

# HABITAT REGULATIONS ASSESSMENT SCREENING REPORT

Fylde Local Plan to 2032 – Partial Review

MARCH 2020



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## VERSION CONTROL

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# 1 Introduction

## 1.1 The Fylde Local Plan to 2032

1.1.1.1 The Fylde Local Plan to 2032 (the FLP32) was adopted on 22nd October 2018. It was examined in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework 2012 (NPPF12). A revised National Planning Policy Framework was published in July 2018 (NPPF18) and a further version with minor additional revisions was published in February 2019 (NPPF19). Paragraph 212 of NPPF19 states that:

*“Plans may need to be revised to reflect policy changes which the replacement framework has made. This should be progressed as quickly as possible, either through a partial revision or by preparing a new plan”.*

1.1.1.2 In light of this, Paragraph 1.27 of the Local Plan states that:

*“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 Plan (whether partial or full) 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”.*

1.1.1.3 Accordingly, Fylde Council is carrying out a Partial Review of the Local Plan defined by the changes between NPPF12 and NPPF19, as well as the Duty to Cooperate.

1.1.1.4 The proposed revisions are required to ensure the conformity of the Local Plan with the NPPF19, and to ensure that the Council complies with Paragraph 1.27 of the Local Plan. They involve alterations to policies and text that are essential to serve the function of the Partial Review.

## 1.2 Habitat Regulations Assessment

1.2.1.1 Under Article 6 of the Habitats Directive, an assessment is required where a plan or project may give rise to significant effects upon any Natura 2000 sites (also known as ‘European sites’). Natura 2000 is a network of areas designated to conserve natural habitats and species that are rare, endangered, vulnerable or endemic within the European Community. This includes Special Areas of Conservation (SACs), designated under the Habitats Directive for their habitats and/or species of European importance, and Special Protection Areas (SPAs), classified under Directive 2009/147/EC on the Conservation of Wild Birds (the codified version of Directive 79/409/EEC as amended) for rare, vulnerable and regularly occurring migratory bird species and internationally important wetlands. In addition, it is a matter of law that candidate SACs and Sites of Community Importance (SCI) are considered in this process; furthermore, it is Government Policy that sites designated under the 1971 Ramsar Convention for their internationally important wetlands (Ramsar sites) and potential SPAs (pSPAs) are also considered. Marine Conservation Zones (MCZs), which protect nationally important habitats and species in marine environments, are also taken into consideration.

1.2.1.2 There are five sites partially within Fylde:

- Ribble and Alt Estuaries SPA;
- Ribble and Alt Estuaries Ramsar;
- Ribble Estuary MCZ;
- Morecambe Bay and Duddon estuary SPA; and
- Morecambe Bay Ramsar.

1.2.1.3 Morecambe Bay and Duddon Estuary SPA and Morecambe Bay Ramsar both cross the northern border of Lancashire and the southern border of Cumbria.

1.2.1.4 There are a further seven sites that sit outside Fylde but have been included within the HRA due to their proximity to the Borough:

- Morecambe Bay SAC;
- Sefton Coast SAC;
- Martin Mere SPA;
- Martin Mere Ramsar;
- Bowland Fells SPA;
- Wyre-Lune MCZ; and
- Fylde MCZ.

1.2.1.5 The requirements of the Habitats Directive are transposed into English and Welsh law by means of the Conservation of Habitats and Species (Amendment) Regulations 2017.

1.2.1.6 Paragraph 3, Article 6 of the Habitats Directive states that:

*'Any plan or project not directly connected with or necessary to the management of the site but likely to have a significant effect thereon, either individually or in combination with other plans or projects, shall be subject to appropriate assessment of its implications for the site in view of the site's conservation objectives. In the light of the conclusions of the assessment of the implications for the site and subject to paragraph 4 (see below), the competent national authority shall agree to the plan or project only having ascertained that it will not adversely affect the integrity of the site concerned and, if appropriate, after having obtained the opinion of the general public.'*

1.2.1.7 Paragraph 4, Article 6 of the Habitats Directive states that:

*'If, in spite of a negative assessment of the implications for the site and in the absence of alternative solutions, a plan or project must nevertheless be carried out for imperative reasons of overriding public interest, including those of social or economic nature, the Member State shall take all compensatory measures to ensure that the overall coherence of Natura 2000 is protected. It shall inform the Commission of the compensatory measures adopted.'*

1.2.1.8 The overarching aim of HRA is to determine, in view of a site's conservation objectives and qualifying interests, whether a plan, either in isolation and/or in combination with other plans, is likely to have a significant adverse effect on the European site. If the Screening (the first stage of the process, see Section 3 for details) concludes that significant adverse effects are likely, then Appropriate Assessment must be undertaken to determine whether there will be adverse effects on a site's integrity.

### **1.3 HRA of the FLP32**

1.3.1.1 The Habitat Regulations Assessment of the Fylde Local Plan to 2032: HRA Report, published by Arcadis in July 2018, considered the potential implications of the FLP32 for European Sites within and near to the Borough boundary.

1.3.1.2 Many of the site allocations within the FLP32 had already been granted planning permission and had assessed the likelihood of a significant effect upon the European sites. Three of the strategic and two non-strategic sites (and four associated policies, DLF1, SL1, SL2 and EC1) were considered to have the potential for likely significant effects at the Screening Stage. Three further policies, GD3, GD4 and GD5, could not be screened out on a precautionary basis. All of the other allocation sites and policies were screened out. Where the potential for significant effects were considered likely, the policies and allocation sites (HSS1, HSS4, MUS2, HS60 and HS61), were taken through to Appropriate Assessment. For all five of the allocation sites, project-level HRA has been undertaken. All of the project-level HRAs have concluded no adverse effects on the integrity of the designated sites (with agreed mitigation measures in place) and therefore the four policies associated with them would also have no adverse effects on integrity or in enabling the European sites to achieve their conservation objectives.

- 1.3.1.3 The FLP32 includes policies designed to protect European sites in order to ensure that any developments that are brought forwards under policies GD3, GD4 or GD5 would be subject to appropriate ecological survey and assessment to prevent unsuitable developments that could harm European sites from being granted planning consent.
- 1.3.1.4 The assessment of in-combination effects revealed that the FLP32 would not contribute to significant in-combination effects (with agreed mitigation measures in place).
- 1.3.1.5 It was, therefore, concluded that, following the comprehensive and robust Appropriate Assessment, the FLP32 would result in no adverse effects on the integrity of the European sites identified within the HRA Report, either alone or in-combination with other plans or projects.

## **1.4 Purpose of this Document**

- 1.4.1.1 As a result of the Partial Review, the Council has proposed revisions to the FLP32. These are set out in Table 2.2. In a very limited number of cases the proposed revisions to the FLP32 include revisions to Plan policies. These Plan policies were originally assessed in the July 2018 HRA Report.
- 1.4.1.2 The purpose of this document is to assess the Council's proposed revisions to the FLP32 and its policies in order to ensure that the integrity of a European site is not at risk as a result of one or more policy revisions. This HRA Report should be read in conjunction with, and provides an update to, the assessment results of the July 2018 HRA Report.
- 1.4.1.3 This HRA Report is tightly focussed on the revisions being made to the FLP32. It does not consider elements of the FLP32 that are not being changed as a result of the Partial Review. Only elements of the FLP32 subject to change as a result of the Partial Review are considered in this HRA. For policies and site allocations that have not been revised the existing assessments and results in the July 2018 HRA Report remain valid and accurate.

## 2 Screening of the Revisions

### 2.1 Methodology

2.1.1.1 Policies that have been revised as part of the FLP32 Partial Review have undergone a screening exercise in order to determine if these changes could alter the conclusions of the July 2018 HRA Report. Note that where a policy has not been subject to revision by the Partial Review, these have not been subject to further HRA and the conclusions of the July 2018 HRA still stand.

### 2.1.2 Identifying European Sites

2.1.2.1 The European sites relevant to this HRA re-screening exercise are the same as those taken into consideration during the HRA of the FLP32. This includes European sites located within, and on, the Borough boundary as well as European sites located within 20km of the Borough that could potentially be affected by activities undertaken in Fylde if they are connected through an impact pathway, such as due to hydrological links or mobile species. European sites considered during the HRA of the FLP32, and therefore considered during this re-screening exercise, are summarised in Table 2.1.

2.1.2.2 European sites which may be affected by the revisions to the FLP32 through an identifiable impact pathway have been considered within a 20 km distance from the Borough boundary, as per Table 2.1.

Table 2.1: Summary of European Sites considered in the HRA Screening

Name of Site	Identification Number	Designation
Morecambe Bay and Duddon Estuary	UK9020326	SPA
Morecambe Bay	UK11045	Ramsar site
Morecambe Bay	UK 0013027	SAC
Ribble and Alt Estuaries	UK9005103	SPA
Ribble and Alt Estuaries	UK11057	Ramsar site
Ribble Estuary	n/a	Marine Conservation Zone
Sefton Coast	UK 0013076	SAC
Martin Mere	UK 9005111	SPA
Martin Mere	UK 11039	Ramsar Site
Bowland Fells	UK 9005151	SPA
Wyre-Lune	n/a	Marine Conservation Zone
Fylde	n/a	Marine Conservation Zone

### Conservation Objectives

2.1.2.3 Under Regulation 35(3) of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended) the appropriate statutory nature conservation body (in this case Natural England) has a duty to communicate the conservation objectives for a European site to the relevant/competent authority responsible for that site. The information provided under Regulation 35 must also include advice on any operations which may cause deterioration of the features for which the site is designated.

2.1.2.4 The conservation objectives for a European site are intended to represent the aims of the Habitats and Birds Directives in relation to that site. To this end, habitats and species of European Community importance should be maintained or restored to 'favourable conservation status' (FCS), as defined in Article 1 of the Habitats Directive below:

2.1.2.5 The conservation status of a natural habitat will be taken as 'favourable' when:

- Its natural range, and the area it covers within that range, are stable or increasing;

- The specific structure and functions which are necessary for its long-term maintenance exist and are likely to continue to exist for the foreseeable future; and
- Conservation status of typical species is favourable as defined in Article 1(i).

2.1.2.6 The conservation status of a species will be taken as favourable when:

- Population dynamics data on the species concerned indicate that it is maintaining itself on a long-term basis as a viable component of its natural habitats;
- The natural range of the species is neither being reduced nor is likely to be reduced for the foreseeable future; and
- There is, and will probably continue to be, a sufficiently large habitat to maintain its populations on a long-term basis.

2.1.2.7 Guidance from the European Commission<sup>1</sup> indicates that the Habitats Directive intends FCS to be applied at the level of an individual site, as well as to habitats and species across their European range. Therefore, in order to properly express the aims of the Habitats Directive for an individual site, the conservation objectives for a site are essentially to maintain (or restore) the habitats and species of the site at (or to) FCS.

2.1.2.8 Conservation Objectives for European sites under consideration in this re-screening exercise were obtained from Natural England's website and are provided in Appendix A<sup>2</sup>.

#### **Threats and vulnerabilities**

2.1.2.9 Natural England provides Site Improvement Plans (SIPs) for each European site. The SIP identifies the qualifying features for each European site. These are the sensitive biodiversity features for which the site has been granted SAC, SPA or Ramsar status.

2.1.2.10 Each qualifying feature is known to be vulnerable to various threats and pressures, which are also identified in the SIP for each site. If these threats and pressures on qualifying features are exacerbated then conservation status of the European site could be undermined i.e. there could be a likely significant effect (LSE) on the European site.

2.1.2.11 Qualifying features and threats/pressures for European sites under consideration in this re-screening exercise were obtained from Natural England's website and are provided in Appendix B<sup>3</sup>.

### **2.1.3 Approach to Screening**

2.1.3.1 The screening process of this document follows the same two distinct screening stages as the July 2018 screening report - initial screening and detailed screening. The initial screening stage provides a high-level screening 'matrix style' assessment to determine if any of the proposed revisions to the FLP32 could potentially lead to significant adverse effects on European sites identified in Table 2.1. The purpose of this was to eliminate those proposed revisions from the assessment which very clearly would not affect European sites in order to focus on those policies where there was potential for effects or uncertainty about potential effects. Any proposed revisions that cannot be discounted during the initial screening would be carried through to the detailed screening stage, which involves a close examination of the potential for the proposed revision to impact on a European site through defined impact pathways.

## **2.2 Initial Screening**

2.2.1.1 Each proposed revision to the FLP32 has been considered to determine if it could conceivably have any impact on a European site. If a proposed revision to the FLP32, such as rewording of a policy or

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<sup>1</sup> Managing Natura 2000 sites: the provisions of Article 6 of the Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC. (European Commission 2000)

<sup>2</sup> <http://publications.naturalengland.org.uk/category/4582026845880320>

<sup>3</sup> <http://publications.naturalengland.org.uk/category/4582026845880320>

supporting text, would be clearly incapable of leading to any negative effects on a European site, then this proposed revision would not be carried through to the detailed screening. If it is considered that the proposed revision could conceivably have a negative effect on a European site, either alone or in-combination, then this proposed revision would be carried through to the detailed screening stage.

2.2.1.2 Table 2.2 presents the proposed revisions to policies and supporting text of the FLP32 as part of the Partial Review. Each of these has been examined to determine if there is a need for further consideration in the form of more detailed screening in order to establish the likely impacts on European sites.

2.2.1.3 The final column in the table presents the results of the initial screening of each proposed revision using the following notations:

✓ - Further detailed screening is required to determine the nature of effects on the European site.

X - No further screening is required as no effects are predicted on the European site.

2.2.1.4 Table 2.2 shows that there are only two policies proposed for revision that require more detailed consideration, in both cases because the revised policies relate to new housing numbers:

- Strategic Policy DLF1: Development Locations for Fylde; and
- Policy H1: Housing Delivery and the Allocation of Housing Land.

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Table 2.2: Initial screening of proposed revisions to the FLP32. Policy revisions that require more detailed screening are highlighted. Please refer to the Partial Review of the FLP32 published by the Council to see the revisions in full – only revisions to the wording of policies, and not revisions to supporting text, have been represented in full.

Text or policy in the FLP32	Description of the revision(s)	Initial screening	Comment
Paragraph 1.3	Text consolidated from paragraph 1.4 to allow additional paragraph. Minor updates made to the text transferred to include reference to the 2019 Framework.	X	These revisions do not materially change any policies in the Plan and do not alter any of the assessment findings in the HRA. There is clearly no possible impact pathway between these revisions and a European site. These revisions can therefore be screened out of further consideration from this HRA.
Paragraph 1.4	Introduction paragraph updated to include introduction to the Partial Review and to the 2019 Framework.	X	
Paragraph 1.5	Text amended to accord with revised wording in NPPF19 paragraph 8.	X	
Paragraph 1.9	Text amended to accord with revised wording in NPPF19 paragraph 2.9.	X	
Paragraph 1.15	Text amended to accord with revised wording in NPPF19 paragraphs 24 and 26.	X	
Paragraph 1.16	Text amended to accord with revised wording in NPPF19 paragraph 27.	X	
Paragraph 1.18	Text amended to accord with revised wording in NPPF19 paragraph 20.	X	
Paragraph 1.24	Text amended to provide an updated position concerning the Wyre Local Plan, in response to the requirement in paragraph 1.27 of the adopted FLP32. Previous text to be included within box for clarification. The new text explains what has been done in response to this text.	X	
Paragraph 1.25	Text amended to provide an updated position concerning the Wyre Local Plan, in response to the requirement in paragraph 1.27 of the adopted FLP32.	X	
Paragraph 1.26	Text amended to provide an updated position concerning the Wyre Local Plan, in response to the requirement in paragraph 1.27 of the adopted FLP32.	X	
Paragraph 1.27	Text amended to provide an updated position concerning the Wyre Local Plan, in response to the requirement in paragraph 1.27 of the adopted FLP32.	X	
Paragraph 1.28	Text amended to accord with revised wording in NPPF19 paragraph 35.	X	
Paragraph 1.40	Consolidation of paragraphs to allow for new content below.	X	
New side heading	Partial Review of the Fylde Local Plan to 2032 - to introduce new content.	X	
Paragraph 1.41	Original text consolidated into paragraph 1.40. New text added to describe the latest stage of plan preparation.	X	
Paragraph 1.42	To note updates made to evidence as part of the Partial Review	X	
Paragraph 1.44	To note the updates made to the technical assessments as part of the Partial Review	X	
Cross-Cutting Themes: Equality	Removal of quote from NPPF12, no longer within NPPF19 or PPG.	X	

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Text or policy in the FLP32	Description of the revision(s)	Initial screening	Comment
Cross-Cutting Themes: Viability	Removal of out-of-date text from NPPF12, replacement with text from NPPF19 and PPG.	X	
Paragraph 3.4	The twelve core principles appeared in NPPF12 but were deleted in NPPF19. Paragraph deleted.	X	
Policy DLF1	<p>Development Locations for Fylde</p> <p>Policy wording has been amended as follows (new or amended text in <b><i>bold</i></b>, removed text <del>crossed out</del>):</p> <p>“The Local Plan will provide sites for a minimum of <del>6,895</del>-8,715 new homes and a minimum of 60.6 Ha (gross requirement) of additional employment land over the plan period to 31 March 2032.</p> <p>...</p> <p><b>Broad Distribution of Development</b></p> <p><b>Strategic Locations</b></p> <p>Around <del>7,845 homes</del>, representing 90% of homes to be developed in the plan period (including small sites) and 59.6 Ha of employment land will be located in the four Strategic Locations for development.</p> <p><b>Non-strategic Locations</b></p> <p>Around <del>870 homes</del>, representing 10% of homes to be developed in the plan period (including small sites) and 2.4 Ha of employment land will be located in the Non-strategic Locations.</p> <p><b>Windfalls (including small committed sites)</b></p> <p>Small housing sites (amounting to between 1 and 9 homes) are not allocated; they can occur throughout the borough where compliant with the other policies of the plan. Small sites are provided for through a windfall allowance of 40 homes per annum in years 10 to 21 of the plan. The delivery of small sites that are already committed is included within the Housing Trajectory (Appendix 2): this provides for the delivery of small sites up to year 10 of the plan. Small committed sites and windfalls yet to come will provide around <del>1040 homes within the plan period</del> (11% of the housing requirement). There may also be some larger windfall sites that will also contribute to this figure.”</p> <p>Housing numbers edited due to revised housing requirement figure resulting from change to housing needs methodology in NPPF19.</p>	✓	<p>This revision represents a material change to the policy in terms of housing numbers in Fylde. At this initial screening stage, it is not possible to rule out a potential impact pathway between this revision and a European site. This revision will be considered in further detail in Section 2.3.</p>
Paragraph 7.12	Text amended to accord with revised wording in NPPF19 paragraph 8.	X	<p>This revision does not materially change any policies in the Plan and does not alter any of the assessment findings in the HRA. There is clearly no possible impact pathway between this revision and a European site. This revision can therefore be screened out of further consideration from this HRA.</p>

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Text or policy in the FLP32	Description of the revision(s)	Initial screening	Comment
Policy GD4 Development in the Countryside	<p>Policy wording has been amended as follows (new or amended text in <b><u>bold</u></b>, removed text <del>crossed out</del>):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) “that needed for purposes of <b><u>meeting local business and community needs, for the purposes of</u></b> agriculture, horticulture or forestry; or other uses appropriate to a rural area, including uses which would help to diversify the rural economy, including small-scale tourist accommodation, holiday caravan sites and very exceptionally, larger scale tourism development; <b><u>The development must be sensitive to its surroundings, must not have an unacceptable impact on local roads and exploit any opportunity to make the location more sustainable (for example by improving the scope for access on foot, by cycling or by public transport).</u></b></li> <li>b) the re-use or rehabilitation of existing permanent and substantial buildings;</li> <li>c) extensions to existing dwellings and other buildings in accordance with Policy <b><u>H7</u></b>;</li> <li>d) development essentially needed for the continuation of an existing enterprise, facility or operation, of a type and scale which would not harm the character of the surrounding countryside;</li> <li>e) isolated new homes in the countryside which meet the criteria set out in Policy <b><u>H6</u></b>;</li> <li>f) minor infill development</li> <li><b><u>g) development needed to support entry-level exception sites for first-time buyers (or those looking to rent their own home) on land not already allocated for housing which meets the criteria set out in Policy GD7.</u></b>”</li> </ul> <p>The text in criterion a) requires alteration to reflect text in paragraph 84 of NPPF19. Paragraph 71 of the NPPF19 contains additional text on supporting entry-level homes. Criterion g) should be included as an addition to Policy GD4 to ensure conformity with paragraph 71 of NPPF19.</p>	X	This revision makes minor amendments to policy GD4. These amendments do not materially alter the impact of the policy in terms of HRA and does not require amendments to the existing assessment in the HRA and there is clearly no discernible impact pathway between the revisions or a European site. This revision can therefore be screened out of further consideration from this HRA.
Paragraph 7.14	Text amended to accord with paragraph 84 of NPPF19 and to reflect the proposed additional text to criterion a) of Policy GD4.	X	These revisions do not materially change any policies in the Plan and do not alter any of the assessment findings in the HRA. There is clearly no possible impact pathway between these revisions and a European site. These revisions can therefore be screened out of further consideration from this HRA.
Paragraph 7.21	Paragraph 7.21 quotes from paragraph 21 of NPPF12. The text from NPPF12 has been replaced with the new wording in paragraph 81d) of NPPF19.	X	
Policy GD7 Achieving Good Design in Development	Additional text added to criterion I (new text in <b><u>bold</u></b> , removed text <del>crossed out</del> ):	X	This revision makes minor amendments to policy GD7. These amendments do not materially alter the impact of the policy in terms of HRA and does not require amendments to

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Text or policy in the FLP32	Description of the revision(s)	Initial screening	Comment
	<p><i>"l) Creating safe and accessible environments where crime and disorder, and the fear of crime, do not undermine quality of life or community cohesion, and there are clear and legible pedestrian and cycle routes and high quality public space, which encourages the active and continual use of public areas <b>and which promote health and wellbeing.</b></i></p> <p><b><i>p) Ensuring that the quality of approved development is not materially diminished between permission and completion.</i></b></p> <p>The changes to criterion l) of Policy GD7 are necessitated by the additional wording in Paragraph 127 of NPPF19. Paragraph 130 of NPPF19 contains additional text relating to the lowering of standards during the delivering of a development. Criterion p) is needed as an addition to Policy GD7 to ensure conformity with Paragraph 130 of the NPPF19.</p>		<p>the existing assessment in the HRA and there is clearly no discernible impact pathway between the revisions or a European site. This revision can therefore be screened out of further consideration from this HRA.</p>
Paragraph 8.17	Paragraph 8.17 quotes from NPPF12, the text from NPPF12 has been deleted and been replaced with a more general reference to the Framework.	X	<p>These revisions do not materially change any policies in the Plan and do not alter any of the assessment findings in the HRA. There is clearly no possible impact pathway between these revisions and a European site. These revisions can therefore be screened out of further consideration from this HRA.</p>
Paragraph 8.22	Paragraph 8.22 refers to the framework but includes out of date text from NPPF12. It has been amended to reflect the content of paragraph 83 of NPPF19.	X	
Policy EC5 Vibrant Town, District and Local Centres	<p>Wording for text on development outside of town centres amended as follows (new or amended text in <b>bold</b>, removed text <del>crossed out</del>):</p> <p>"Proposals for retail, <b>and</b> leisure <del>and office</del> development in 'edge of centre' or 'out-of-centre' locations will be considered in line with the Framework, bearing in mind the impacts on existing centres.</p> <p>When assessing proposals for retail, <b>and</b> leisure <del>and office</del> development outside of centres, a local threshold of any development more than 750 square metres, will apply in terms of requiring a retail impact assessment.</p> <p>When undertaking a sequential test, or retail impact assessment, it will be necessary to have regard to likely impact upon other centres, including those outside of Fylde."</p> <p>Paragraph 89 of the NPPF19 removes the need to assess the impact of out of centre office proposals on town centres. The sequential approach is considered to adequately control inappropriate office proposals.</p>	X	<p>This revision makes minor amendments to policy EC5. These amendments do not materially alter the impact of the policy in terms of HRA and does not require amendments to the existing assessment in the HRA and there is clearly no discernible impact pathway between the revisions or a European site. This revision can therefore be screened out of further consideration from this HRA.</p>
Paragraph 8.55	Paragraph 89 of the NPPF19 removes the need to assess the impact of out of centre office proposals on town centres. The sequential approach is considered to adequately control inappropriate office proposals.	X	<p>These revisions do not materially change any policies in the Plan and do not alter any of the assessment findings in the HRA. There is clearly no possible impact pathway between</p>
Paragraph 9.10	Consolidation of paragraphs to allow new content in paragraphs 9.13 onwards.	X	

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Text or policy in the FLP32	Description of the revision(s)	Initial screening	Comment
Paragraph 9.11	Consolidation of paragraphs to allow new content in paragraphs 9.13 onwards.	X	these revisions and a European site. These revisions can therefore be screened out of further consideration from this HRA.
Paragraph 9.12	Consolidation of paragraphs to allow new content in paragraphs 9.13 onwards.	X	
Paragraph 9.13	Text amended to accord with the requirements of NPPF19 paragraph 60.	X	
Paragraph 9.14	Text amended to accord with the requirements of NPPF19 paragraphs 60 and 65. Housing numbers edited due to revised housing requirement figure resulting from change to housing needs methodology in NPPF19.	X	
Paragraph 9.15	Text amended to remove reference to out-of-date NPPF12 paragraph number.	X	
Paragraph 9.16	Text amended to accord with the requirements of NPPF19 paragraphs 60 and 65. Housing numbers edited due to revised housing requirement figure resulting from change to housing needs methodology in NPPF19.	X	
Paragraph 9.17	To accord with the requirements of NPPF19 paragraphs 60 and 65. Housing numbers edited due to revised housing requirement figure resulting from change to housing needs methodology in NPPF19.	X	
Paragraph 9.18	Text amended to accord with the requirements of NPPF19 paragraphs 60 and 65.	X	
Paragraph 9.19	Text amended to accord with the requirements of NPPF19 paragraphs 60 and 65.	X	
Policy H1 Housing Delivery and the Allocation of Housing Land	<p>Wording of policy amended as follows (new or amended text in <b><u>bold</u></b>, removed text <del>crossed-out</del>):</p> <p>“The Council will provide for and manage the delivery of new housing by:</p> <p>a) Setting and applying a <del>minimum</del> housing requirement of <b><u>415 net homes per annum for the plan period 2011-2032</u></b> <del>and a housing requirement of 275-415 net homes per annum for the period 2019-2032.</del></p> <p>b) Keeping under review housing delivery performance on the basis of rolling 3 year completion levels as set out in accordance with the Monitoring Framework at Appendix 8.</p> <p>c) Ensuring there is enough deliverable land suitable for house building capable of providing a continuous 5 year supply calculated using the “Liverpool” method from the start of each annual monitoring period and in locations that are in line with the Policy <b><u>DLF1</u></b> (Development Locations for Fylde) and suitable for developments that will provide the range and mix of house types necessary to meet the requirements of the Local Plan.</p> <p>d) The delivery of the developable sites, which are allocated for housing and mixed use from 1 April 2011 to 31 March 2032 and provided for through allowances, to provide for a minimum of <b><u>6,895</u></b>-8,715 homes.”</p>	✓	This revision represents a material change to the policy in terms of housing numbers in Fylde. At this initial screening stage, it is not possible to rule out a potential impact pathway between this revision and a European site. This revision will be considered in further detail in Section 2.3.

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Text or policy in the FLP32	Description of the revision(s)	Initial screening	Comment
	Housing numbers edited due to revised housing requirement figure resulting from change to housing needs methodology in NPPF19. Text amended to accord with the requirements of NPPF19 paragraphs 60 and 65.		
Paragraph 9.22	Text amended to accord with the requirements of NPPF19 paragraphs 60 and 65.	X	These revisions do not materially change any policies in the Plan and do not alter any of the assessment findings in the HRA. There is clearly no possible impact pathway between these revisions and a European site. These revisions can therefore be screened out of further consideration from this HRA.
Paragraph 9.24	Text amended to accord with the requirements of NPPF19 paragraphs 60 and 65.	X	
Paragraph 9.49	Paragraph number from NPPF12 removed; text is still in accordance with NPPF19.	X	
Paragraph 9.57	Text amended to accord with the requirements of NPPF19 paragraph 121.	X	
Paragraph 9.58	Paragraph 9.58 quotes from NPPF12, the text from NPPF12 has been deleted and been replaced with a more general reference to the Framework.	X	
Paragraph 9.67	Text amended to accord with the requirements of NPPF19 paragraphs 60 and 65.	X	
Policy H6	<p>Wording of policy amended as follows (new or amended text in <b><u>bold</u></b>, removed text <del>crossed-out</del>):</p> <p>“4. Where the development would re-use redundant or disused buildings and lead to enhancement in the immediate setting; or  <b><u>5. Where the development would involve the subdivision of an existing residential dwelling.</u></b>”</p> <p>Policy amended to accord with revised wording in NPPF19 paragraph 79.</p>	X	This revision makes minor amendments to policy H6. These amendments do not materially alter the impact of the policy in terms of HRA and does not require amendments to the existing assessment in the HRA and there is clearly no discernible impact pathway between the revisions or a European site. This revision can therefore be screened out of further consideration from this HRA.
Paragraph 11.1	Removal of out of date reference to core planning principles from NPPF12; these have been deleted in NPPF19 so the reference to the Framework is removed. The final sentence has been altered to accord with Paragraph 81 c) of the NPPF19.	X	These revisions do not materially change any policies in the Plan and do not alter any of the assessment findings in the HRA. There is clearly no possible impact pathway between these revisions and a European site. These revisions can therefore be screened out of further consideration from this HRA.
Paragraph 11.2	References to telecommunications in NPPF12 have been changed to electronic communications in NPPF19.	X	
Paragraph 11.7	References to telecommunications in NPPF12 have been changed to electronic communications in NPPF19	X	
Paragraph 11.12	References to telecommunications in NPPF12 have been changed to electronic communications in NPPF19.	X	
Paragraph 11.59	FLP32 contains some quoted content from Paragraph 39 of NPPF12. The final bullet point requires updating to reflect the content of Paragraph 105 e) of the NPPF19. The text in the final sentence of Paragraph 11.59 contains out-of-date wording relating to NPPF12 and should be amended to ensure conformity with Paragraph 106 of NPPF19.	X	
Policy ENV1 Landscape	Wording of policy amended as follows (new or amended text in <b><u>bold</u></b> , removed text <del>crossed-out</del> ):	X	This revision makes minor amendments to policy ENV1. These amendments do not materially alter the impact of the policy in terms

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Text or policy in the FLP32	Description of the revision(s)	Initial screening	Comment
	<p>“Development will have regard to its visual impact within its landscape context and the landscape type in which it is situated. Development will be assessed to consider whether it is appropriate to the landscape character, amenity and tranquillity within which it is situated, as identified in the Lancashire Landscape Character Assessment, December 2000 or any subsequent update. <del>Development will also need to have regard to any impact on valued landscapes.</del> In addition: ...”</p> <p>Paragraph 170a) NPPF 19 states that valued landscapes should only be protected commensurate with their statutory status or if they have been identified in a development plan. The FBLP32 does not designate any valued landscape therefore this reference to valued landscapes has been removed in line with NPPF19.</p>		<p>of HRA and does not require amendments to the existing assessment in the HRA and there is clearly no discernible impact pathway between the revisions or a European site. This revision can therefore be screened out of further consideration from this HRA.</p>
<p>Policy ENV1 Coastal Change Management Areas</p>	<p>Policy wording has been amended as follows (new or amended text in <b><u>bold</u></b>, removed text <del>crossed-out</del>):</p> <p>“The open and coastal character of the Coastal Change Management Areas, which are identified on the <b><i>Policies Map including Inset Plans</i></b>, will be protected. Development in the Coastal Change Management Areas will only be permitted where the development meets all of the following criteria:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. Exceptionally requires a coastal location;</li> <li>ii. Is appropriate and in keeping with the open character of the coastline;</li> <li>iii. <del>Does not adversely affect the nature conservation assets</del> <b><i>Promotes the conservation, restoration and enhancement</i></b> of the coastline, predominantly the Ribble and Alt Estuaries SPA/Ramsar. Project specific Habitats Regulations Assessments (HRAs) will be required for any tourism and coastal defence developments near to the Ribble and Alt Estuaries SPA/Ramsar. The HRAs will need to demonstrate that there will be no likely significant effect upon European Sites before the tourism and coastal defence developments can be granted consent.” <p>The revision has been made to reflect the wording of NPPF19 which is about achieving measurable net gain in Biodiversity.</p> </li></ul>	<p>X</p>	<p>This revision makes minor amendments to policy ENV1. These amendments do not materially alter the impact of the policy in terms of HRA and does not require amendments to the existing assessment in the HRA and there is clearly no discernible impact pathway between the revisions or a European site. This revision can therefore be screened out of further consideration from this HRA.</p>
<p>Paragraph 13.6</p>	<p>Paragraph 13.6 contains an out of date reference to paragraph 109 of the NPPF12. Paragraph 170a) NPPF19 states that valued landscapes should only be protected commensurate with their statutory status or if they have been identified in a development plan. The FLP32 does not designate any valued landscape therefore this reference to valued landscapes has been removed in line with NPPF19.</p>	<p>X</p>	<p>These revisions do not materially change any policies in the Plan and do not alter any of the assessment findings in the HRA. There is clearly no possible impact pathway between these revisions and a European site. These revisions can therefore be screened out of further consideration from this HRA.</p>
<p>Paragraphs 13.16 and paragraph 13.17</p>	<p>Areas of Tranquillity NPPF12 have been renamed Tranquil Areas by NPPF19, the reference to paragraph 123 has changed therefore it has been deleted, leaving a reference to the Framework.</p>	<p>X</p>	<p>These revisions can therefore be screened out of further consideration from this HRA.</p>

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Text or policy in the FLP32	Description of the revision(s)	Initial screening	Comment
Policy ENV2	<p>Policy wording has been amended as follows (new or amended text in <b><u>bold</u></b>, removed text <del>crossed out</del>):</p> <p>“Where development is considered necessary, adequate mitigation measures and compensatory habitat creation will be required through planning conditions and / or obligations, with the aim of providing an overall improvement in the site’s biodiversity value <b><u>in order to secure measurable net gains for biodiversity</u></b>. Where compensatory habitat is provided it should be of at least equal area and biodiversity if not larger and more diverse than that which is being replaced. Measures should be put in place for the ongoing management of such features.”</p>	X	This revision makes minor amendments to policy ENV2. These amendments do not materially alter the impact of the policy in terms of HRA and does not require amendments to the existing assessment in the HRA and there is clearly no discernible impact pathway between the revisions or a European site. This revision can therefore be screened out of further consideration in this HRA.
Paragraph 13.29	Paragraph 13.29 contained two out of date references to NPPF12 and the reference to net gain needed updating to reflect the content of NPPF19.	X	These revisions do not materially change any policies in the Plan and do not alter any of the assessment findings in the HRA. There is clearly no possible impact pathway between these revisions and a European site. These revisions can therefore be screened out of further consideration from this HRA.
Paragraph 13.36	FLP32 contains content from NPPF12 paragraph 114 and so it needs updating to reflect the content of paragraph 171 of NPPF19.	X	
Policy ENV3 Criterion a)	<p>Policy wording amended as follows:</p> <p>“The areas of Existing Open Space provide a critically important part of the Green Infrastructure network within Fylde. Existing Open Space will be protected from inappropriate development, having particular regard to the multi-functional benefits of open spaces, as follows:</p> <p>a) Existing Open Space, including sports and playing pitches (subject to policy <b><u>HW3</u></b>: Protection and Provision of Indoor and Outdoor Sports Facilities), will be protected unless the requirements of paragraph <del>74</del><b><u>97</u></b> of the Framework are met and the findings of any published and adopted needs assessment are met.”</p> <p>This specific reference to the paragraph number in Policy ENV3 was required by the Local Plan Inspector who examined the FLP32 and is an integral part of the policy. The content of NPPF12 paragraph 74 is repeated in NPPF19 paragraph 97, with a very minor addition; therefore, the reference to paragraph 74 should be changed to 97.</p>	X	This revision makes minor amendments to policy ENV3. These amendments do not materially alter the impact of the policy in terms of HRA and does not require amendments to the existing assessment in the HRA and there is clearly no discernible impact pathway between the revisions or a European site. This revision can therefore be screened out of further consideration from this HRA.
Paragraph 13.52	Out of date paragraph number from NPPF12.	X	These revisions do not materially change any policies in the Plan and do not alter any of the assessment findings in the HRA. There is clearly no possible impact pathway between these revisions and a European site. These
Paragraph 13.59	This text is not included in NPPF19 therefore it is deleted.	X	
Glossary	References to telecommunications in NPPF12 have been changed to electronic communications in NPPF19.	X	

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Text or policy in the FLP32	Description of the revision(s)	Initial screening	Comment
Appendix 1	Schedule of saved policies from the Fylde Borough Local Plan (As Altered), October 2005 To ensure the 'To be replaced by the Framework' section in Appendix 1 accords with the new paragraph numbering in NPPF19.	X	revisions can therefore be screened out of further consideration from this HRA.
Appendix 8	Performance Monitoring Framework Consistency with approach of housing delivery test	X	
Appendix 9	To ensure reference is made to NPPF19 and the updated PPG.	X	

## 2.3 Detailed Screening

2.3.1.1 As per Table 2.2, two of the proposed revisions to the FLP32 require further consideration in the form of a more detailed screening. The two revisions are set out in full below and includes the revisions to policies DLF1 and H1. These revisions are considered to require a more detailed screening than the initial stage as they pertain to the number of houses to be delivered in the Borough over the Plan period. All other revisions have been screened out of further consideration from this HRA, as per Table 2.2.

### 2.3.2 The Revisions

2.3.2.1 The proposed revisions to Policies DLF1 and H1 amend the housing requirement target to read 'a *minimum of 6,895 - 8,715 new homes*'. The minimum number of homes the Council intend to build has therefore been reduced by 1,820 homes, whilst the maximum figure remains at 8,715 homes:

#### Policy DLF1: Development Locations for Fylde

Policy wording has been amended as follows (new or amended text in **bold**, removed text ~~crossed out~~):

"The Local Plan will provide sites for a minimum of **6,895**-8,715 new homes and a minimum of 60.6 Ha (gross requirement) of additional employment land over the plan period to 31 March 2032.

#### Broad Distribution of Development

##### Strategic Locations

Around ~~7,845 homes, representing~~ 90% of homes to be developed in the plan period (including small sites) and 59.6 Ha of employment land will be located in the four Strategic Locations for development.

##### Non-strategic Locations

Around ~~870 homes, representing~~ 10% of homes to be developed in the plan period (including small sites) and 2.4 Ha of employment land will be located in the Non-strategic Locations.

##### Windfalls (including small committed sites)

Small housing sites (amounting to between 1 and 9 homes) are not allocated; they can occur throughout the borough where compliant with the other policies of the plan. Small sites are provided for through a windfall allowance of 40 homes per annum in years 10 to 21 of the plan. The delivery of small sites that are already committed is included within the Housing Trajectory (Appendix 2): this provides for the delivery of small sites up to year 10 of the plan. Small committed sites and windfalls yet to come will provide around ~~4040 homes within the plan period~~ (11% of the housing requirement). There may also be some larger windfall sites that will also contribute to this figure."

#### Policy H1 Housing Delivery and the Allocation of Housing Land

Wording of policy amended as follows (new or amended text in **bold**, removed text ~~crossed out~~):

"The Council will provide for and manage the delivery of new housing by:

- a) Setting and applying a ~~minimum~~-housing requirement of **415 net homes per annum for the plan period 2011-2032** ~~2019~~ **and a housing requirement of 275-415 net homes per annum for the period 2019-2032.**
- b) Keeping under review housing delivery performance on the basis of rolling 3 year completion levels as set out in accordance with the Monitoring Framework at Appendix 8.
- c) Ensuring there is enough deliverable land suitable for house building capable of providing a continuous 5 year supply calculated using the "Liverpool" method from the start of each annual monitoring period and in locations that are in line with the Policy **DLF1** (Development Locations for Fylde) and suitable for developments that will provide the range and mix of house types necessary to meet the requirements of the Local Plan.
- d) The delivery of the developable sites, which are allocated for housing and mixed use from 1 April 2011 to 31 March 2032 and provided for through allowances, to provide for a minimum of **6,895**-8,715 homes."

### 2.3.3 Detailed screening

- 2.3.3.1 Generally speaking, new residential development can post a risk to the conservation objectives of European sites due to a multitude of potential impact pathways, such as due to recreational disturbances or due to direct losses of habitat.
- 2.3.3.2 The July 2018 HRA established that there would be no LSE on a European site caused by 8,715 new homes when considered both alone and in-combination, as agreed with the statutory and relevant consultees. The proposed revision to Policies DLF1 and H1 could mean that the number of new homes built in Fylde would be less than 8,715 but at least 6,895, which means that up to 1,820 fewer homes could be built in Fylde over the plan period than previously estimated in the HRA.
- 2.3.3.3 The Habitats Regulations Assessment Handbook, DTA Publications<sup>4</sup> provides 13 categories for screening policies in HRA, as per Table 2.3. The Council's proposed revisions to policies H1 and DLF1 are both considered to fall under Category H, because the revisions make a provision for change but cannot undermine the conservation status of a European site. This conclusion relates to all the European Sites identified in Table 2.1 including the newly designated MCZs.
- 2.3.3.4 The proposed revisions would not be able to undermine the conservation status of a European site because they would not result in more development taking place than was previously considered in the July 2018 HRA, which ruled out an LSE, whilst they could potentially result in less residential development taking place.
- 2.3.3.5 It is therefore considered that the Council's proposed revisions to DLF1 and H1 can be objectively ruled out at this stage.

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<sup>4</sup> Available online at: <https://www.dtapublications.co.uk/>

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Table 2.3: DTA HRA Handbook Screening Categories

Category	Description
A	General statements of policy/general aspirations. Policies which are no more than general statements of policy or general political aspirations should be screened out because they cannot have a significant effect on a site.
B	Policies listing general criteria for testing the acceptability/sustainability of proposals. These general policies cannot have any effect on a European site and should be screened out.
C	Proposal referred to but not proposed by the plan. Screen out any references to specific proposals for projects, such as those which are identified, for example, in higher policy frameworks such as the Wales Spatial Plan or National Policy Statements, relating perhaps to nationally significant infrastructure projects. These will be assessed by the Secretary of State or Welsh Ministers.
D	Environmental protection/site safeguarding policies. These are policies, the obvious purpose of which is to protect the natural environment, including biodiversity, or to conserve or enhance the natural, built or historic environment, where enhancement measures will not be likely to have any adverse effect on a European Site. They can be screened out because the implementation of the policies is likely to protect rather than adversely affect European sites and not undermine their conservation objectives.
E	Policies or proposals that steer change in such a way as to protect European sites from adverse effects. These types of policies or proposals will have the effect of steering change away from European sites whose qualifying features may be affected by the change and they can therefore be screened out.
F	Policies or proposals that cannot lead to development or other change. Policies that do not themselves lead to development or other change, for example, because they relate to design or other qualitative criteria for development, such as materials for new development. They do not trigger any development or other changes that could affect a European site and can be screened out.
G	Policies or proposals that could not have any conceivable adverse effect on a site. Policies which make provision for change, but which could have no conceivable effect on a European site, because there is no causal connection or link between them and the qualifying features of any European site and can therefore be screened out.
H	Policies or proposals the (actual or theoretical) effects of which cannot undermine the conservation objectives (either alone or in combination with other aspects of this or other plans or projects). Policies or proposals which make provision for change, but which could have no significant effect on a European site, either alone or in combination with other aspects of the same plan, or in combination with other plans or projects, can be screened out. These may include cases where there are some potential effects which (and theoretically even in combination) would plainly be insignificant and could not undermine the conservation objectives.
I	Policies or proposals with a likely significant effect on a site alone. Policies or proposals which are likely to have a significant effect on a European site alone, should be screened in.
J	Policies or proposals not likely to have a significant effect alone. These aspects of the plan would have some effect on a site, but the effect would not be likely to be a significant effect; so, they must be checked for in-combination (cumulative) effects. They will then be re-categorised as either Category K (no significant effect in combination) or Category L (likely to have a significant effect in-combination), as explained below.
K & L	Policies or proposals not likely to have a significant effect either alone or in-combination (K) or likely to have a significant effect in-combination (L) after the in-combination test. Where an aspect of a plan could have some effect on the qualifying feature(s) or a European site, but the effects of that aspect of the plan alone would not be significant, the effects of that aspect of the plan will need to be checked in-combination firstly, with other effects of the same plan, and then with the effects of other plans and projects. i.e. policies or proposals which will have no likely significant effect alone or in-combination are classified as Category K. Policies or proposals which are likely to have a significant effect in-combination are classified as Category L. Category L policies or proposals will require further consideration in terms of potential in-combination effects. Firstly, this will be with regard to other aspects of the Plan itself, and subsequently with other separate plans or projects, for example neighbouring Local Plans.
M	Bespoke area, site or case specific policies or proposals intended to avoid or reduce harmful effects on a European site i.e. policies whose purpose and intention is to avoid or reduce actual harm to European sites.

## 3 Conclusion

### 3.1 Summary

- 3.1.1.1 The FLP32 was subject to a comprehensive HRA process which concluded that no policies in the FLP32, when considered either alone or in-combination with other policies, plans or projects, would result in an LSE on a European site.
- 3.1.1.2 Fylde Council are undertaking a Partial Review of the adopted FLP32 and have proposed several revisions to its wording and policies. This HRA Screening Report has considered the proposed revisions to the FLP32 via a two-stage screening process.
- 3.1.1.3 All of the proposed revisions were initially screened in Table 2.2 of this report to determine if there is any potential impact pathway between the proposed revision and European sites. It was considered that the proposed revisions to policies DLF1 and H1 could be pertinent to potential impacts on a European site and so were taken forward to the second stage of the screening process, the detailed screening. All other proposed revisions would clearly not have any potential for resulting in an impact on a European designation and so these revisions can be screened out of further consideration.
- 3.1.1.4 During the detailed screening it was determined that the proposed revisions to DLF1 and H1 make a provision for change but could not have an adverse impact on a European site (including any of the three new MCZs in the Fylde area, as per Table 2.1) and these revisions can therefore be screened out of further consideration.
- 3.1.1.5 In summary, this HRA Screening Report concludes that an LSE on a European site as a result of the Council's proposed revisions to the FLP32, through the Partial Review, can be objectively ruled out at this stage.

### 3.2 Next steps

- 3.2.1.1 This HRA Screening Report will be consulted on with relevant stakeholders and the statutory consultee Natural England. The report will be updated following this, based on the responses received. It is not proposed that Appropriate Assessment is required and the HRA process on the Partial Review can be completed at this stage.

## APPENDIX A

### Conservation Objectives of European Sites



#### European Site Conservation Objectives for Ribble and Alt Estuaries Special Protection Area Site Code: UK9005103

With regard to the SPA and the individual species and/or assemblage of species for which the site has been classified (the 'Qualifying Features' listed below), and subject to natural change;

**Ensure that the integrity of the site is maintained or restored as appropriate, and ensure that the site contributes to achieving the aims of the Wild Birds Directive, by maintaining or restoring;**

- **The extent and distribution of the habitats of the qualifying features**
- **The structure and function of the habitats of the qualifying features**
- **The supporting processes on which the habitats of the qualifying features rely**
- **The population of each of the qualifying features, and,**
- **The distribution of the qualifying features within the site.**

This document should be read in conjunction with the accompanying *Supplementary Advice* document, which provides more detailed advice and information to enable the application and achievement of the Objectives set out above.

#### **Qualifying Features:**

- A037 *Cygnus columbianus bewickii*; Bewick's swan (Non-breeding)
- A038 *Cygnus cygnus*; Whooper swan (Non-breeding)
- A040 *Anser brachyrhynchus*; Pink-footed goose (Non-breeding)
- A048 *Tadorna tadorna*; Common shelduck (Non-breeding)
- A050 *Anas penelope*; Eurasian wigeon (Non-breeding)
- A052 *Anas crecca*; Eurasian teal (Non-breeding)
- A054 *Anas acuta*; Northern pintail (Non-breeding)
- A130 *Haematopus ostralegus*; Eurasian oystercatcher (Non-breeding)
- A137 *Charadrius hiaticula*; Ringed plover (Non-breeding)
- A140 *Pluvialis apricaria*; European golden plover (Non-breeding)
- A141 *Pluvialis squatarola*; Grey plover (Non-breeding)
- A143 *Calidris canutus*; Red knot (Non-breeding)

- A144 *Calidris alba*; Sanderling (Non-breeding)
  - A149 *Calidris alpina alpina*; Dunlin (Non-breeding)
  - A151 *Philomachus pugnax*; Ruff (Breeding)
  - A156 *Limosa limosa islandica*; Black-tailed godwit (Non-breeding)
  - A157 *Limosa lapponica*; Bar-tailed godwit (Non-breeding)
  - A162 *Tringa totanus*; Common redshank (Non-breeding)
  - A183 *Larus fuscus*; Lesser black-backed gull (Breeding)
  - A193 *Sterna hirundo*; Common tern (Breeding)
- Waterbird assemblage  
Seabird assemblage

### **This is a European Marine Site**

This SPA is a part of the Ribble and Alt Estuaries European Marine Site (EMS). These Conservation Objectives should be used in conjunction with the Regulation 35 Conservation Advice document for the EMS. For further details about this please visit the Natural England website at <http://www.naturalengland.org.uk/ourwork/marine/protectandmanage/mpa/europeansites.aspx> or contact Natural England's enquiry service at [enquiries@naturalengland.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@naturalengland.org.uk) or by phone on 0845 600 3078.

### **Explanatory Notes: European Site Conservation Objectives**

These Conservation Objectives are those referred to in the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010 (the "Habitats Regulations") and Article 6(3) of the Habitats Directive. They must be considered when a competent authority is required to make a 'Habitats Regulations Assessment' including an Appropriate Assessment, under the relevant parts of this legislation.

These Conservation Objectives and the accompanying Supplementary Advice (where available) will also provide a framework to inform the management of the European Site under the provisions of Articles 4(1) and 4(2) of the Wild Birds Directive and the prevention of deterioration or significant disturbance of its qualifying features under Article 6(2) of the Habitats Directive.

These Conservation Objectives are set for each bird feature for a [Special Protection Area \(SPA\)](#). Where the objectives are met, the site will be considered to exhibit a high degree of integrity and to be contributing to achieving the aims of the Wild Birds Directive.



## European Site Conservation Objectives for Morecambe Bay Special Area of Conservation Site Code: UK0013027

With regard to the SAC and the natural habitats and/or species for which the site has been designated (the 'Qualifying Features' listed below), and subject to natural change;

Ensure that the integrity of the site is maintained or restored as appropriate, and ensure that the site contributes to achieving the Favourable Conservation Status of its Qualifying Features, by maintaining or restoring;

- The extent and distribution of qualifying natural habitats and habitats of qualifying species
- The structure and function (including typical species) of qualifying natural habitats
- The structure and function of the habitats of qualifying species
- The supporting processes on which qualifying natural habitats and the habitats of qualifying species rely
- The populations of qualifying species, and,
- The distribution of qualifying species within the site.

This document should be read in conjunction with the accompanying *Supplementary Advice* document, which provides more detailed advice and information to enable the application and achievement of the Objectives set out above.

### Qualifying Features:

H1110. Sandbanks which are slightly covered by sea water all the time; Subtidal sandbanks

H1130. Estuaries

H1140. Mudflats and sandflats not covered by seawater at low tide; Intertidal mudflats and sandflats

H1150. Coastal lagoons\*

H1160. Large shallow inlets and bays

H1170. Reefs

H1220. Perennial vegetation of stony banks; Coastal shingle vegetation outside the reach of waves

H1310. *Salicornia* and other annuals colonising mud and sand; Glasswort and other annuals colonising mud and sand

H1330. Atlantic salt meadows (*Glauco-Puccinellietalia maritimae*)

H2110. Embryonic shifting dunes

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H2120. Shifting dunes along the shoreline with *Ammophila arenaria* ("white dunes"); Shifting dunes with marram

H2130. Fixed dunes with herbaceous vegetation ("grey dunes"); Dune grassland\*

H2150. Atlantic decalcified fixed dunes (*Calluno-Ulicetea*); Coastal dune heathland\*

H2170. Dunes with *Salix repens* ssp. *argentea* (*Salicion arenariae*); Dunes with creeping willow

H2190. Humid dune slacks

S1166. *Triturus cristatus*; Great crested newt

\* denotes a priority natural habitat or species (supporting explanatory text on following page)

### **This is a European Marine Site**

This site is a part of the Morecambe Bay European Marine Site. These conservation objectives should be used in conjunction with the Regulation 35 Conservation Advice Package, for further details please contact Natural England's enquiry service at [enquiries@naturalengland.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@naturalengland.org.uk), or by phone on 0845 600 3078, or visit the Natural England website at:

<http://www.naturalengland.org.uk/ourwork/marine/protectandmanage/mpa/europeansites.aspx>

#### **\* Priority natural habitats or species**

Some of the natural habitats and species listed in the Habitats Directive and for which SACs have been selected are considered to be particular priorities for conservation at a European scale and are subject to special provisions in the Directive and the Habitats Regulations. These priority natural habitats and species are denoted by an asterisk (\*) in Annex I and II of the Directive. The term 'priority' is also used in other contexts, for example with reference to particular habitats or species that are prioritised in UK Biodiversity Action Plans. It is important to note however that these are not necessarily the priority natural habitats or species within the meaning of the Habitats Directive or the Habitats Regulations.

### **Explanatory Notes: European Site Conservation Objectives**

These Conservation Objectives are those referred to in the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010 (the "Habitats Regulations") and Article 6(3) of the Habitats Directive. They must be considered when a competent authority is required to make a 'Habitats Regulations Assessment', including an Appropriate Assessment, under the relevant parts of this legislation.

These Conservation Objectives and the accompanying Supplementary Advice (where available) will also provide a framework to inform the measures needed to conserve or restore the European Site and the prevention of deterioration or significant disturbance of its qualifying features as required by the provisions of Article 6(1) and 6(2) of the Directive.

These Conservation Objectives are set for each habitat or species of a [Special Area of Conservation \(SAC\)](#). Where the objectives are met, the site will be considered to exhibit a high degree of integrity and to be contributing to achieving Favourable Conservation Status for that species or habitat type at a UK level. The term 'favourable conservation status' is defined in Article 1 of the Habitats Directive.

**Publication date:** 30 June 2014 – version 2. This document updates and replaces an earlier version dated 29 May 2012 to reflect Natural England's Strategic Standard on European Site Conservation Objectives 2014.



## European Site Conservation Objectives for Morecambe Bay & Duddon Estuary Special Protection Area Site Code: UK9020326

With regard to this SPA and the individual species and/or assemblage of species for which the site has been classified (the 'Qualifying Features'), and subject to natural change;

**Ensure that the integrity of the site is maintained or restored as appropriate, and ensure that the site contributes to achieving the aims of the Wild Birds Directive, by maintaining or restoring;**

- **The extent and distribution of the habitats of the qualifying features**
- **The structure and function of the habitats of the qualifying features**
- **The supporting processes on which the habitats of the qualifying features rely**
- **The population of each of the qualifying features, and,**
- **The distribution of the qualifying features within the site.**

This document should be read in conjunction with the accompanying Conservation Advice document which provides more detailed advice and information to enable the application and achievement of the Objectives set out above.

### Qualifying Features

- A026 *Egretta garzetta*; Little egret (Non-breeding)
- A038 *Cygnus cygnus*; Whooper swan (Non-breeding)
- A040 *Anser brachyrhynchus*; Pink-footed goose (Non-breeding)
- A048 *Tadorna tadorna*; Common shelduck (Non-breeding)
- A054 *Anas acuta*; Northern pintail (Non-breeding)
- A130 *Haematopus ostralegus*; Eurasian oystercatcher (Non-breeding)
- A137 *Charadrius hiaticula*; Ringed plover (Non-breeding)
- A140 *Pluvialis apricaria*; European golden plover (Non-breeding)
- A141 *Pluvialis squatarola*; Grey plover (Non-breeding)
- A143 *Calidris canutus*; Red knot (Non-breeding)
- A144 *Calidris alba*; Sanderling (Non-breeding)
- A149 *Calidris alpina alpina*; Dunlin (Non-breeding)

Contd/

- A151 *Philomachus pugnax*; Ruff (Non-breeding)
  - A156 *Limosa limosa islandica*; Black-tailed godwit (Non-breeding)
  - A157 *Limosa lapponica*; Bar-tailed godwit (Non-breeding)
  - A160 *Numenius arquata*; Eurasian curlew (Non-breeding)
  - A162 *Tringa totanus*; Common redshank (Non-breeding)
  - A169 *Arenaria interpres*; Ruddy turnstone (Non-breeding)
  - A176 *Larus melanocephalus*; Mediterranean gull (Non-breeding)
  - A183 *Larus fuscus*; Lesser black-backed gull (Non-breeding)
  - A183 *Larus fuscus*; Lesser black-backed gull (Breeding)
  - A184 *Larus argentatus*; Herring gull (Breeding)
  - A191 *Sterna sandvicensis*; Sandwich tern (Breeding)
  - A193 *Sterna hirundo*; Common tern (Breeding)
  - A195 *Sterna albifrons*; Little tern (Breeding)
- Waterbird assemblage  
Seabird assemblage

### **This is a European Marine Site**

This SPA is a part of the Morecambe Bay European Marine Site ('EMS'). These Conservation Objectives should be used in conjunction with the current Conservation Advice document for the EMS. For further details about this please visit the Natural England website at <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/conservation-advice-packages-for-marine-protected-areas> or contact Natural England's enquiry service at [enquiries@naturalengland.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@naturalengland.org.uk) or by phone on 0845 600 3078.

### **This is a new combined site**

This SPA replaces two individual sites – Morecambe Bay SPA (UK9005081) and Duddon Estuary SPA (UK9005031).

### **Explanatory Notes: European Site Conservation Objectives**

These Conservation Objectives are those referred to in the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010 (the "Habitats Regulations") and Article 6(3) of the Habitats Directive. They must be considered when a competent authority is required to make a 'Habitats Regulations Assessment' including an Appropriate Assessment, under the relevant parts of this legislation.

These Conservation Objectives and the accompanying Supplementary Advice (where this is available) will also provide a framework to inform the management of the European Site under the provisions of Articles 4(1) and 4(2) of the Wild Birds Directive, and the prevention of deterioration of habitats and significant disturbance of its qualifying features required under Article 6(2) of the Habitats Directive.

These Conservation Objectives are set for each bird feature for a [Special Protection Area \(SPA\)](#). Where the objectives are met, the site will be considered to exhibit a high degree of integrity and to be contributing to achieving the aims of the Wild Birds Directive.

**Publication date:** 13 September 2017 (version 5). This document updates and replaces an earlier version dated 29 January 2016 following the classification of the SPA. It replaces similar documents previously published for Morecambe Bay SPA (UK9005081) and Duddon Estuary SPA (UK9005031)



## European Site Conservation Objectives for Bowland Fells Special Protection Area Site Code: UK9005151

With regard to the SPA and the individual species and/or assemblage of species for which the site has been classified (the 'Qualifying Features' listed below), and subject to natural change;

Ensure that the integrity of the site is maintained or restored as appropriate, and ensure that the site contributes to achieving the aims of the Wild Birds Directive, by maintaining or restoring;

- The extent and distribution of the habitats of the qualifying features
- The structure and function of the habitats of the qualifying features
- The supporting processes on which the habitats of the qualifying features rely
- The population of each of the qualifying features, and,
- The distribution of the qualifying features within the site.

This document should be read in conjunction with the accompanying *Supplementary Advice* document, which provides more detailed advice and information to enable the application and achievement of the Objectives set out above.

### Qualifying Features:

A082 *Circus cyaneus*; Hen harrier (Breeding)

A098 *Falco columbarius*; Merlin (Breeding)

### **Explanatory Notes: European Site Conservation Objectives**

These Conservation Objectives are those referred to in the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010 (the "Habitats Regulations") and Article 6(3) of the Habitats Directive. They must be considered when a competent authority is required to make a 'Habitats Regulations Assessment' including an Appropriate Assessment, under the relevant parts of this legislation.

These Conservation Objectives and the accompanying Supplementary Advice (where this is available) will also provide a framework to inform the management of the European Site under the provisions of Articles 4(1) and 4(2) of the Wild Birds Directive, and the prevention of deterioration of habitats and significant disturbance of its qualifying features required under Article 6(2) of the Habitats Directive.

These Conservation Objectives are set for each bird feature for a [Special Protection Area \(SPA\)](#). Where the objectives are met, the site will be considered to exhibit a high degree of integrity and to be contributing to achieving the aims of the Wild Birds Directive.

**Publication date:** 30 June 2014 (Version 2). This document updates and replaces an earlier version dated 29 May 2012 to reflect Natural England's Strategic Standard on European Site Conservation Objectives 2014. Previous references to additional features identified in the 2001 UK SPA Review have also been removed.



## European Site Conservation Objectives for Martin Mere Special Protection Area Site Code: UK9005111

With regard to the SPA and the individual species and/or assemblage of species for which the site has been classified (the 'Qualifying Features' listed below), and subject to natural change;

Ensure that the integrity of the site is maintained or restored as appropriate, and ensure that the site contributes to achieving the aims of the Wild Birds Directive, by maintaining or restoring;

- The extent and distribution of the habitats of the qualifying features
- The structure and function of the habitats of the qualifying features
- The supporting processes on which the habitats of the qualifying features rely
- The population of each of the qualifying features, and,
- The distribution of the qualifying features within the site.

This document should be read in conjunction with the accompanying *Supplementary Advice* document, which provides more detailed advice and information to enable the application and achievement of the Objectives set out above.

### Qualifying Features:

A037 *Cygnus columbianus bewickii*; Bewick's swan (Non-breeding)

A038 *Cygnus cygnus*; Whooper swan (Non-breeding)

A040 *Anser brachyrhynchus*; Pink-footed goose (Non-breeding)

A052 *Anas crecca*; Eurasian teal (Non-breeding)

A054 *Anas acuta*; Northern pintail (Non-breeding)

Waterbird assemblage

### **Explanatory Notes: European Site Conservation Objectives**

These Conservation Objectives are those referred to in the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010 (the "Habitats Regulations") and Article 6(3) of the Habitats Directive. They must be considered when a competent authority is required to make a 'Habitats Regulations Assessment' including an Appropriate Assessment, under the relevant parts of this legislation.

These Conservation Objectives and the accompanying Supplementary Advice (where this is available) will also provide a framework to inform the management of the European Site under the provisions of Articles 4(1) and 4(2) of the Wild Birds Directive, and the prevention of deterioration of habitats and significant disturbance of its qualifying features required under Article 6(2) of the Habitats Directive.

These Conservation Objectives are set for each bird feature for a [Special Protection Area \(SPA\)](#). Where the objectives are met, the site will be considered to exhibit a high degree of integrity and to be contributing to achieving the aims of the Wild Birds Directive.

**Publication date:** 30 June 2014 (Version 2). This document updates and replaces an earlier version dated 29 May 2012 to reflect Natural England's Strategic Standard on European Site Conservation Objectives 2014. Previous references to additional features identified in the 2001 UK SPA Review have also been removed.



## European Site Conservation Objectives for Sefton Coast Special Area of Conservation Site Code: UK0013076

With regard to the SAC and the natural habitats and/or species for which the site has been designated (the 'Qualifying Features' listed below), and subject to natural change;

Ensure that the integrity of the site is maintained or restored as appropriate, and ensure that the site contributes to achieving the Favourable Conservation Status of its Qualifying Features, by maintaining or restoring;

- The extent and distribution of qualifying natural habitats and habitats of qualifying species
- The structure and function (including typical species) of qualifying natural habitats
- The structure and function of the habitats of qualifying species
- The supporting processes on which qualifying natural habitats and the habitats of qualifying species rely
- The populations of qualifying species, and,
- The distribution of qualifying species within the site.

This document should be read in conjunction with the accompanying *Supplementary Advice* document, which provides more detailed advice and information to enable the application and achievement of the Objectives set out above.

### Qualifying Features:

H2110. Embryonic shifting dunes

H2120. Shifting dunes along the shoreline with *Ammophila arenaria* ("white dunes"); Shifting dunes with marram

H2130. Fixed dunes with herbaceous vegetation ("grey dunes"); Dune grassland\*

H2150. Atlantic decalcified fixed dunes (*Calluno-Ulicetea*); Coastal dune heathland\*

H2170. Dunes with *Salix repens* ssp. *argentea* (*Salicion arenariae*); Dunes with creeping willow

H2190. Humid dune slacks

S1166. *Triturus cristatus*; Great crested newt

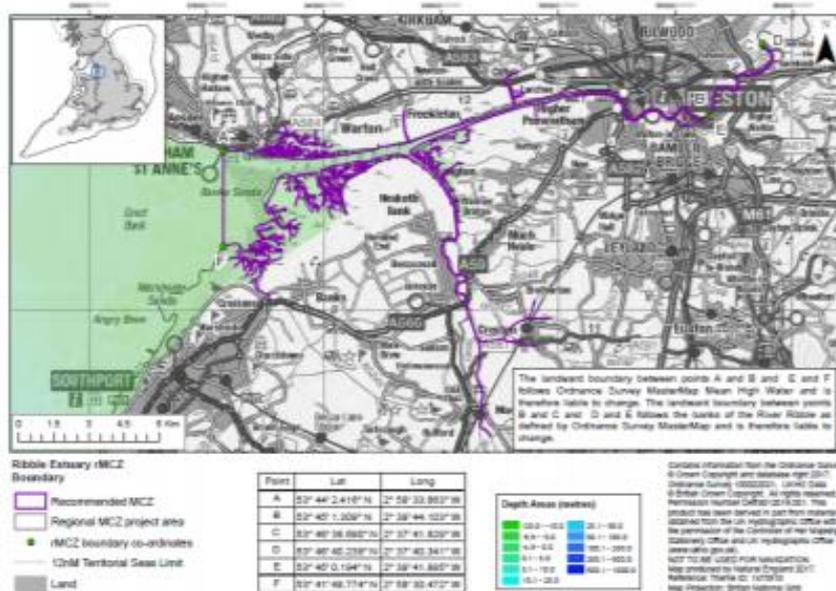
S1395. *Petalophyllum ralfsii*; Petalwort

\* denotes a priority natural habitat or species (supporting explanatory text on following page)

## Ribble Estuary MCZ

### Where is the site located?

The Ribble Estuary recommended Marine Conservation Zone (MCZ) is an inshore site that covers an area of approximately 15 km<sup>2</sup>. It is located on the north-west coast of England, near Preston. The site boundary has been modified from that proposed by the Regional MCZ Project in order to better capture potential smelt spawning habitat. It now extends up to the tidal limit on the Ribble near Samlesbury, on the River Douglas near Rufford and on the River Yarrow near Croston.



### Why is the site environmentally important?

Smelt (*Osmerus eperlanus*) were once widespread in estuaries in the UK but have declined considerably over the past 200 years. They are known to congregate in large shoals in lower estuaries and migrate into freshwater where they spawn in spring. Estuaries such as the Ribble therefore provide critical habitats required to complete smelt lifecycles, including for feeding and post-larval development. Given this dependence on estuaries and the anthropogenic pressures smelt may encounter within estuaries during their migration, they are considered suitable candidates for protection within MCZs.

## What would this site protect?

Designation would protect the following feature. You can read more about this feature and why it is important [here](#).

Feature	General Management Approach
Smelt ( <i>Osmerus eperlanus</i> )	Recover to favourable condition

## Wyre-Lune MCZ

### Why is the site important?

MCZs, together with other types of marine protected areas, will form the UK contribution to an international network of protected sites in the north east Atlantic. The network will help to deliver the government's vision of clean, healthy, safe, productive and biologically diverse oceans and seas. MCZs protect typical, rare or declining habitats and species found in our seas.

Smelt were once widespread in estuaries in the UK but have declined considerably over the past 200 years. They are known to congregate in large shoals in lower estuaries and migrate into freshwater where they spawn in spring. Estuaries such as the Wyre and Lune therefore provide critical habitats required to complete smelt lifecycles, including for feeding and post-larval development. Smelt is an indicator of ecosystem health, being very sensitive to a broad range of environmental degradations, including overfishing, loss of spawning habitat, blockage to migration and water quality impacts.

You can find detailed information about smelt at <http://jncc.defra.gov.uk/page-4527>.

Protected features	General management approach
Smelt ( <i>Osmerus eperlanus</i> )	Recover to favourable condition

### Management of the site

Now that this site has been designated, some activities may need additional management. Activities and the management measures used to regulate them may need to change if new evidence becomes available.

Most marine activity is already regulated by the relevant regulatory bodies. There is an existing legal framework that regulators use to manage fishing, coastal development, recreation and pollution. This also applies in MCZs.

Regulators will manage each site according to the features and activities in, or near, a specific area. Management measures will be implemented at sites most at risk of damage first, regulating only those activities which have a detrimental impact on the designated features. Any management measures that are required for MCZs will be applied on a case-by-case basis.

Management in MCZs can take several different forms, including introducing voluntary measures, use of the existing planning and licensing framework, specific byelaws and orders. There has to be public consultation on permanent byelaws and orders. For activities that already need a marine licence, regulators consider the MCZ in their decision as soon as the site is consulted on. Find out more about marine licensing in MCZs at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/marine-conservation-zones-mczs-and-marine-licensing>.

## Fylde Marine Conservation Zone



### Where is this site?

Fylde MCZ is located in Liverpool Bay, lying between 3 and 20 km off the Fylde coast and Ribble estuary. The MCZ protects an area of approximately 260 km<sup>2</sup>. The depth of the seabed within the site ranges from almost being exposed on low tide (just 35 cm depth) to 22 metres at its deepest part.

### Why is this site important?

The site was chosen for the extensive areas of subtidal sediment habitats and plant and animal communities present. These are considered to be good representatives of the seabed habitats and communities found on the eastern side of Liverpool Bay. The sediment habitats are known to support rich bivalve mollusc populations. The site includes important nursery and spawning grounds for several commercially important fish species including sole (*Solea solea*), plaice (*Pleuronectes platessa*) and whiting (*Merlangius merlangus*).

Fylde MCZ is located next to Shell Flat sandbank, part of the Shell Flat and Lune Deep Special Area of Conservation and offers protection to other rich areas of seabed outside of the SAC. The site is co-located within the Liverpool Bay Special Protection Area which provides protection for particular bird features including common scoter (*Melanitta nigra*) and red-throated diver (*Gavia stellata*) and their supporting habitats.

## What does this Marine Conservation Zone protect?

The subtidal sediments within the site are sand and mud. The seabed in this area is highly productive. It supports an abundance of animals such as crabs, starfish, shrimp-like crustaceans and bivalve shellfish, including the commonly found small nut-shell (*Nucula nitidosa*), a razor shell (*Pharus legumen*) and the white furrow shell (*Abra alba*). Flatfish, including sole (*Solea solea*) and plaice (*Pleuronectes platessa*), are also supported by the habitat within the site.

Feature	General management approach
Subtidal sand	Maintain in favourable condition
Subtidal mud	Maintain in favourable condition

## Who will manage Marine Conservation Zones?

Many activities within the marine environment are regulated through marine licences. More information regarding the marine licensing process in relation to MCZs can be found on the MMO website

[www.marinemangement.org.uk/licensing/marine.htm](http://www.marinemangement.org.uk/licensing/marine.htm)

Other activities are regulated through different mechanisms. For example fishing activities are managed through European legislation, national statutory instruments, byelaws and self-imposed voluntary agreements. Similar arrangements are in place to manage the range of activities that may impact MCZs including pollution, coastal development and recreation.

Management of sites is currently being prioritised nationally according to the potential or actual adverse impacts of activities on the features designated in relation to fishing activities. This prioritisation will be further refined at a local level taking into account relevant information and will guide regulators to those sites which may need protection before others.

Any management measures that are required for MCZs will be applied on a case-by-case basis. Management measures will be implemented at sites most at risk of damage first, regulating only those activities which have a detrimental impact on the features. In cases where there is a high risk to designated features being damaged emergency measures may be put in place to ensure the protection of vulnerable habitats and species.

## APPENDIX B

### Qualifying Features and Threats/Pressures of European Sites

The below information is derived from Natural England Site Improvement Plans, available online at: <http://publications.naturalengland.org.uk/category/5458594975711232>, as well as from Natura 2000 Standard Data Forms (SAC and SPA) and Ramsar Information Sheets.

#### Ribble and Alt Estuaries SPA

##### Qualifying Features

This site qualifies under Article 4.1 of the Directive (79/409/EEC) by supporting populations of European importance of the following species listed on Annex I of the Directive:

During the breeding season;

- Common Tern *Sterna hirundo*;
- Ruff *Philomachus pugnax*;

Over winter;

- Bar-tailed Godwit *Limosa lapponica*;
- Bewick's Swan *Cygnus columbianus bewickii*;
- Golden Plover *Pluvialis apricaria*;
- Whooper Swan *Cygnus*;

This site also qualifies under Article 4.2 of the Directive (79/409/EEC) by supporting populations of European importance of the following migratory species:

During the breeding season;

- Lesser Black-backed Gull *Larus fuscus*;

On passage;

- Ringed Plover *Charadrius hiaticula*;
- Sanderling *Calidris alba*;

Over winter;

- Black-tailed Godwit *Limosa islandica*;
- Dunlin *Calidris alpina*;
- Grey Plover *Pluvialis squatarola*;
- Knot *Calidris canutus*;
- Oystercatcher *Haematopus ostralegus*;
- Pink-footed Goose *Anser brachyrhynchus*;
- Pintail *Anas acuta*;
- Redshank *Tringa tetanus*;
- Sanderling *Calidris alba*;
- Shelduck *Tadorna*;
- Teal *Anas crecca*; and
- Wigeon *Anas Penelope*.

Assemblage qualification: A seabird assemblage of international importance

The area qualifies under Article 4.2 of the Directive (79/409/EEC) by regularly supporting at least 20,000 seabirds

During the breeding season, the area regularly supports 29,236 individual seabirds.

Assemblage qualification: A wetland of international importance.

The area qualifies under Article 4.2 of the Directive (79/409/EEC) by regularly supporting at least 20,000 waterfowl.

##### Key vulnerabilities (threats and pressures)

Coastal squeeze

Air pollution: risk of atmospheric nitrogen deposition

Inappropriate scrub control

Invasive species

Hydrological changes

Public access/Disturbance

Inappropriate coastal management

Fisheries: Commercial marine and estuarine

Change to site conditions

Inappropriate coastal management

Shooting/ scaring

Invasive species

Feature location/ extent/ condition unknown

## Ribble and Alt Estuaries Ramsar

### Ramsar criterion 2

This site supports up to 40% of the Great Britain population of natterjack toads *Bufo calamita*.

### Ramsar criterion 5

Assemblages of international importance:

Species with peak counts in winter:

222,038 waterfowl

### Ramsar criterion 6

Species/populations occurring at levels of international importance.

Qualifying Species/populations (as identified at designation): Species regularly supported during the breeding season:

- Lesser black-backed gull, *Larus fuscus graellsii*,

Species with peak counts in spring/autumn:

- Ringed plover, *Charadrius hiaticula*,
- Grey plover, *Pluvialis squatarola*
- Red knot, *Calidris canutus islandica*
- Sanderling, *Calidris alba*
- Dunlin, *Calidris alpina*
- Black-tailed godwit, *Limosa islandica*
- Common redshank, *Tringa totanus*,
- Lesser black-backed gull, *Larus fuscus graellsii*,

Species with peak counts in winter:

- Tundra swan, *Cygnus columbianus bewickii*
- Whooper swan, *Cygnus*
- Pink-footed goose, *Anser brachyrhynchus*
- Common shelduck, *Tadorna*
- Eurasian wigeon, *Anas penelope*
- Eurasian teal, *Anas crecca*
- Northern pintail, *Anas acuta*
- Eurasian oystercatcher, *Haematopus ostralegus*

Bar-tailed godwit, *Limosa lapponica*

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## Morecambe Bay & Duddon Estuary SPA

### Qualifying Features

This site qualifies under Article 4.1 of the Directive (79/409/EEC) by supporting populations of European importance of the following species listed on Annex I of the Directive:

During the breeding season;

- Little Tern *Sterna albifrons*;
- Sandwich Tern *Sterna sandvicensis*;
- Common tern *Sterna hirundo*;

Over winter;

- Bar-tailed Godwit *Limosa lapponica*;
- Golden Plover *Pluvialis apricaria*;

This site also qualifies under Article 4.2 of the Directive (79/409/EEC) by supporting populations of European importance of the following migratory species:

During the breeding season;

- Herring Gull *Larus argentatus*;
- Lesser Black-backed Gull *Larus fuscus*;

On passage;

- Ringed Plover *Charadrius hiaticula*;
- Sanderling *Calidris alba*;

Over winter;

- Whooper swan *Cygnus*;
  - Curlew *Numenius arquata*;
  - Dunlin *Calidris alpina*;
  - Grey Plover *Pluvialis squatarola*;
  - Black-tailed godwit *Limosa*;
  - Knot *Calidris canutus*;
-

## Morecambe Bay & Duddon Estuary SPA

- Oystercatcher *Haematopus ostralegus*;
- Pink-footed Goose *Anser brachyrhynchus*;
- Pintail *Anas acuta*;
- Redshank *Tringa tetanus*;
- Shelduck *Tadorna*;
- Turnstone *Arenaria interpres*;
- Little egret *Egretta garzetta*;
- Ruff *Calidris pugnax*;
- Mediterranean Gull *Larus melancephalus*; and
- Lesser Black-backed Gull *Larus fuscus*.

Assemblage qualification: A seabird assemblage of international importance

The area qualifies under Article 4.2 of the Directive (79/409/EEC) by regularly supporting at least 20,000 seabirds

During the breeding season, the area regularly supports 61,858 individual seabirds (5 year peak mean for 1991/92 to 1995/96) including: Herring Gull *Larus argentatus*, Lesser Black-backed Gull *Larus fuscus*, Little Tern *Sterna albifrons*, Sandwich Tern *Sterna sandvicensis*.

Assemblage qualification: A wetland of international importance.

The area qualifies under Article 4.2 of the Directive (79/409/EEC) by regularly supporting at least 20,000 waterfowl

Over winter, the area regularly supports 210,668 individual waterfowl (5 year peak mean for 1991/92 to 1995/96)

### Key vulnerabilities (threats and pressures)

Public access/disturbance

Air Pollution: risk of atmospheric nitrogen deposition

Water Pollution

Inappropriate pest control

Invasive species

Fisheries: commercial marine and estuarine

Fisheries: Aquaculture

Biological Resource Use

Change in land management

Hydrological changes

Physical modification

Energy production

Changes in species distribution

Direct impact from third party

## Morecambe Bay SAC

### Qualifying Features

#### Annex I habitats that are a primary reason for selection of this site

Estuaries

Mudflats and sandflats not covered by seawater at low tide

Large shallow inlets and bays

Perennial vegetation of stony banks

Salicornia and other annuals colonising mud and sand

Atlantic salt meadows (*Glaucopuccinellietalia maritimae*)

Shifting dunes along the shoreline with *Ammophila arenaria* ('white dunes')

Fixed dunes with herbaceous vegetation ('grey dunes') \*Priority feature

Humid dune slacks

#### Annex I habitats present as a qualifying feature, but not a primary reason for selection of this site

Sandbanks which are slightly covered by sea water all the time

Coastal lagoons Priority feature

Reefs

Embryonic shifting dunes

Atlantic decalcified fixed dunes (*Calluno-Uliceteta*) \* Priority feature

Dunes with *Salix repens* ssp. *argentea* (*Salicion arenariae*)

#### Annex II species that are a primary reason for selection of this site

Great crested newt *Triturus cristatus*

## Morecambe Bay SAC

### Key vulnerabilities (threats and pressures)

Public access/disturbance  
Air Pollution: risk of atmospheric nitrogen deposition  
Water Pollution  
Inappropriate pest control  
Invasive species  
Fisheries: commercial marine and estuarine  
Fisheries: Aquaculture  
Biological Resource Use  
Change in land management  
Hydrological changes  
Physical modification  
Energy production  
Changes in species distribution  
Direct impact from third party

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## Morecambe Bay Ramsar

### Ramsar criterion 4

The site is a staging area for migratory waterfowl including internationally important numbers of passage ringed plover *Charadrius hiaticula*.

### Ramsar criterion 5

Assemblages of international importance:

Species with peak counts in winter:

223709 waterfowl (5 year peak mean 1998/99-2002/2003)

### Ramsar criterion 6 – species/populations occurring at levels of international importance.

Qualifying Species/populations (as identified at designation):

Species regularly supported during the breeding season:

- Lesser black-backed gull, *Larus fuscus graellsii*,
- Herring gull, *Larus argentatus*
- Sandwich tern, *Sterna (Thalasseus) sandvicensis*

Species with peak counts in spring/autumn:

- Great cormorant, *Phalacrocorax carbo*
- Northern pintail, *Anas acuta*,
- Common eider, *Somateria mollissima*,
- Eurasian oystercatcher, *Haematopus ostralegus*,
- Ringed plover, *Charadrius hiaticula*,
- Grey plover, *Pluvialis squatarola*,
- Sanderling, *Calidris alba*,
- Eurasian curlew, *Numenius arquata*,
- Common redshank, *Tringa totanus*,
- Ruddy turnstone, *Arenaria interpres*,
- Lesser black-backed gull, *Larus fuscus graellsii*,

Species with peak counts in winter:

- Great crested grebe, *Podiceps cristatus*,
  - Pink-footed goose, *Anser brachyrhynchus*
  - Eurasian wigeon, *Anas Penelope*
  - Common goldeneye, *Bucephala clangula*,
  - Red-breasted merganser, *Mergus serrator*
  - European golden plover, *Pluvialis apricaria*,
  - Northern lapwing, *Vanellus*,
  - Red knot, *Calidris canutus islandica*,
  - Dunlin, *Calidris alpina*,
  - Bar-tailed godwit, *Limosa lapponica*,
-

## Sefton Coast SAC

### Qualifying Features

Annex I habitats that are a primary reason for selection of this site

Embryonic shifting dunes

Shifting dunes along the shoreline with *Ammophila arenaria* ('white dunes')

Fixed dunes with herbaceous vegetation ('grey dunes') \*Priority feature

Dunes with *Salix repens ssp. argentea* (*Salicion arenariae*)

Humid dune slacks

Annex I habitats present as a qualifying feature, but not a primary reason for selection of this site

Atlantic decalcified fixed dunes (*Calluno-Ulicetea*) \*Priority feature

This site qualifies under Article 4.1 of the Directive (79/409/EEC) by supporting populations of European importance of the following species listed on Annex I of the Directive:

During the breeding season;

- Hen Harrier *Circus cyaneus*
- Merlin *Falco columbarius*

This site also qualifies under **Article 4.2** of the Directive (79/409/EEC) by supporting populations of European importance of the following migratory species:

During the breeding season;

Lesser Black-backed Gull *Larus fuscus*

### Key vulnerabilities (threats and pressures)

Coastal squeeze

Air pollution: risk of atmospheric nitrogen deposition

Inappropriate scrub control

Invasive species

Hydrological changes

Public access/Disturbance

Inappropriate coastal management

Fisheries: Commercial marine and estuarine

Change to site conditions

Inappropriate coastal management

Shooting/ scaring

Invasive species

Feature location/ extent/ condition unknown

## Bowland Fells SPA

### Qualifying Features

This site qualifies under Article 4.1 of the Directive (79/409/EEC) by supporting populations of European importance of the following species listed on Annex I of the Directive:

During the breeding season;

- Hen Harrier *Circus cyaneus*
- Merlin *Falco columbarius*

This site also qualifies under Article 4.2 of the Directive (79/409/EEC) by supporting populations of European importance of the following migratory species:

During the breeding season;

- Lesser Black-backed Gull *Larus fuscus*

### Key vulnerabilities (threats and pressures)

Low breeding success/ poor recruitment/ juvenile and adult survival

Game management: grouse moors

Managed rotational burning

Changes in species distribution

Change in land management

Hydrological changes

Public access/disturbance

Air pollution: risk of atmospheric nitrogen deposition

**Bowland Fells SPA**

Invasive species

**Martin Mere SPA**

**Qualifying Features**

This site qualifies under Article 4.1 of the Directive (79/409/EEC) by supporting populations of European importance of the following species listed on Annex I of the Directive:

- Over winter;
- Bewick's Swan *Cygnus Columbianus bewickii*
  - Whooper Swan *Cygnus*

This site also qualifies under Article 4.2 of the Directive (79/409/EEC) by supporting populations of European importance of the following migratory species:

- Over winter;
- Pink-footed Goose *Anser brachyrhynchus*
  - Pintail *Anas acuta*

Assemblage qualification: A wetland of international importance.

The area qualifies under Article 4.2 of the Directive (79/409/EEC) by regularly supporting at least 20,000 waterfowl

- Over winter, the area regularly supports 46,196 individual waterfowl.

**Key vulnerabilities (threats and pressures)**

- Hydrological changes
- Invasive species
- Water pollution

**Martin Mere Ramsar**

**Ramsar criterion 5**

Assemblages of international importance:

Species with peak counts in winter:

25,306 waterfowl

**Ramsar criterion 6 – species/populations occurring at levels of international importance.**

Qualifying Species/populations (as identified at designation): Species with peak counts in spring/autumn:

- Pink-footed goose, *Anser brachyrhynchus*
- Species with peak counts in winter:
- Tundra swan, *Cygnus columbianus bewickii*
  - Whooper swan, *Cygnus*
  - Eurasian wigeon, *Anas penelope*
  - Northern pintail, *Anas acuta*

**Fylde Marine Conservation Zone**

Feature	General management approach
Subtidal mud (A5.3)	Maintain in favourable condition
Subtidal sand (A5.2)	Maintain in favourable condition

**Conservation objectives**

The site's conservation objectives apply to the Marine Conservation Zone and the individual species and/or habitat for which the site has been designated (the "Designated features" listed below).

The conservation objective of the zone is that the protected habitats:

- are maintained in favourable condition if they are already in favourable condition

### Fylde Marine Conservation Zone

- be brought into favourable condition if they are not already in favourable condition

For each protected feature, favourable condition means that, within a zone:

- extent is stable increasing
- its structures and functions, its quality, and the composition of its characteristic biological communities (including the diversity and abundance of species forming part or inhabiting the habitat) are sufficient to ensure that it remains healthy and does not deteriorate

Any temporary deterioration in condition is to be disregarded if the habitat is sufficiently healthy and resilient to enable its recovery.

Any alteration to a feature brought about entirely by natural processes is to be disregarded when determining whether a protected feature is in favourable condition.

This should be read in conjunction with the accompanying supplementary advice section, which provides more detailed information to help achieve the objectives set out above, including which attributes should be maintained and which restored.

Designated features:

Subtidal mud (A5.3)  
Subtidal sand (A5.2)

### Wyre-Lune Marine Conservation Zone

Feature	General management approach
Smelt ( <i>Osmerus eperlanus</i> )	Recover to favourable condition
Natural England is currently in the process of developing a Conservation Advice package. Upon publication it will be available within the Designated Sites System (DSS) <sup>5</sup> .	

### Ribble Estuary Marine Conservation Zone

Feature	General management approach
Smelt ( <i>Osmerus eperlanus</i> )	Recover to favourable condition
Natural England is currently in the process of developing a Conservation Advice package. Upon publication it will be available within the Designated Sites System (DSS) <sup>6</sup> .	

<sup>5</sup> Natural England Designated Sites System, Wyre-Lune MCZ, available at: <https://designatedsites.naturalengland.org.uk/Marine/MarineSiteDetail.aspx?SiteCode=UKMCZ0074&SiteName=wyre-lune&SiteNameDisplay=Wyre-Lune%20MCZ&countyCode=&responsiblePerson=&SeaArea=&IFCAArea=&NumMarineSeasonality=&HasCA=0>

<sup>6</sup> Natural England Designated Sites System, Fylde MCZ, available at: <https://designatedsites.naturalengland.org.uk/Marine/MarineSiteDetail.aspx?SiteCode=UKMCZ0067&SiteName=ribble%20estuary&SiteNameDisplay=Ribble%20Estuary%20MCZ&countyCode=&responsiblePerson=&SeaArea=&IFCAArea=&NumMarineSeasonality=&HasCA=0>

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