning authority should ensure that the Local Plan and decision-making is based on adequate, up-to-date and relevant evidence about the economic, social and environmental characteristics and prospects of the area. As part of our approach to working cooperatively, the authorities will consider the best means of gathering information and intelligence on a strategic cross-boundary basis to ensure consistency of data and its interpretation and application to development planning.

3.0 THE FYLDE COAST PENINSULA – SUB REGIONAL FUNCTIONALITY

- 3.1 The Fylde Coast sub-region encompasses the area covered by the unitary authority of Blackpool Council and the two-tier area covered by Lancashire County Council and the district councils of Fylde and Wyre. The area stretches from the Ribble Estuary in the south to Morecambe Bay in the north and the Forest of Bowland moorlands in the east. The area covers 384 sq. km and is home to 327,400 residents.
- 3.2 The Fylde Coast sub-region demonstrates a high level of self-containment in terms of housing markets, travel to work patterns and economic functionality.
- 3.3 The Fylde Coast housing market area is broadly determined by patterns of local migration and travel to work patterns. There are strong local connections within that part of the Fylde Coast housing market area comprising Blackpool and west Fylde and Wyre. The remaining areas of Wyre relate to a wider rural housing market with the A6 corridor and eastern Fylde relating more strongly to Preston.
- 3.4 The economic functionality of the Fylde Coast is apparent through the strong travel to work patterns and employment with a shared tourism and cultural offer; regionally and nationally significant advanced manufacturing (BAE Systems at Warton and nuclear processing at Westinghouse, Springfields); the Department for Work and Pensions; and a shared infrastructure including Blackpool Airport, coastal tramway and strategic highway and rail networks.

- 3.5 This economic coherence was reflected in the establishment of the Multi Area Agreement in April 2009 and the Blackpool, Fylde and Wyre Economic Development Company in April 2010 (rebranded the Blackpool Bay Company in 2011), to support local authority partnership working, co-ordinate and drive forward shared objectives and deliver a co-ordinated programme of capital investment.
- 3.6 The landscape across the sub-region is broadly similar, largely falling within the Lancashire and Amounderness Plain National Character Area (NCA), but with a portion of the North Wyre coast within the Morecambe Coast and Lune Estuary NCA. The sub-region encompasses part of the Forest of Bowland AONB.

4.0 CROSS BOUNDARY ISSUES

Context

- 4.1 Paragraph 156 of the NPPF sets out strategic issues where co-operation might be appropriate including:
- the homes and jobs needed in the area;
 - the provision of retail, leisure and other commercial development;
 - the provision of infrastructure for transport, telecommunications, waste management, water supply, wastewater, flood risk and coastal change management, and the provision of minerals and energy (including heat);
 - the provision of health, security, community and cultural infrastructure and other local facilities; and
 - climate change mitigation and adaptation, conservation and enhancement of the natural and historic environment, including landscape/habitats and the importance of European sites.
- 4.2 The priority given to these issues will depend on local circumstances and strategic approaches may not be required in every situation.
- 4.3 Working together on strategic planning issues is not new to the FCAs and LCC. Engagement on issues of common concern with respect to housing, employment land and transport infrastructure have been ongoing for many years.
- 4.4 Currently, the spatial planning policies of the FCAs are being reviewed through the development of local plans. Whilst the Duty to Co-operate proposes that neighbouring authorities should consider joint approaches to plan making, the authorities have decided to develop separate Local Plans, albeit closely aligned, due to the different stages of the local plan process at which each authority finds itself and having regard to the unitary status of Blackpool Council.
- 4.5 To undertake a joint local plan would further delay the adoption of an up to date plan for each authority. The government has advised local planning authorities to ensure that they get up to date local plans in place by spring 2017. Without an up-to-date plan, development decisions will be made on the basis of the Framework, with the presumption being 'yes' to sustainable development unless 'any adverse impacts would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in the Framework

taken as a whole; or specific policies in the Framework indicate development should be restricted'. This could result in development being approved which does not have the support of the authorities.

- 4.6 Lancashire County Council (LCC) is responsible for the delivery of transport infrastructure and services within Fylde and Wyre districts directed by the Local Transport Plan and Fylde Coast Highways and Transport Masterplan; as well as education and social care provision and new responsibilities relating to flood risk and health. This also involves working with Blackpool at a strategic level to ensure a co-ordinated approach to infrastructure and service delivery. LCC's involvement is therefore critical in the development and delivery of the FCAs' local plans.
- 4.7 With respect to waste management and the provision of minerals, LCC and Blackpool Council as minerals and waste authorities have a long standing relationship of working together in preparing; monitoring and reviewing the Joint Minerals and Waste Local Plan and Municipal Waste Management Strategy for Lancashire. The Local Plan is currently being reviewed and an Onshore Oil and Gas Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) is under preparation.
- 4.8 The FCAs and LCC acknowledge that addressing cross-boundary issues is essential if sustainable development is to be delivered at a local level and economic growth and social and environmental well-being for the sub-region is to be achieved. Those strategic issues which are considered to need cross boundary co-operation are set out below. The 'Key Issues' which are highlighted at the end of each section are not exclusive. The Duty to Co-operate is an ongoing process, as issues and the policy approach are agreed other issues will arise which will need to be addressed. This memorandum will be reviewed and updated as appropriate in accordance with the governance arrangements set out at the end of this document.

Housing

- 4.9 The housing offer on the Fylde Coast has an important role in supporting the sub-region's economy. The Fylde Coast housing market area (HMA) as a whole offers a wide range of housing and neighbourhoods, including some very attractive areas, but there are also some major concentrations of poor quality homes in very unattractive neighbourhoods. These neighbourhoods contribute to the underperformance of the local economy, whilst in the attractive areas it is difficult for local people on modest incomes to be able to afford to buy or rent a suitable home.
- 4.10 To achieve a more balanced housing market the FCAs have undertaken a joint approach to addressing housing issues unrestricted by local authority boundaries. This has included appointing a Fylde Coast Housing Strategy Manager in October 2007 to develop and manage the sub-regional approach to housing and inform policy development.
- 4.11 Joint housing studies have been produced to inform policy development, including the need for new and affordable housing:
- the **Fylde Coast Housing Market Assessment Study (December 2013) published February 2014** (including Addendums) - to provide a robust evidence base to inform the policy approach to be adopted in the individual local plans. This study is a key document

in the Local Plan evidence base and updates the previous 2008 Fylde Coast SHMA. It is accompanied by two Addendums which relate to the 2012 ONS Population and Household projections which were released in October 2014 and February 2015 respectively

- the **Fylde Coast Housing Strategy 2009** - to provide a common understanding, vision and set of priorities for housing across the Fylde Coast housing market area to provide a wider understanding of issues and priorities that enables public and private sector partners to develop their work in a clear strategic context.

- 4.12 In considering housing need and requirements, the FCAs also need to address the accommodation requirements of Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople. The Government's Planning Policy for Travellers (March 2012) sets out the broad approach to be adopted and requires all local authorities to provide for a 5 year supply of sites where a such need is identified. In response to this the FCAs jointly commissioned consultants Opinion Research Services to undertake a Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment and the findings were published in October 2014. The assessment established a need for additional sites across the Fylde Coast including 81 traveller pitches and 14 plots for Travelling Showpeople to 2031.

We will work together to:

- **reach a consensus on housing provision across the Fylde Coast sub-region;**
- **establish a more balanced and wider housing choice in the Housing Market Area;**
- **promote a strong and distinctive sustainable pattern of settlement growth that supports each area's needs;**
- **reach a consensus on the accommodation needs of Gypsy, Traveller and travelling Showpeople communities across the Fylde Coast sub-region;**
- **agree complementary/joint approaches to the delivery and accessibility of affordable housing.**

Economy – Business and Industrial Development

- 4.13 There are strong links between the FCAs in terms of travel to work patterns and employment, which warrant the joint consideration of future employment development for the sub region.
- 4.15 The size of the Fylde Coast economy is around £4.8bn – some 2% of the North West economy but productivity per head significantly underperforms the Lancashire and England average, reflecting the predominance of the tourism sector. However the sub-region does contain significant specialism in advanced manufacturing in Fylde - aerospace at Warton, identified in 2012 as an Enterprise Zone, nuclear processing at Springfields, accounting for almost half the industrial business lands in the sub-region and advanced chemical manufacturing at Hillhouse, Thornton.

- 4.16 Other strengths exist in food processing and environmental technologies. Environmental technology including Global Renewables at Thornton and fish processing associated with Fleetwood docks contribute significantly to employment in Wyre. The public sector and government agencies are also substantial providers of jobs in the sub-region along with insurance providers Axa and Aegon in Fylde.
- 4.17 Decline in GVA and employment has been a shared experience across the FCAs. However they recognise the need to strengthen, promote and enhance the tourism offer whilst at the same time further develop the other key sectors referred to above, with a need to persuade existing businesses in these sectors to grow and to provide the right conditions for other firms to invest.
- 4.18 Crucial to this is the provision of quality development sites to support new business growth. The peripheral location of the Fylde Coast within the North West makes it critical to provide a portfolio of sustainable employment opportunities to improve economic performance. The FCAs have recognised the need to capitalise on the particular assets, strengths and opportunities of the sub region as a whole. In 2010 a Fylde Sub Region Employment Land Review was agreed by Blackpool, Fylde and Wyre which sets out the current position in terms of employment land availability. Updating this in 2012 Fylde Council commissioned consultants to carry out an Employment Land and Premises Study and Wyre Council undertook an Employment Land and Commercial Leisure Study. In 2015 Wyre commissioned an update of the employment land elements of the Employment Land and Commercial Leisure Study. Blackpool Council has undertaken an updated Employment Land Study which was published in June 2014. Additionally BE Group were jointly commissioned in 2013 by Fylde and Blackpool Councils to undertake an employment land appraisal study relating to land on the Fylde/Blackpool boundary around Whitehills and Junction 4 of the M55 and specific sites in south Blackpool.
- 4.19 The Blackpool Bay Company (BBC) has commissioned Genecon consultants to develop the Blackpool, Fylde and Wyre Local Growth Accelerator Strategy focused on delivering economic change at the sub-area level across the Fylde Coast in line with the Lancashire Enterprise Partnership Growth Plan and Strategic Economic Plan.

We will work together to :

- **undertake joint consideration of future employment development for the sub-region in response to the strong links between the FCAs in terms of travel to work patterns and employment;**
- **agree the sub-regional employment land requirement;**
- **agree the strategic priorities for land use with the aim of attracting major new economic development to help strengthen the Fylde Coast economy;**

- **to promote sustainable solutions at key strategic sites and corridors:**
 - **Blackpool Airport corridor – Blackpool/Fylde boundary including newly designated Enterprise Zone;**
 - **The Enterprise Zone at BAE Systems – Warton – Fylde;**
 - **Hillhouse International Business Park – Wyre;**
 - **Central Business District – Blackpool Town Centre;**
 - **Junction 4 of the M55 – Fylde/Blackpool boundary;**
 - **A6 Corridor/Garstang – Wyre**

Retail

- 4.20 Retailing is a key strategic issue over which the FCAs collaborate and in September 2007 White Young Green were commissioned by Blackpool, Fylde and Wyre authorities to carry out the first sub-regional retail study for the Fylde Coast. The study, which was published in June 2008, was undertaken to provide an in-depth analysis of the retail provision within the main centres of the Fylde Coast Sub-Region, including an assessment of the extent to which the centres were meeting the retail needs of the local population and the role of the local shopping network and the sub-regional shopping hierarchy.
- 4.21 This 2008 study was updated by Roger Tym and Partners – the ‘Joint Fylde Coast Retail Study 2011’ in order to reflect significant changes since the first study. These include major new developments, in particular the extension to the Houndhill Shopping Centre in Blackpool; economic changes; forecast retail expenditure growth rates; and changes in national guidance at the time with respect to the publication of PPS4 (December 2009) and the test of soundness for Local Plan Documents in PPS12 (June 2008), now superseded by the NPPF.
- 4.22 The 2011 study provides evidence to inform the local plans of the FCAs with respect to:
- a. the retail role of towns within the Fylde Coast and their position in the retail hierarchy;
 - b. potential future development needs for each authority; and
 - c. definition of the town centres within the Sub-Region which are Blackpool, Lytham, St Annes, Kirkham, Fleetwood, Cleveleys, Poulton-le-Fylde and Garstang.
- 4.23 The 2011 study has been endorsed by each of the FCAs to be used as appropriate evidence base on which to inform policy in their local plans.
- 4.24 To address over-trading issues of particular convenience stores highlighted in the 2011 study, Fylde and Wyre jointly commissioned Peter Brett Associates (formerly Roger Tym and Partners) to undertake additional work to assess the impact on future

convenience expenditure capacity in their areas. It also provided the opportunity to extend the consideration of future floorspace needs for an additional 4 years to 2030 to reflect Fylde and Wyre's Local Plan periods.

We will work together to:

- **reach a consensus on the retail hierarchy and roles of towns within the Fylde Coast Sub -Region;**
- **provide evidence to effectively resist retail applications which are not in accordance with the retail hierarchy contained in the development plans of the FCAs.**

Transport

- 4.25 Developing a more sustainable and efficient transport network across the Fylde Coast is vital for our economic prosperity and our social and environmental well-being. Our sub-regional transport infrastructure needs to support our economic priorities and effectively integrate with future development locations to reduce the need to travel, making it safe and easy for Fylde Coast residents to access jobs and services; for visitors to access and enjoy the tourism and cultural offer; and for business to be attracted to invest in the sub-region.
- 4.26 The transport infrastructure of the Fylde Coast comprises road, rail, tram, air and potential port links supported by a comprehensive network of footpaths, canal, cycle routes and bridleways.
- 4.27 At the heart of the transport network is the M55 linking Blackpool with the M6 north of Preston. This is supported by the principal road network including the key routes of the A583 (Preston - Kirkham - Blackpool), the A584 (Freckleton/Warton –Lytham St. Annes-Blackpool), the A585(T) (M55 Junction 3 to Fleetwood), A6 (Preston – Garstang – Lancaster), the A586 (A6 to A585) and A588 (A585 through Wyre East Rural to Lancaster).
- 4.28 The North Fylde line connects Blackpool North, Poulton-le-Fylde and Kirkham with frequent and fast services to Preston. This line has recently been electrified which will increase the potential; for modal shift to relieve the road network enhance and may see through services by using Pendolino trains by 2017. There are a total of twelve railway stations in the sub-region, most of which are situated on the south Fylde line which connects to Blackpool South station and the Pleasure Beach and serves Lytham and St. Annes with an hourly service to Preston.
- 4.29 The Blackpool Tramway system runs for some 11 miles along the coast from Starr Gate in south Blackpool to north Fleetwood linking to Blackpool North and South stations although the interchange between the two is currently poor. The tramway has seen recent significant investment with a comprehensive upgrade completed in 2012, providing a modern accessible transport system which carried some 4.3 million passengers in the year ending October 2013. Through Sintropher funding, work has been undertaken to assess the development of tram services linked to the national rail network. The Blackpool North Tram option proposes a 700m extension from the

promenade at North Pier along Talbot Road to Blackpool North rail station. The intention is to create an interchange between the tram and rail, increasing accessibility and connectivity between destinations along the Fylde Coast tramway and the national rail network.

- 4.30 Until October 2014, Blackpool Airport operated regular charter and scheduled flights throughout the UK and to various European destinations. In addition, whilst the Port of Fleetwood ceased ferry services in 2010 it maintains its capacity for ferry Roll-On Roll-Off (RORO) and has potential as a maintenance base for the off-shore energy sector, including wind turbines.
- 4.31 Whilst the transport infrastructure for the Fylde Coast could be considered as comprehensive there are major strategic challenges which need to be addressed to improve our economic competitiveness. These include:
- The A585(T) corridor which presents a significant bottleneck at Singleton crossroads and other local problems for connectivity between the M55 and Fleetwood
 - Congestion on the A585 between the M55 and Fleetwood could undermine future economic development activity of the Fleetwood -Thornton Development Corridor (to which the adopted Fleetwood-Thornton Area Action Plan, is applicable)
 - The A6 corridor and in particular junction 1 on the M55 is close to capacity which could limit future growth along the A6 corridor beyond planned growth in North Preston
 - In the south access to the BAE Systems site at Warton needs to be improved to allow redundant brownfield land to be suitable for future development. Such connectivity issues act as a barrier to communities accessing employment. In response to this the Central Lancashire Highways and Transport Masterplan proposes a Western Distributor road around Preston linked to a new Junction 2 on the M55 to accommodate significant housing development in northwest Preston and improve access to the Enterprise Zone site
 - Access to the Warton Enterprise Zone from the wider Fylde Coast can be problematic in particular from Wyre, trips taking around 50 minutes from Fleetwood to Warton outside peak holiday season and significantly longer within season. In addition public transport is also limited
 - Public transport connectivity is relatively poor with limited rail connectivity between some of the key urbanised areas and coastal and market towns of Wyre and Fylde and the wider North West. Heavy rail connectivity to St Annes and south Blackpool is restricted by a single track line with trains only running once every hour in both directions. The propensity of those in the South Fylde rail line catchment area to use rail is well below the national average. There is a real need to increase service frequency and reliability, meeting transport demand from Lytham St Annes and supporting regeneration in south Blackpool. In addition, a lack of suitable interchange means the tram system is currently disconnected from the rail infrastructure. At Preston, interchange between services is made more difficult by poor platform access between main line platforms and those serving the Fylde Coast

- Blackpool Airport, now designated within an Enterprise Zone is a considerable sub-regional asset and there is a need to ensure that the economic potential of this asset is maintained. Currently public transport access to the airport is relatively poor. There is no rail station and at present no buses directly serve the site. If the airport is to truly appeal, there needs to be investment in transport infrastructure to the site from not only across the Fylde Coast but also from places such as Preston.
- 4.32 Local transport planning priorities for Lancashire and Blackpool captured in the Fylde Cost Highways and Transport Masterplan will play an important part in addressing these strategic challenges. As well as the strategic issues presented above, this will consider important issues of rural connectivity, bus infrastructure and coach travel and the promotion of cycling.

We will work together to:

- **identify and carry forward a programme of cost effective viable improvements along the A585, working with the Highways Agency to remove the last remaining pinch-points along the route;**
- **consider the need for and the means to provide new direct, high standard road links between the M55 motorway north to Norcross and south to St. Annes to relieve road congestion and improve connectivity to potential areas of growth and development;**
- **to identify and deliver necessary improvements along the A6 corridor to support new growth and development;**
- **support the sustainable development of Blackpool Airport including working to explore the potential to develop commercial aeronautical activity and improvements to surface access by public transport;**
- **Support improvements to Preston Station, Blackpool North and other stations and maximise the opportunities presented by rail electrification and HS2 for rail travel and commuting;**
- **support further improvements to and better integration of the sub-regions train and tram networks to assist north-south movements along the coast from Fleetwood to Starr Gate and south to Lytham and St. Annes;**
- **Consider the opportunities presented by significant new road infrastructure in Central Lancashire, including the prospect for a new road crossing of the River Ribble;**
- **seek a common approach to parking standards across the sub-region.**

Surface Water Drainage and Waste Water

- 4.33 Water infrastructure capacity is a key cross boundary issue which will directly affect the delivery of built development across the Fylde Coast. The main issues relate to surface water drainage; the capacity of the existing sewage network and the need to ensure that proposals for new development have no adverse effect on the bathing water quality along the Fylde Coast. This is a vital issue as the quality of our beaches and bathing water underpins our tourism offer and our future economic prosperity.
- 4.34 Recent studies have been undertaken to inform the evidence base including the Central Lancashire and Blackpool Outline Water Cycle Study completed in April 2011. Whilst this study covers those authorities in Central Lancashire and Blackpool which were included in the Growth Point area, the study provides an assessment of the flood risk planning data, foul drainage, surface water management water resources and infrastructure issues including information on the wider Fylde Coast area. In addition, as part of its role as a Lead Local Flood Authority, Blackpool has recently produced a Blackpool Surface Water Management Plan researching and aligning all data, information and legislation, in liaison with United Utilities and the Environment Agency on critical capacity issues, with a focus on existing assets, identifying flood risks, mitigation measures and with the view to developing an on-going implementation plan. This plan will include wider consideration of cross-boundary surface water infrastructure and drainage issues along the coastal belt in order to generate and develop sustainable drainage measures. Lancashire County Council is the Lead Flood Authority for the Fylde and Wyre area and works closely with the FCA's to identify and address Blackpool Flood Risk Management Strategy for 2014 to 2017.
- 4.35 From the evidence base it is clear that the main cross boundary issues relate to network capacity issues which are contributing to surface water flooding and spills of untreated waste water into the Irish Sea, putting at risk Fylde Coast bathing waters under the new bathing water legislation due to come into force in 2015.
- 4.36 It is therefore imperative that the FCAs and LCC agree a supportive approach to surface water and waste water management to ensure that the economic prosperity of the Fylde Coast is not compromised and that the future development requirements of the sub-region can be accommodated. This includes the approach to ad hoc development not compromising the delivery of required infrastructure improvements to address the capacity issues of the Fylde Coast.
- 4.37 In recognition of the issues surrounding water management the Fylde Peninsula Water Management Group (FPWMG) was set up in April 2011. The Group is a partnership comprising the Environment Agency, United Utilities, the FCAs, Lancashire County Council and Keep Britain Tidy. The purpose of the group is to provide a sustainable and integrated approach to the management of coastal protection; water quality (including bathing waters), surface water drainage (including flooding) and development.
- 4.38 The Partnership established a set of guiding principles to work towards:
- Work together to develop a strong evidence base so we can prioritise what is important for the area;
 - Use this evidence to demonstrate how environmental improvements can deliver real and lasting social and economic outcomes;

- Cooperate to identify and deliver innovative solutions;
 - Unlock new funding streams and align investment plans to deliver real value for money;
 - Develop an agreed programme of works that delivers real and lasting change.
- 4.39 The FPWMG has also produced a ten point action plan which sets out the work that is needed to deliver long term improvements to bathing water quality across the Fylde Peninsula.”

We will work together to:

- **agree a common approach to surface water and waste water management, including the approach adopted to ad hoc development, to ensure the delivery of required infrastructure improvements needed to accommodate future development requirements is not compromised.**

Natural Environment

- 4.40 The Fylde Coast sub-region is characterised by a wide variety of natural environmental assets, from intertidal mudflats to the high Bowland fells, and including all of Lancashire's surviving natural sand dune systems. There is a range of overlapping wildlife designations including sites of international, National and local importance which seek to conserve natural habitats and/or species. Six designated sites of international importance (including Ramsar, Special Protection Areas (SPA) and Special Areas of Conservation (SAC)) fringe the coastline. There are ten nationally designated Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs) which include Morecambe Bay, Ribble Estuary, River Wyre. Offshore there is a Marine SAC (Liverpool Bay) and Marine SPA (Shell Flat and Lune Deep) and a nationally important Marine Conservation Zone (Fylde). There are also 111 locally important Biological Heritage Sites (BHSs), five Local Geo-diversity Sites and pockets of ancient woodland. Part of the Forest of Bowland Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty lies within the sub region.
- 4.41 The sub-region is covered by two Local nature partnerships: Morecambe Bay LNP and Lancashire LNP. In addition, the Morecambe Bay Nature Improvement Area (NIA) was one of twelve designated in 2012, with the aim of improving the landscape for nature, the community and visitors.
- 4.42 A core planning principle of the NPPF relates to conserving and enhancing the natural environment. This should be considered at a strategic level as landscape-scale networks of biodiversity and green infrastructure cross administrative boundaries and development in one area can have a potential effect upon natural assets in another. Green infrastructure is defined by Natural England as a strategically planned and delivered network comprising the broadest range of high quality green spaces and other environmental features. An ecological network for Lancashire, including the whole of the sub region, has been identified on behalf of the Lancashire LNP and made available through LERN. LERN, which is hosted by the County Council, supports the environmental information and intelligence needs of public, private and third sector organisations operating in Lancashire, as well as members of the public. Access to LERN data and services is covered by a separate MoA.

- 4.43 To determine the environmental impact and effect on European designated sites, the Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Directive 2001/42/EC and the Habitats Directive respectively require assessments of plans and projects of neighbouring authorities to be considered, so requiring co-ordination and sharing of information at the Fylde Coast sub-regional level.
- 4.44 The sub-region is also characterised by relatively small but strategically important areas of Green Belt between i) Fleetwood, Thornton and Cleveleys ii) Thornton, Cleveleys, Poulton-le-Fylde and Blackpool iii) South Blackpool and St Anne’s, iv) Lytham and Warton, v) Freckleton and Kirkham and vi) Staining and Blackpool / Poulton-le-Fylde. Any substantial strategic changes to Green Belt boundaries would need to be undertaken as part of a holistic sub-regional review and there is not currently any evidence of a requirement for such a review to take place.

We will work together to:

- **conserve and enhance natural habitats, ecological networks and landscapes of importance;and**
- **develop a strategic network of green and blue infrastructure across the sub-region.**

5.0 GOVERNANCE

- 5.1 The Duty to Co-operate requires that councils engage constructively, actively and on an ongoing basis. There is therefore a need to establish governance arrangements and protocols to ensure that the requirements of the Duty to Co-operate are met and that the FCAs can demonstrate at examination of their Local Plans that appropriate and constructive co-operation has taken place to ensure sustainable outcomes to strategic planning issues.
- 5.2 Governance arrangements under this MOU will comprise:

A Joint Member and Officer Advisory Steering Group to oversee the work under the Duty to Co-operate. The Terms of Reference for the Group are as follows:

- a) **To facilitate the Fylde Coast Authorities in meeting their Duty to Cooperate by discussing matters of common interest in relation to strategic planning on the Fylde Coast as a whole and to make recommendations to each Local Planning Authority and the County Council as necessary;**
- b) **To review as necessary and keep up to date the Memorandum of Understanding between the Fylde Coast Authorities;**
- c) **To collaborate on the development of planning, economic development and transport policy where appropriate to achieve consistency of approach**

- d) To commission joint studies relating to strategic matters and the development of planning policy in each individual Local Authority and ensure that the evidence base remains up to date;**
 - e) To discuss and resolve as far as is possible cross boundary issues to make recommendations to each individual authority and the County Council as necessary;**
 - f) To keep each Local Planning Authority and the County Council informed on the development and review of planning, economic and transport policy in each individual Authority area;**
- 5.3 The group will be chaired on a rotational basis by a Member of one of the four authorities. The Council Leaders and Chief Executives will have the remit to appoint up to two appropriate representative to act on their behalf as necessary. All meetings will be minuted to provide an ongoing evidence of co-operation.
- 5.4 An Officer Working Group will provide support to all joint working arrangements as appropriate to ensure constructive engagement, good communications and transparency, seeking innovative sustainable solutions to strategic issues

APPENDIX B

Blackpool Local Plan Part 1: Core Strategy (2012-2027) – Statement of Compliance can be found at the following link:

<https://www.blackpool.gov.uk/Residents/Planning-environment-and-community/Documents/DC001-Duty-to-Co-operate-Statement-of-Compliance.pdf>