



**Strategic Environmental Assessment
Screening Opinion of**

St. Annes on the Sea Neighbourhood Development Plan

Prepared by Fylde Council

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St. Annes on the Sea Neighbourhood Plan

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1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 This Screening Opinion report is designed to determine whether or not the proposed content of the St. Annes on the Sea Neighbourhood Plan (hereafter known as ‘SANP’) requires a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) in accordance with the European Directive 2001/42/EC and associated Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004.
- 1.2 SEA is a systemic process for evaluating the environmental consequences of plans and programmes to ensure that environmental issues are integrated and assessed at the earliest opportunity in the decision-making process.
- 1.3 Neighbourhood plans (hereafter known as ‘NP’) do not automatically require the undertaking of SEA, it is the case that a screening procedure is undertaken to determine whether the plan is likely to have a significant environmental effect. If there are significant effects, a SEA is required.
- 1.4 The legislative background set out in the following section outlines the regulations that require the need for this screening exercise. Section 4 provides a generic screening of a Neighbourhood Plan and Section 6, provides a screening assessment of both the likely significant environmental effects and conclusion as to the need for a full SEA based on the proposal for SANP.

2.0 Legislation

- 2.1 The need for environmental assessment of plans and programmes is set out in the European Directive 2001/42/EC known as the Strategic Environmental Assessment or SEA Directive. The Directive was subsequently transposed into English Law by the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004, or SEA Regulations. The government has produced guidance in relation to these regulations and is available in “A Practical Guide to the Strategic Environmental Assessment Directive” (ODPM, 2005).
- 2.2 The Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires local planning authorities to produce a Sustainability Appraisal (SA) of any documents which form part of a Local Plan, including core strategies, site allocation documents and area action plans. It is considered best practice to incorporate the requirements of the European Directive on SEA into the Sustainability Appraisal which should be an integral part of the plan preparation process, and should consider all the likely significant effects on the environment, economic and social factors.
- 2.3 The SEA requirements for Neighbourhood Plans are described in the UK Government’s Planning Practice Guidance. The guidance states that:

“There is no legal requirement for a neighbourhood plan to have a sustainability appraisal as set out in section 19 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.”

However, “In some limited circumstances, where a neighbourhood plan is likely to have significant environmental effects, it may require a strategic environmental assessment. Draft neighbourhood plan proposals should be assessed to determine whether the plan is likely to have significant environmental effects. This process is commonly referred to as a “screening” assessment and the requirements are set out in regulation 9 of the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004.”

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The guidance continues, stating that an SEA may be required, for example, where:

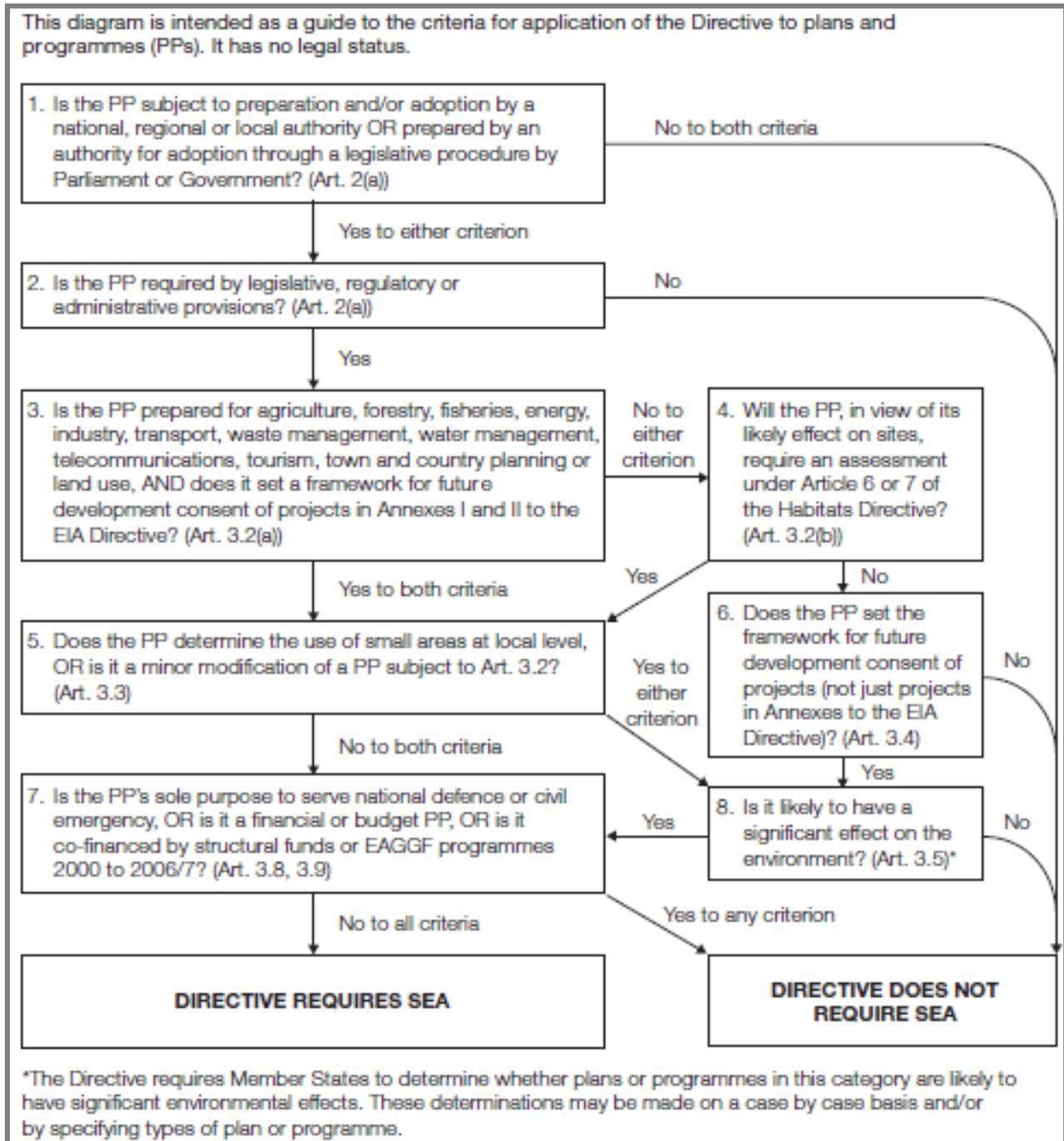
- *“a neighbourhood plan allocates sites for development;*
- *the neighbourhood area contains sensitive natural or heritage assets that may be affected by the proposals in the plan;*
- *the neighbourhood plan is likely to have significant environmental effects that have not already been considered and dealt with through a sustainability appraisal of the Local Plan.”*

- 2.4 When determining whether the proposals are likely to have a significant environmental effect, the local planning authority is required to consult the three statutory consultation bodies: the Environment Agency, Historic England (formerly English Heritage) and Natural England.
- 2.5 Where a local planning authority determines that the plan is unlikely to have a significant environmental effect, and does not require a SEA, a statement of its reasons for the determination should be provided to the ‘qualifying body’¹ which can be made available to the independent examiner as part of the Neighbourhood Plan examination process.
- 2.6 If the local planning authority concludes that a SEA is required, it will be the responsibility of the ‘qualifying body’ to prepare the full SEA. The first stage of the process will require the preparation of a SEA Scoping Report, which will subsequently have to undergo a five week consultation with the three statutory consultation bodies. The local planning authority may be able to offer relevant support and assistance.
- 2.7 Where a SEA is required, the ‘qualifying body’ may wish to voluntarily expand the scope of the SEA so that it covers the wider social and economic issues, in addition to environmental aspects. The added benefit of undertaking a Sustainability Appraisal is that it can demonstrate the impact of the Neighbourhood Plan on social, economic and environmental factors and can demonstrate to an independent examiner that the plan has been prepared to promote sustainable development and that all reasonable alternative options have been considered.
- 3.0 **Generic assessment of Neighbourhood Plans - Application of criteria of the SEA Directive to Plans**
- 3.1 Figure 1 illustrates the process for screening a planning document to determine whether a full SEA is required.
- 3.2 A generic assessment of the characteristics of a Neighbourhood Plan has been undertaken with the results of this assessment being set out in Table 1 of this report.

¹ A town or parish council is the ‘qualifying body’ for producing a Neighbourhood Plan. In an area not covered by a town or parish council, a designated Neighbourhood Forum is the qualifying body.

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Figure 1: Application of the SEA Directive to plans and programmes



Source: A Practical Guide to the Strategic Environmental Assessment Directive 2005

Table 1: Assessment of the characteristics of a Neighbourhood Plan

Assessment Criteria	Assessment	
	Y/N	Justification
1. Is the PP (plan or programme) subject to preparation and/or adoption by a national, regional or local authority OR prepared by an authority for adoption through	Yes	A NP will be prepared by the “qualifying body” under the provision of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990, as amended by the Localism Act 2011. The NP will be prepared subject to The Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012 and The

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<p>a legislative procedure by Parliament or Government? (Art. 2(a))</p>		<p>Neighbourhood Planning (referendums) Regulations 2012.</p> <p>A NP will subject to independent examination and following a successful referendum, the Plan will be “made” (brought into legal force) by Fylde Council as the local planning authority.</p>
<p>2. Is the PP required by legislative, regulatory or administrative provisions? (Art. 2(a))</p>	<p>No</p>	<p>There is no requirement for a NP to be produced by a Parish/Town council or a Neighbourhood Forum (as the ‘qualifying body’). However, a NP once ‘made’ will form part of the statutory Development Plan and be used when determining planning applications.</p>
<p>3. Is the PP prepared for agriculture, forestry, fisheries, energy, industry, transport, waste management, water management, telecommunications, tourism, town and country planning or land use, AND does it set a framework for future development consent of projects in Annexes I and II to the to the EIA Directive? [Article 3.2(a)]</p>	<p>Yes</p>	<p>A NP can cover some of the topics identified in the list and they could set the framework for future development of a scale that would fall under Annex II of the EIA Directive. However, for NP, developments which fall under Annex I of the EIA Directive are ‘excluded development’ a set out in Section 61k of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended by the Localism Act 2011).</p>
<p>4. Will the PP, in view of its likely effect on sites, require an assessment for future development under Article 6 or 7 of the Habitats Directive? (Art. 3.2 (b))</p>	<p>?</p>	<p>A NP could potentially have an impact on an internationally designated wildlife site covered by the Habitats Directive. For this reason, a case by case assessment of each NP may be required.</p>
<p>5. Does the PP Determine the use of small areas at local level, OR is it a minor modification of a PP subject to Art. 3.2? (Art. 3.3)</p>	<p>Yes</p>	<p>A NP can determine the use of small areas at the local level.</p>
<p>6. Does the PP set the framework for future development consent of projects (Not just projects in annexes to the EIA Directive)? (Art 3.4)</p>	<p>Yes</p>	<p>A NP once ‘made’ will form part of the statutory Development Plan and be used when determine planning applications. The policies in a NP therefore set the framework for future development.</p>
<p>7. Is the PP’s sole purpose to serve the national defence or civil emergency, OR is it a financial or budget PP, OR is it co-financed by structural funds or EAGGF programmes 2000 to 2006/7? (Art 3.8, 3.9)</p>	<p>No</p>	<p>A NP will not deal with these matters.</p>
<p>8. Is it likely to have a significant effect on the environment? (Art. 3.5)</p>	<p>?</p>	<p>The impact of a NP on the environment will depend on the proposal included within the Plan. For this reason, a case by case assessment of each NP will be required.</p>

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3.3 The generic screening of a NP characteristic has determined that depending upon the content of the Plan, an SEA may be required. For this reason, a case by case analysis is recommended to determine the likely significant effects of the NP proposals on the environment.

4.0 **Criteria for Assessing the Effects of Neighbourhood Plans (the ‘plan’)**

4.1 Assessment of the significance of the effect of a NP will depend on the proposal within it. The criteria for assessing the likely significance of the environmental effects are set out in Annex II from Article 3.5 of the SEA Directive. The relevant schedule of the regulations is set out below:

Figure 2: Criteria for assessing the likely significance of effects on the environment

1. The characteristics of plans and programmes, having regard, in particular, to
 - the degree to which the plan or programme sets a framework for projects and other activities, either with regard to the location, nature, size and operating conditions or by allocating resources,
 - the degree to which the plan or programme influences other plans and programmes including those in a hierarchy,
 - the relevance of the plan or programme for the integration of environmental considerations in particular with a view to promoting sustainable development,
 - environmental problems relevant to the plan or programme,
 - the relevance of the plan or programme for the implementation of Community legislation on the environment (e.g. plans and programmes linked to waste-management or water protection).
2. Characteristics of the effects and of the area likely to be affected, having regard, in particular, to
 - the probability, duration, frequency and reversibility of the effects,
 - the cumulative nature of the effects,
 - the transboundary nature of the effects,
 - the risks to human health or the environment (e.g. due to accidents),
 - the magnitude and spatial extent of the effects (geographical area and size of the population likely to be affected),
 - the value and vulnerability of the area likely to be affected due to:
 - special natural characteristics or cultural heritage,
 - exceeded environmental quality standards or limit values,
 - intensive land-use,
 - the effects on areas or landscapes which have a recognised national, Community or international protection status.

Source: Annex II of SEA Directive 2001/42/EC

5.0 St. Anne’s on the Sea Neighbourhood Plan Context

5.1 The parish of St. Anne’s on the Sea is located in Fylde, Lancashire. To the north, the town is bounded by the A5230, Squires Gate, and includes Blackpool International Airport. Blackpool is four miles to the north. To the southeast it abuts the townships of Ansdell and Lytham. Its Irish Sea coastline lies at the northern edge of the estuary of the River Ribble, whilst inland the town includes part of the agricultural Lytham Moss. The population of the parish is 27,105, which comprised 35.7% of the total population of Fylde Borough (2011 Census).

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5.2 The St. Anne's on the Sea Neighbourhood Area was designated on the 11 April 2013 covering the whole of the administrative area of the Town Council. Work on SANP commenced in February 2014 by the Town Council, in collaboration with other stakeholders. The following background documents have been produced following evidence gathering and initial consultation with the community, stakeholders and statutory consultees:

- Issues and Options (draft June 2014)
- Report of Consultation (draft June 2014)
- Neighbourhood Profile (July 2014)
- Identified Theme and Policy Areas (received 21 November 2014)
- 'Lite' Options Appraisal Matrix (received 21 November 2014)

5.3 The Town Council have formally requested a SEA screening opinion of its emerging NP, which was received by Fylde Council on 27 August 2014. This screening determination has been undertaken by Fylde Council.

5.4 The purpose of the SANP is to ensure St. Anne's on the Sea is and remains a thriving, sustainable community. The NP has the following draft aims which it seeks to achieve, these being:

- Identify the future development proposals for St. Anne's on the Sea and how these can be enhanced to support the vision of the town as a 'Garden town by the Sea'
- Bring forward proposals which will support the quality of life in St. Anne's on the Sea in the years to come;
- Protect and enhance the distinctive architectural design and the historic environment within the Town.

5.5 To further these aims, the Plan sets out the following objectives:

1. Set out a positive vision for the future of the town, ensuring that it reflects the aspirations of its residents, who will be involved in making the plan, monitoring its progress and delivering development;
2. Ensure a high quality of life for all the town's residents;
3. Ensure that the town will have a sustainable and prosperous local economy into the future;
4. Support sustainable development meeting local needs;
5. Secure high quality sensitive design which prioritises local distinctiveness and enriches the landscape and built environment;
6. Enjoy and utilise our natural landscape and assets whilst protecting it for future generations;
7. Support the transition to a low carbon future taking full account of climate change, flood risk and coastal change, encourage the reuse of existing resources and the use of renewable resources;
8. Deliver high quality housing development that meets the town's needs;
9. Seek improvements to transport, to utility infrastructure and to digital connectivity;
10. Ensure that St. Anne's remains a high quality year round visitor resort;
11. Ensure that the town is safe, accessible and attractive to all its residents, visitors and people who work in it;

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12. Protect the town's heritage assets whilst encouraging appropriate high quality contemporary architecture; and
13. Improve health, social and cultural wellbeing for all residents, encouraging and providing opportunities for an active lifestyle, and ensuring high quality local facilities for existing and new residents.

5.6 The policies within the plan are to be based on six topic themes² which are considered key to achieve the over-riding aim of the Town Council, these being:

- Environment;
- Community & Health;
- Design & Heritage;
- Economy;
- Transport & Movement; and
- Housing

5.7 The Town Council in a letter dated 21 November 2014, indicated that the scope of the proposed NP would largely follow the 'Lite' approach, as set out in the Draft Issues and Options report. The only exception to this related to a potential extension/enhancement of the existing Lytham St Annes Dune Nature Reserve and a potential new nature reserve at the area at Heyhouses, as identified in the SEA Determination Context Plan in appendix 2. In all other respects, the SANP does not seek to promote major new allocations, in the sense of designating land for new 'hard' development uses, such as housing and/or employment.

5.8 Following the letter dated 21 November 2014 and ongoing discussions with Natural England, the Town Council confirmed in an email dated 15 April 2015, that the proposal for a new nature reserve at the area at Heyhouses has been deleted from the emerging Neighbourhood Plan. Instead, the Biological Heritage Site (BHS) is to be taken forward as a local designation in the Neighbourhood Plan and this should be considered instead of the proposed nature reserve as part of the SEA determination. A revised SEA Determination Context Plan is provided in appendix 3.

6.0 SEA Screening Determination

6.1 The proposed parameters of the NP, including proposed themes and policy areas and the preferred 'lite' approach, as set out in section 5 of this report have been used to undertake this Screening Assessment. At this stage in the NP process, it is not possible to confirm the final content of the NP.

6.2 If the conclusion of the screening assessment is that an SEA is not required, any changes to the nature and quantum of development proposed may require further screening assessment to ensure that significant effect are not likely. If it is found that a SEA is required, any changes to the nature and quantum of development can be assessed as part of the SEA process.

6.3 Table 2 sets out the screening assessment for SANP to determine the likely significance of effects on the environment.

² The identified theme and policy areas for St. Anne's on the Sea Neighbourhood Plan is provided in appendix 1.

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Table 2: Assessment of likelihood of significant effects on the environment

Screening Criteria (Annex II SEA Directive)	Screening Determination of the Likely significance of effects	
	Justification	Is the SANP likely to have a significant environmental impact
1. The characteristics of plans and programmes, having regard, in particular to:		
1(a) the degree to which the plan or programme <u>sets a framework</u> for projects and other activities, either with regard to the location, nature, size and operating conditions or by allocating resources.	<p>The overarching framework for planning policy is set in the National Planning Policy Framework and Planning Practice Guidance.</p> <p>The Neighbourhood Plan will set out a spatial vision and provide a development framework for St Annes on the Sea, based around the themes of the: environment; community & health; design & heritage; economy; transport & movement and housing (plus implementation plan).</p> <p>The SANP does not seek to promote major new allocations, with the exception being the potential extension of and/or enhancement of the existing Lytham St Annes Dunes Nature reserve, in terms of visitor and interpretation facilities, including greater awareness of the wider beach and its environmental importance.</p> <p>Whilst the SANP sets the framework for other projects and activities, including the location, nature and size of the development, there are potential positive environmental effects resulting from the Plan.</p>	No
1(b) the degree to which the plan or programme <u>influences other plans and programmes</u> including those in a hierarchy.	<p>The NP sits at the lowest tier of the development plan system hierarchy. A NP must be in general conformity with the strategic policies of the development plan in force. In this respect, it does not set a framework for other plans and strategies and can only provide policies for the area it covers – it does not have a direct impact on other plans in neighbouring areas.</p> <p>If SANP is brought forward before the emerging Local Plan is adopted, the Town Council and local planning authority will have to ensure close working relationship to ensure general conformity, the NP could influence the emerging Local Plan.</p>	No
1(c) the relevance of the plan or programme for the integration of environmental considerations, in particular with a view	<p>A NP is required to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development and therefore the likelihood of significant effects on the environment is minimised.</p> <p>The draft Issues and Options (June 2014) document produced by the Town Council has undertaken a</p>	No

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<p>to <u>promoting sustainable development</u>.</p>	<p>specific appraisal of each option in terms of its potential contribution to meeting the requirements of the “Egan Sustainability Wheel”, which can be used for judging sustainable communities.</p> <p>It is considered that the NP will have a direct (positive) impact on the environment through the inclusion of a policy to protect/enhance the existing nature reserve and protect environmental assets. There will also be indirect (positive) impacts on the environment through the implementation of policies on topics such as green infrastructure, flood risk, renewable energy, recreation and leisure, improving public transport and design.</p>	
<p>1(d) <u>environmental problems</u> relevant to the plan or programme and;</p>	<p>Any existing environmental issues identified through the NP process could be mitigated/reduced through the implementation of the Plan.</p> <p>The NP does not seek to promote major new allocations, the only exception being a potential extension to an existing nature reserve. The environmental impact of proposals in the SANP are likely to be minimal due to the nature/ quantum and scale of development proposed.</p>	No
<p>1(e) the relevance of the plan or programme for the implementation of community legislation on the environment (for example, plans and programmes linked to waste management or water protection)</p>	<p>The NP will be in general conformity with the saved policies in the Fylde Borough Local Plan. The emerging Local Plan will take account of existing European and National legislative framework for environmental protection.</p> <p>If SANP is brought forward before the emerging Local Plan is adopted, the Town Council and local planning authority will have to ensure close working relationship to ensure general conformity.</p> <p>This NP will not impact on the implementation of European Community legislation on the environment.</p>	No
<p>2. Characteristics of the effects and of the area likely to be affected, having regard, in particular, to:</p>		
<p>2(a) the probability, duration, frequency and reversibility of effects.</p>	<p>It is highly unlikely that there will be irreversible environmental impacts associated with the NP. It is considered that the proposed policies in the NP overall seek to ensure that direct and indirect positive environmental effects are maximised and negative effects are minimised or avoided.</p>	No
<p>2(b) the cumulative nature of the effects</p>	<p>It is considered that the effect of this NP will be largely beneficial, therefore any cumulative impacts will also be beneficial and unlikely to be significant on the local environment.</p>	No
<p>2(c) the transboundary nature of the effects</p>	<p>The parish boundary for St Annes on the Sea is adjacent to the Borough boundary with Blackpool Council. Within Fylde, the parish boundary for St. Anne’s on the Sea borders the parish of Westby-</p>	Potential

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	<p>with-Plumpton and the non parished areas of Ansdell and Lytham. There may be the potential for localised transboundary impacts on neighbouring areas, this may be more prevalent for the urban conurbation.</p> <p>Proposal for the extension to/enhancement of the existing Lytham St Annes Dunes Nature Reserve may have the potential for positive transboundary effects.</p> <p>Due to the nature of the policies and the lack of any development allocations, it is not considered that proposals in the NP would have a significant environmental impact on European sites within or in the wider vicinity of the NP area, including the:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Morecambe Bay SPA and Ramsar site • Ribble & Alt Estuaries SPA and Ramsar site • Bowland Fells SPA, • Martin Mere SPA, • Sefton Coast SAC • Liverpool Bay SAC <p>A map of European sites within or in the wider vicinity of the NP area is available in appendix 4.</p>	
<p>2(d) the risks to human health or the environment (for example, due to accidents)</p>	<p>It is not envisaged that there will be significant risk to human health or the environment as a result of the development proposed in the NP.</p> <p>There are indirect (positive) benefits to health through proposed policies tackling social needs of the population. This includes policies to take account of the rising needs of the large population of older people, including provision for lifetime homes, facilitating retirement villages and supported housing products. There are proposed policies to encourage improvements to existing housing stock and thermal efficiency, promotion of health lifestyles through pedestrian and cycle networks and access to amenity space, improvement to bathing water quality and public transport links.</p>	<p>No</p>
<p>2(e) the magnitude and spatial extent of the effects (geographical area and size of the population likely to be affected)</p>	<p>The NP is for St Anne's on the Sea and covers the whole administrative area of the Town Council which is a predominately urban area. The proposals in the NP are concerned with development in the Neighbourhood Area only.</p> <p>The population of the parish in the 2011 census stood at 27,105, which comprised 35.7% of the total population of Fylde Borough.</p> <p>The over-riding aim of the NP is to ensure the area</p>	<p>No</p>

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	<p>remains a thriving, sustainable community. To further this, the aims and objectives are heavily focused on supporting all of the town's residents, visitors and people who work in it. The proposed themes and policy areas are not considered to provide a detrimental impact on residential amenity but provide positive impacts for the community.</p> <p>Whilst the policies proposed in the NP will provide localised benefits, due to the Town being a key service centre in the borough and a tourist destination, the positive effects could be provided for the wider community. This will be enhanced through policies on tourism offer.</p>	
<p>2(f) the value and vulnerability of the area likely to be affected due to;</p> <p>i. special natural characteristics or cultural heritage</p> <p>ii. exceeded environmental quality standards or limit values or</p> <p>iii. intensive land use</p> <p>2(g) the effects on areas or landscapes which have a recognised national, community or international protection status.</p>	<p>There are 19 grade II listed buildings, 3 Conservation Areas and 2 registered grade II listed Historic Park and Gardens within the Neighbourhood Area.</p> <p>Whilst the area is generally urban in nature, there are European, national and local environmental designations within the neighbourhood area.</p> <p>The NP is unlikely to affect the value and vulnerability of the areas of special natural characteristics or cultural heritage. The proposed policies are likely to provide direct (positive) benefits. This will be through policies to preserve and enhance heritage assets, high standards of design and enhancement of public realm, and protection of environmental assets within and adjoining the town.</p> <p>The borough has a number of important areas or landscapes which have national, community or international protection. These sites are protected by separate policies in the saved policies in the Fylde Borough and in the emerging Fylde Local Plan.</p> <p>The overall impact of the NP will be positive by maximising the positive environmental effects of development and minimising or avoiding negative effects.</p>	<p>No.</p>

6.4 On the basis of the SEA Screening Assessment as a set out in table 2, the conclusion is that the current proposals for St. Anne's on the Sea Neighbourhood Plan are unlikely to have a significant environmental effect and therefore do not need to be subject to a full SEA. The main reasons for this conclusion are:

- The SANP seeks to avoid or minimise negative environmental effects through the implementation of the NP. The NP is therefore likely to have both direct and

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indirect positive environmental effects. Therefore, any cumulative impacts will also be beneficial and unlikely to be significant on the local environment.

- The NP does not seek to promote major new allocations, the environmental impact of proposals in the SANP are likely to be minimal due to the nature/ quantum and scale of development proposed.
- The SANP sets a framework for projects and development, it is specific development which may come forward within the Neighbourhood Area that may result in environmental effects which will require appropriate environmental assessment by the applicant.
- The SANP represent a lower tier in the hierarchy of planning documents and continued close working relationships between the Town Council and local planning authority will ensure general conformity with the 'parent' emerging Local Plan in the event that the NP comes into legal force before the adoption of the emerging Local Plan.
- The SANP provides a further layer of policies to protect and enhance the environment rather than seeking to promote major new allocations.
- The proposal for a potential extension to/enhancement of the existing Lytham St Anne's Dunes Nature Reserve are considered to provide a direct positive impact on the local environment within St Anne's on the Sea and the wider catchment.

6.5 It is important to note that this conclusion is based on the information provided, as set out in section 5. If the issues addressed in the Neighbourhood Plan should change then a new screening opinion may be required to determine whether an SEA will be required.

7.0 Consultation with Statutory Bodies

7.1 The three statutory consultation bodies for Strategic Environmental Assessment in England have been consulted to determine whether SANP required a full SEA. The Consultation Bodies defined in this report as 'statutory consultees' in England comprise:

- Historic England (formerly English Heritage);
- Environment Agency; and
- Natural England

7.2 The statutory consultees were initially consulted for three weeks in August/September 2014 to seek their views on the screening opinion request and information submitted. A summary of the consultation responses is provided in appendix 4.

7.3 Following a review of the statutory consultee comments and further discussions between the Town Council and local planning authority, the Town Council confirmed in their letter dated 21 November 2014, that the scope of the proposed NP would largely follow the 'Lite' approach, as set out in the Draft Issues and Options report. The only exception to this relates to a potential extension to/enhancement of the existing Lytham St Annes Dunes Nature Reserve and a potential new nature reserve at the area at Heyhouses, as identified in the SEA Determination Context Plan in appendix 2.

7.4 Following further ongoing discussion with Natural England, the Town Council have confirmed in an email dated 15 April 2015 that the proposal for a new nature reserve at the area at Heyhouses has been deleted from the emerging Neighbourhood Plan.

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Instead, the Biological Heritage Site (BHS) is to be taken forward as a local designation in the Neighbourhood Plan and that this should be considered instead of the proposed nature reserve as part of the SEA determination. A revised SEA Determination Context Plan is provided in appendix 3.

- 7.5 In light of the statutory consultee comments and Town Council's agreed scope, the local planning authority has drafted a screening assessment report which concludes that an SEA would not be required for this Neighbourhood Plan.
- 7.6 The local planning authority undertook a further three week consultation with the three statutory consultees in January/February 2015 to seek comments on the draft screening assessment and whether they agree with the conclusion of the screening opinion. A summary of the consultation responses are provided in table 3.

Table 3: **Summary of responses to the consultation January/ February 2015**

Statutory Consultee	Summary of response
Environment Agency	Satisfied with the finding of the screening opinion and agree that a SEA is not required.
Historic England (formerly English Heritage)	No comment
Natural England	<p><u>10 February 2015:</u></p> <p>Natural England is unable to make a judgement on the need for SEA at this time without information on the proposed Neighbourhood Plan policies relating to the Nature reserve. In particular, the purpose for its inclusion and what is to be proposed at the Nature Reserve through the Neighbourhood Plan. Given that we are aware of SPA birds species are using the proposed Nature Reserve and its association with the Queensway development, we also cannot conclude no likely significant effects.</p> <p>We also recommend that within the theme areas outlined in the SEA document that biodiversity be specifically included under the Environment section. There may be a requirement to rescreen once the policies are drafted.</p> <p><u>3 March 2015:</u></p> <p>It is important that the emerging Local Plan and Neighbourhood Plan are not conflicting in relation to the site the Town Council proposes for a nature reserve and Fylde Council Preferred Options proposes for development (site H2).</p> <p>Natural England would recommend site H2 is safeguarded area and protected from future development due to the presence of birds, which are functionally linked to the Ribble and Alt Estuaries SPA. If the site is selected for any form of alternative land use (than present) a Habitat Regulation Assessment will be required. <i>On 15 April, the Town Council confirmed the proposal for a new nature reserve have been deleted and the Biological Heritage Site is to be taken forward as a local designation (see para 7.4 above).</i></p>

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	<p><u>6 May 2015:</u> Natural England confirmed that they agreed with the approach to be taken forward.</p>
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8.0 Summary Screening and conclusion

Name of Neighbourhood Plan	St. Anne's on the Sea Neighbourhood Development Plan
Geographic Coverage of the Plan	St Anne's on the Sea Town Council Neighbourhood Area
Key topics/scope of Plan	<p>Eight theme and policy areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Environment; • Community & Health; • Design & Heritage; • Economy; • Transport & Movement; • Housing; • Sustainability; and • Implementation Plan

Name and job title of officer undertaking Screening Assessment	Fiona Riley Planning Policy Officer
Date of assessment	January and April 2015
Name and job title of officer approving the Screening Determination	 Mark Evans Head of Planning and Regeneration
Date of approval	May 2015
Date of final Screening determination	May 2015

Conclusion of assessment:
The proposals for St. Anne's on the Sea Neighbourhood Plan will result in positive direct and indirect environmental effects, therefore any cumulative impacts will also be beneficial. The Plan does not promote major new allocations, the environmental impact of the proposals are likely to be minimal due to the nature/ quantum and scale of the development proposed. Therefore, the current proposals are unlikely to have a significant environmental effect and therefore do not need to be subject to a full SEA.

The three statutory consultees have agreed the conclusion of the screening determination.

**APPENDIX 1: IDENTIFIED THEME AND POLICY AREAS FOR ST. ANNE'S ON THE SEA
NEIGHBOURHOOD AREA**

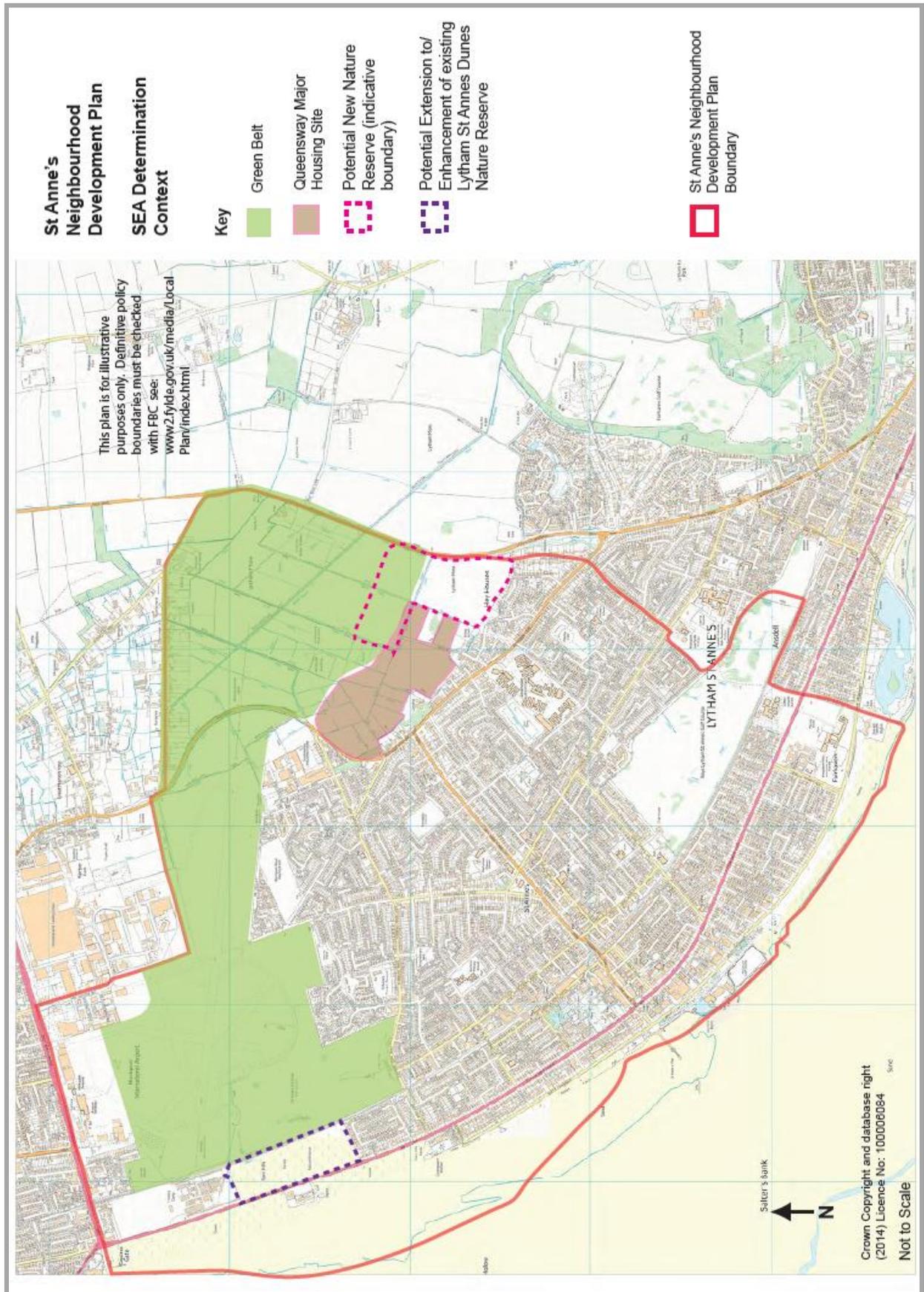
No	THEME	SUGGESTED POLICY AREA	ACTIONS
1	ENVIRONMENT	<p>Pedestrian and cycle network – <i>ensure links across town</i></p> <p>Open space, recreation and leisure – <i>see green infrastructure/corridor exercise</i></p> <p>Protecting open countryside – <i>country side park, public rights of way</i></p> <p>Local green space</p> <p>Beach and sea</p>	<p><i>Mark Green Infrastructure / Corridor on location map.</i></p> <p><i>Ensure policies are clearly for St. Anne's.</i></p> <p><i>Provide bullet points.</i></p>
2	COMMUNITY & HEALTH	<p>Community facilities</p> <p>Community assets</p> <p>Secondary school? – <i>can we influence this?</i></p> <p>Needs of elderly population</p>	<p><i>Make sure that policies are things we can do something about.</i></p> <p><i>Provide bullet points.</i></p>
3	DESIGN & HERITAGE	<p>Gateways into town - <i>important</i></p> <p>Towns heritage - <i>important</i></p> <p>Historic town study – <i>character</i></p> <p>Building for UFE 12</p> <p>Design quality – <i>separate design guide produced after plan?</i></p>	<p><i>Review photographs of good and bad design, mark on map?</i></p> <p><i>Provide bullet points.</i></p>
4	ECONOMY	<p>Tourism</p> <p>Office accommodation</p> <p>Loss of employment land</p> <p>Town centre</p>	<p><i>How to encourage tourism.</i></p> <p><i>St. Anne's is a traditional seaside town.</i></p> <p><i>Provide bullet points</i></p> <p><i>Mapping exercise?</i></p>
		South Fylde Railway	<i>Provide bullet</i>

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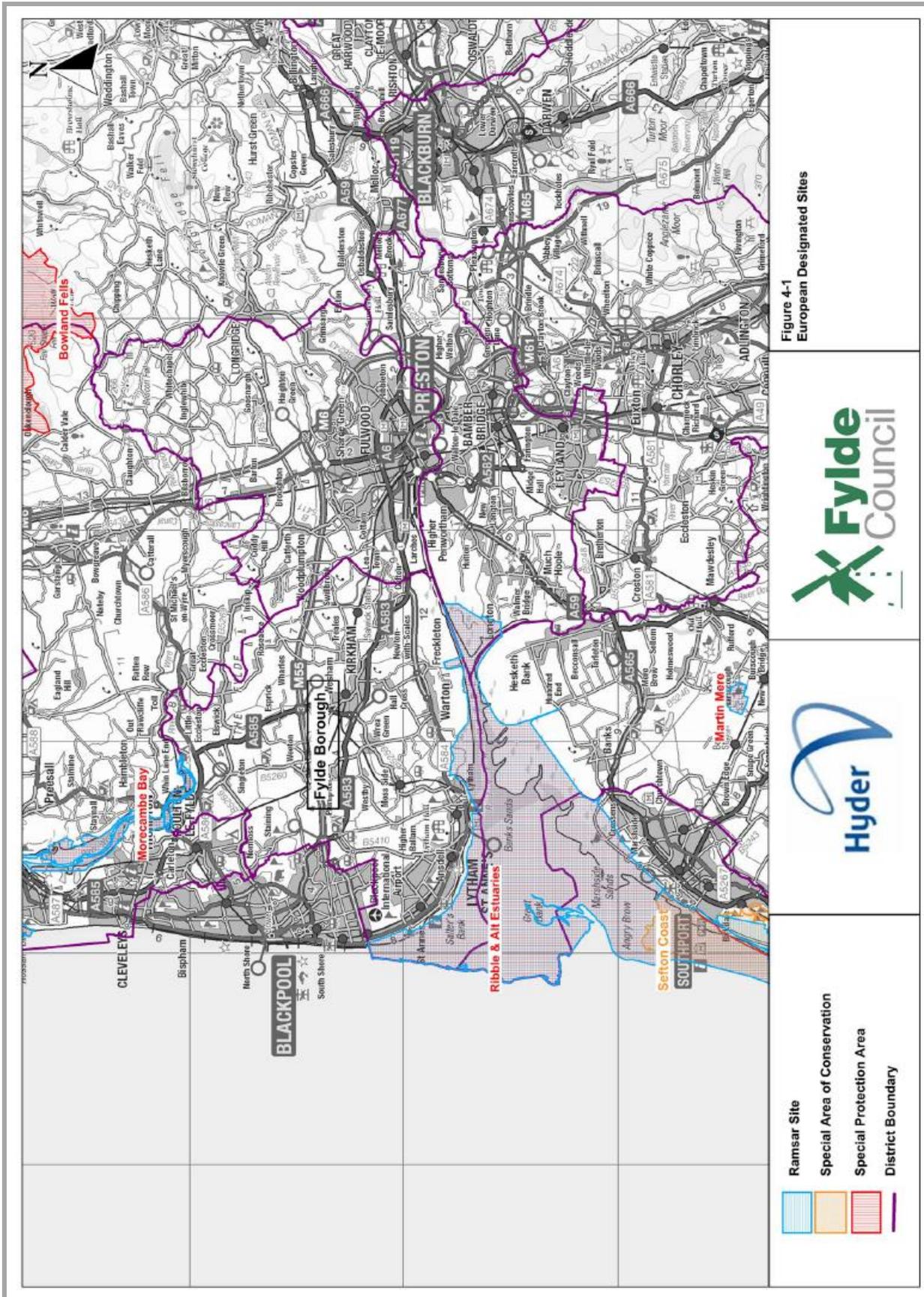
5	TRANSPORT & MOVEMENT	Improving public transport Car parking	<i>points.</i>
6	HOUSING	Affordable housing <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shared ownership • Low cost market Types/tenure Specialist needs	<i>Provide bullet points.</i>
7	SUSTAINABILITY	Renewable energy Green infrastructure (GI)	<i>Links with Environment and Green Corridor.</i> <i>Provide bullet points,</i>
8	IMPLEMENTATION PLAN		<i>Town Council cannot deliver all actions.</i> <i>Will need to identify who is responsible for delivery of each action.</i> <i>Provide bullet points.</i>

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APPENDIX 2: SEA DETERMINATION CONTEXT PLAN



APPENDIX 4: EUROPEAN DESIGNATED SITES WITHIN OR IN THE WIDER VICINITY OF THE ST. ANNE'S ON THE SEA NEIGHBOURHOOD AREA



Source: Fylde Local Plan to 2030 Habitat Regulations Assessment Screening Report

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APPENDIX 5: SUMMARY OF RESPONSE TO THE INITIAL CONSULTATION (28 August to 19 September 2014)

Statutory Consultee	Summary of response
Environment Agency (Dated 10/09/14)	We feel that if the Town Council chooses to undertake a comprehensive NDP then further work to ensure the requirements of Strategic Environmental Assessment / Sustainability Appraisal SEA/SA will be required. If the "lite" approach is taken we would recommend that an up-to-date scoping of the issues is undertaken to establish if further SEA/SA work is necessary. The existing SA Scoping Report produced by Fylde BC (updated in 2010) will soon require a review as 5 years is generally considered the 'shelf life' of evidence base documents. Therefore, a light review of the issues of relevance to St Anne's would establish if any further SA would be required if the NDP "lite" approach was taken.
English Heritage (Dated 17/09/14)	The evidence accompany the consultation is vague in that it proposes a number of different options that may allocate sites for development but there is no confirmation of the preferred option. In view of this, it is determined that the Plan will allocate sites and put forward policies that will not have been covered in the appraisal of the 'parent' document and therefore will require an SA/SEA
Natural England (Dated 16/09/14)	<p>As the Fylde Local Plan is still emerging Natural England considers that further appraisal of the Neighbourhood Plan is required with respect to Strategic Environment Assessment (SEA) but also Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA).</p> <p>Before doing so, the Town Council needs to take a clear view as to how it wishes to approach the key strategic issues e.g. housing land allocation.</p> <p>There are some uncertainties, listed below, which are likely to require further assessment with regards to SEA and HRA:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strategic, Making better use of the beach and the sea • Housing • The Natural Environment Beach and Dunes • Culture and Community Infrastructure