

Strategic Environmental Assessment of the Burscough Parish Neighbourhood Plan

Environmental Report to accompany
Regulation 14 consultation
on the Neighbourhood Plan

Quality information

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Table of Contents

Non-Technical Summary	
1. Introduction	1
1.1 Background	1
1.2 SEA explained	2
1.3 Structure of this Environmental Report.....	3
2. Local Plan context and vision for the Burscough Parish Neighbourhood Plan	4
2.1 Local Plan context for the BPNP	4
2.2 Vision for the Burscough Parish Neighbourhood Plan	5
3. The Scope of the SEA	6
3.1 SEA Scoping Report.....	6
3.2 Key sustainability / environmental issues	7
3.2.1 Air quality	7
3.2.2 Biodiversity	7
3.2.3 Climatic factors.....	7
3.2.4 Landscape and historic environment.....	8
3.2.5 Land, soil and water resources	8
3.2.6 Population and community	8
3.2.7 Health and Wellbeing.....	9
3.2.8 Transportation.....	9
3.3 SEA Framework.....	10
4. What has plan making / SEA involved to this point?.....	14
4.1 Introduction.....	14
4.2 Overview of plan making / SEA work undertaken	14
4.3 Assessment of reasonable alternatives for the Neighbourhood Plan	14
4.4 Appraising the BPNP policies.....	15
4.5 Current approach in the Neighbourhood Plan and the development of Neighbourhood Plan policies	15
5. What are the appraisal findings at this current stage?	17
5.1 Introduction.....	17
5.2 Approach to the appraisal.....	17
5.3 SEA Objective 1: Protect and enhance all biodiversity and geological features	17
5.4 SEA Objective 2: Reduce the level of contribution to climate change made by activities within the BPNP area	18
5.5 SEA Objective 3: Support the resilience of the Neighbourhood Plan area to the potential effects of climate change including flooding.	18
5.6 SEA Objective 4: Protect, Maintain and enhance the cultural heritage resource within the Neighbourhood Plan area, including the historic environment and archaeological assets.	18
5.7 SEA Objective 5: Protect and enhance the character and quality of landscapes and townscapes.....	19
5.8 SEA Objective 6: Ensure the efficient and effective use of land	19
5.9 SEA Objective 7: Promote sustainable waste management solutions that encourage the reduction re-use and recycling of waste	20
facilities being considered early on in the design process.....	20
5.10 SEA Objective 8: Use and Manage water resources in a sustainable manner.....	20
5.11 SEA Objective 9: Cater for existing and future residents’ needs as well as the needs of different groups in the community, and improve access to local, high-quality community services and facilities.	20

5.12	SEA Objective 10: Reduce Deprivation and promote a more inclusive and self-contained community	21
5.13	SEA Objective 11: Provide everyone with the opportunity to live in good quality, affordable housing, and ensure an appropriate mix of dwelling sizes, types and tenures.....	21
5.14	SEA Objective 12: Improve the Health and Wellbeing of residents within the Neighbourhood Plan Area.....	21
5.15	SEA Objective 13: Promote sustainable transport use and reduce the need to travel.	22
6.	Conclusions at this current stage	22
6.1	Potential significant effects.....	22
6.2	Recommendations at this current stage.....	23
6.3	Monitoring.....	23
7.	What are the next steps?	25
	Appendix A – Burscough Neighbourhood Plan Area	26
	Appendix B – Scoping Report	27
	Appendix C - Policy appraisal proformas	28

Non-Technical Summary

What is strategic environmental assessment?

A strategic environmental assessment (SEA) has been undertaken to inform the Burscough Parish Neighbourhood Plan (BPNP). This process is required by the SEA Regulations.

Neighbourhood Plan groups use SEA to assess Neighbourhood Plans against a set of sustainability / environmental objectives developed in consultation with interested parties. The purpose of the assessment is to avoid adverse environmental and socio-economic effects through the Neighbourhood Plan, and identify opportunities to improve the environmental quality of the area covered by the Neighbourhood Plan and the quality of life of residents.

What is the Burscough Parish Neighbourhood Plan?

The Burscough Parish Neighbourhood Plan (BPNP) presents a plan for the administrative area of Burscough Parish for the period to 2028. Prepared to be in conformity with the West Lancashire Local Plan, it sets out a vision and a range of policies for the Neighbourhood Plan area.

It is currently anticipated that the BPNP will be submitted for examination in late 2017.

Purpose of the Environmental Report

The Environmental Report, which accompanies the current consultation on the BPNP, is the second document to be produced as part of the SEA process. The first document was the SEA Scoping Report (March 2017), which includes information about the Neighbourhood Plan area's environment and community.

The purpose of the Environmental Report is to:

- Identify, describe and evaluate the likely significant effects of the BPNP and alternatives; and
- Provide an opportunity for consultees to offer views on any aspect of the SEA process which has been carried out to date.

The Environmental Report contains:

- An outline of the contents and main objectives of the BPNP and its relationship with other relevant policies, plans and programmes;
- Relevant aspects of the current and future state of the environment and key sustainability / environmental issues;
- The SEA Framework of objectives against which the BPNP has been assessed;
- A discussion concerning the appraisal of alternative approaches for the BPNP;
- The likely significant environmental effects of the BPNP;
- The measures envisaged to prevent, reduce and as fully as possible offset any significant adverse effects as a result of the BPNP; and
- Potential monitoring measures.

Scoping

The scoping stage involved the collection of information relating to:

- the state of the environment in the plan area; *and*
- relevant objectives and targets set out within plans, policies and programmes.

This information allowed for a range of key issues to be identified, and to establish what topics should be the focus of the SEA. The scoping process led to the following topics being scoped in or out of the SEA. Those topics scoped in to the SEA subsequently informed the development of a series of SEA objectives within a SEA Framework, which is the basis for appraising the Plan (and reasonable alternatives).

- Air Quality – **Scoped out**
- Biodiversity – **Scoped in**
- Climatic factors - **Scoped in**
- Landscape and historic environment – **Scoped in**
- Land, soil and water resources – **Scoped In**
- Population and community – **Scoped in**
- Health and safety – **Scoped in**
- Transportation – **Scoped in**

Assessment of alternative approaches for the BPNP

The overall level, distribution and location of housing and employment growth to be delivered within the Borough and within the BPNP area up to 2028 has already been considered and set out within the adopted West Lancashire Local Plan (WLLP). Given the context in which the BPNP is being prepared, it would not be appropriate for the BPNP or the SEA to reconsider alternatives for the level or location of proposed growth in Burscough as this has been established at a higher level of plan-making through the WLLP.

The BPNP is limited in terms of potential alternatives that can be considered, which must be in general conformity with and support the strategic development needs set out in the WLLP. Significant effects against SEA objectives are most likely to arise through the consideration of alternatives for the level and location of growth to be delivered in the plan area, which is often one of the key issues for the plan to address.

Alternatives for the level and location of growth in Burscough up to 2028 have already been developed and subject to assessment at a higher level of plan-making through the WLLP. It is not considered necessary to develop and assess alternatives for every thematic issue considered in the BPNP as they are unlikely to result in significant effects against the SEA objectives.

Assessment of the current version of the BPNP

The Plan is predicted to have a **significant positive effect** on objective 4 'Protect, maintain and enhance cultural heritage resource within the Neighbourhood Plan area, including the historic environment and archaeological assets' as it strengthens the existing policy context, particularly with regards to locally important buildings and features. For the same reason, the Plan records a **significant positive effect** on objective 5 'Protect and enhance the character and quality of landscapes and townscapes'.

A number of other effects were recorded against various objectives, although these were not deemed to be significant. A **positive effect** was recorded against objective 3 'Support the resilience of the Neighbourhood Plan area to the potential effects of climate change, including flooding' as a result of the plan promoting the application of SUDs and additional drainage infrastructure.

Concerning objective 6 'Ensuring the efficient and effective use of land' there was a **positive effect**, as a result of the policies dealing with a more efficient use of land at Lord Street (BPR2) and the Community Hub Opportunity Area (BPC2).

Positive effects are predicted in relation to objective 8 'Use and manage water resources in a sustainable manner' through the application of policies relating to SUDs, Foul Water Sewerage Systems, and water efficiency measures.

The Plan recorded **positive effects** against objective 9 'Cater for existing and future residents needs as well as the needs of different groups in the community, and improved access to local high quality community services and facilities' through delivering a mix of housing, supporting Burscough centre, the Lord Street Opportunity Area, securing additional community facilities, and the Community Hub Opportunity Area.

With regards to objective 10 'Reduce deprivation and promote a more inclusive and self-contained community' there is a **positive effect** as the BPNP aims to deliver housing according to needs, increase employment opportunities (at Yew Tree Farm), and an inclusive and accessible environment.

Further **positive effects** were recorded against objective 11 'Provide everyone with the opportunity to live in good quality, affordable housing, and ensure an appropriate mix of dwelling sizes, types and tenures' as the plan includes policies relating to delivery of a mix of housing according to needs,

A **positive effect** was recorded against objective 12 'Improve the health and wellbeing of residents within the Neighbourhood Plan area' as apart from the Community Hub Opportunity Area policy (BPC2) only minor effects were recorded by the other policies, whilst the remaining **positive effect** was recorded against objective 13 'Promote sustainable transport use and reduce the need to travel' as a number of policies aim to reduce the need to travel whilst also ensuring the safe and accessible movement of cyclists and pedestrians.

The plan is predicted to have neutral effects with regards to objective 1 'Protecting and enhancing all biodiversity and geological features'; objective 2 'Reducing the level of contribution to climate change made by activities within the Neighbourhood Plan area'; and objective 7 'Promoting sustainable waste management solutions that encourage the reduction, re-use and recycling of waste'.

No overall negative effects on the SEA objectives have been predicted, which reflects the nature of the draft Plan with regard to environmental factors, although negative effects arising from individual policies are discussed in the following section.

Mitigation

A small number of mitigation measures were identified in order to reduce any negative effects resulting from individual policies. With regards to objective 1, the policy on Green Space (BPEV1) could be amended to refer to any biodiversity or geological value the Green Space may have, whilst the Community Hub Opportunity Area policy (BPC2), could be amended to include a criteria relating to impacts on biodiversity and geological impacts.

In terms of objective 2, policy BPEV1 could be amended to include reference to the ability of green spaces to perform a mitigation role e.g. through increased tree cover which can act as a carbon sink.

Policy BPE1 could be strengthened with reference to reducing flood risk and run-off levels, with regards to objective 3. Policy BPEV1 could be amended further to reflect the role green spaces can play in climate change adaptation e.g. providing shade and temporary flood storage areas. In terms of objectives 4 and 5, policy BPT1 is silent on the impacts transport infrastructure can have on the built and natural environment.

No further enhancement measures have been identified through the SEA process.

Monitoring

There is a requirement to present measures that could be used to monitor the effects of the Plan identified through the SEA. It is particularly important to monitor effects that are predicted to be significant, whether this be positive or negative. Monitoring helps to track whether the effects turn-out as expected, and to identify any unexpected effects.

A small number of overall significant effects have been predicted in the SEA. Whilst these are all positive, it is still important to monitor whether the effects that occur in reality are as positive as expected. Potentially suitable monitoring indicators are identified in table 6.1 for each of the significant positive effects.

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1. Introduction

1.1 Background

AECOM has been commissioned to undertake an independent Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) in support of the emerging Burscough Parish Neighbourhood Plan (BPNP).

The BPNP is currently being prepared as a Neighbourhood Development Plan under the Localism Act 2012. The Neighbourhood Plan area covers the Parish of Burscough. This includes the communities within Burscough, Burscough Bridge, New Lane, and isolated farmsteads and includes the Martin Mere Wildfowl and Wetland Trust facility.

It is currently anticipated that the BPNP will be submitted to West Lancashire Borough Council later in 2017.

Key information relating to the BPNP is presented in Table 1.1.

Table 1.1: Key facts relating to the Burscough Parish Neighbourhood Plan

Name of Qualifying Body	Burscough Parish Council
Title of Plan	Burscough Parish Neighbourhood Plan (BPNP)
Subject	Neighbourhood planning
Purpose	The Burscough Parish Neighbourhood Plan is being prepared as a Neighbourhood Development Plan under the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012. The plan will be in conformity with the West Lancashire Local Plan.
Timescale	To 2028
Area covered by the plan	The emerging BPNP will be used to guide and shape development within the area covered by the administrative area of Burscough Parish. (Refer to Map in Appendix A)
Summary of content	The Burscough Parish Neighbourhood Plan will set out a vision, strategy and range of policies for the Neighbourhood Plan area.
Plan contact point	Tess Reddington Email address: tess.reddington@burscoughpc.org.uk

1.2 SEA explained

The BPNP has been screened in as requiring an SEA.

SEA is a mechanism for considering and communicating the likely significant effects of an emerging plan, and reasonable alternatives in terms of key environmental issues. The aim of SEA is to inform and influence the plan-making process with a view to avoiding or mitigating negative environmental effects and maximising positive effects. Through this approach, the SEA for the BPNP seeks to maximise the emerging Neighbourhood Plan's contribution to sustainable development.

The SEA has been prepared in line with the procedures prescribed by the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004 (the SEA Regulations) which transpose into national law the EU Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Directive¹.

The SEA Regulations require that a report is published for consultation alongside the draft plan that 'identifies, describes and evaluates' the likely significant effects of implementing 'the plan, and reasonable alternatives'. The report must then be taken into account, alongside consultation responses, when finalising the plan.

In line with the SEA Regulations this Environmental Report must essentially answer four questions:

- What is the scope of the SEA?
- What has plan-making/SEA involved up to this point?
 - 'Reasonable alternatives' must have been appraised for the plan.
- What are the appraisal findings at this stage?
 - i.e. in relation to the draft plan.
- What happens next?

These questions are derived from Schedule 2 of the SEA Regulations, which present 'the information to be provided within the report'. **Table 1.2** presents the linkages between the regulatory requirements and the four SEA questions.

¹ Directive 2001/42/EC

1.3 Structure of this Environmental Report

This document is the Environmental Report for the BPNP and hence needs to answer all four of the questions listed above with a view to providing the information required by the SEA Regulations.

Each of the four questions is answered in turn within this report, as follows:

Table 1.2: Questions that must be answered by the Environmental Report in order to meet regulatory² requirements

Environmental Report question	In line with the SEA Regulations, the report must include... ³
What is the plan seeking to achieve?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> An outline of the contents, main objectives of the plan and relationship with other relevant plans and programmes
What is the sustainability 'context'?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The relevant environmental protection objectives, established at international or national level Any existing environmental problems which are relevant to the plan including those relating to any areas of a particular environmental importance
What's the scope of the SEA?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The relevant aspects of the current state of the environment and the likely evolution thereof without implementation of the plan The environmental characteristics of areas likely to be significantly affected Any existing environmental problems which are relevant to the plan including those relating to any areas of a particular environmental importance
What are the key issues & objectives?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Key problems/issues and objectives that should be a focus of (i.e. provide a 'framework' for) assessment
What has plan-making/SEA involved up to this point?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Outline reasons for selecting the alternatives dealt with (and thus an explanation of the 'reasonableness' of the approach) The likely significant effects associated with alternatives Outline reasons for selecting the preferred approach in-light of alternatives appraisal/a description of how environmental objectives and considerations are reflected in the draft plan.
What are the assessment findings at this stage?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The likely significant effects associated with the draft plan The measures envisaged to prevent, reduce and as fully as possible offset any significant adverse effects of implementing the draft plan
What happens next?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The next steps for plan making/SEA process.

² Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004

³ NB this column does not quote directly from Schedule II of the Regulations. Rather, it reflects a degree of interpretation.

2. Local Plan context and vision for the Burscough Parish Neighbourhood Plan

2.1 Local Plan context for the BPNP

Due to the Neighbourhood Area's location within West Lancashire Borough, this Plan is being prepared in the context of planning policies and strategy for the Borough.⁴

The West Lancashire Local Plan 2012-2027 was adopted in 2013. This sets out a framework for how future development across the West Lancashire Borough will be planned and delivered in the period to 2027.

When adopted, Neighbourhood plans will form part of the development plan for West Lancashire Borough Council (WLBC), alongside, but not as a replacement for the Local Plan. Decisions on planning applications by the Local Planning Authority (WLBC) will have to be made in accordance with the BPNP, other parts of the statutory development plan, and other material considerations.

Neighbourhood plans are required to be in conformity with the Local Plan and can develop policies and proposals to address local place-based issues. In this way it is intended for the Local Plan to provide a clear overall strategic direction for development in Burscough, whilst enabling finer detail to be determined through the neighbourhood planning process where appropriate. Therefore the BPNP will focus on the issues that can be tackled through more detailed and locally specific policies.

The Local Plan sets an overall minimum housing target of 850 homes for Burscough, and 13ha of employment land. The majority of this development will be accommodated in the Yew Tree Farm Strategic Development Site, with the remainder met through existing planning permissions.

⁴ West Lancashire Local Plan (2012 -2027) Development Plan Document, adopted October 2013

2.2 Vision for the Burscough Parish Neighbourhood Plan

The vision / mission statement for the Burscough Parish Neighbourhood Plan, which was developed during earlier stages of plan development, is as follows:

“ A vibrant, healthy, caring, safe, accessible and prosperous place where new development and its residents and occupiers are fully integrated into the fabric of the town and its community. There will be a diverse range of services and facilities to meet the everyday needs of the community along with an expansion of high quality employment premises and a broadening of the Area’s tourism assets providing jobs for the local economy. This growth will be managed through the appropriate improvements to infrastructure, services and utilities and within the context of the Area’s rural setting where the landscape, heritage and nature conservation assets will be retained, enhanced and celebrated. By aspiring to fulfil the above the Neighbourhood Plan will play an important role in ensuring that Burscough provides an outstanding quality of life for its current and future residents, visitors and workers. ”

**Vision / Mission Statement for the Burscough
Parish Neighbourhood Plan**

To support the Neighbourhood Plan’s mission statement, the BPNP sets out a number of Neighbourhood Plan policies. The latest iteration of these policies has been appraised in **Chapter 5** of this Environmental Report.

3. The Scope of the SEA

3.1 SEA Scoping Report

The SEA Regulations require that: “When deciding on the scope and level of detail of the information that must be included in the report, the responsible authority shall consult the consultation bodies”. In England, the consultation bodies are Natural England, the Environment Agency and Historic England.⁵ These authorities were consulted on the scope of the BPNP SEA in March 2017.

The purpose of scoping was to outline the ‘scope’ of the SEA through setting out:

- A context review of the key environmental and sustainability objectives of national, regional and local plans and strategies relevant to the Neighbourhood Plan;
- Baseline data against which the Neighbourhood Plan can be assessed;
- The key sustainability / environmental issues for the Neighbourhood Plan; and
- An ‘SEA Framework’ of objectives against which the Neighbourhood Plan can be assessed.

Baseline information (including the context review and baseline data) is presented in **Appendix B**.

Only one of the statutory consultees (Natural England) provided a response to the Scoping Report within the five week consultation period. The comments made and how they have been considered and addressed, are presented in **Table 3.1** below.

Table 3.1: Consultation responses received on the SEA Scoping Report

Consultation response	How the response was considered and addressed
<p>Natural England</p> <p>Natural England welcome the scoping report for the Burscough Neighbourhood Plan and considers that The methodology and baseline information used to inform The report appears to meet the requirements of the SEA Directive (2001/42/EC) and associated guidance.</p>	<p>Comments welcomed. No response required.</p>

⁵ In-line with Article 6(3) of the SEA Directive, these consultation bodies were selected because ‘by reason of their specific environmental responsibilities, [they] are likely to be concerned by the environmental effects of implementing plans and programme.’

3.2 Key sustainability / environmental issues

Drawing on the review of the policy context and baseline information, the SEA Scoping Report was able to identify a range of sustainability / environmental issues that should be a particular focus of the SEA.

The selected environmental themes incorporate the 'SEA topics' suggested by Annex I (f) of the SEA Directive⁶. These were refined to reflect a broad understanding of the anticipated scope of plan effects (drawing from the screening opinion and local knowledge).

The scoping process allowed for some sustainability topics to be 'scoped out'; as it was considered the Plan is unlikely to have significant effects on certain factors.

3.2.1 Air quality

- There are no Air Quality Management Areas or Air Quality Action Plans within the Neighbourhood Plan area;
- The nearest AQMA is located in Moor Street, Ormskirk;
- There is likely to be continued reliance on the car to access services, jobs and facilities within and beyond the Neighbourhood Plan Area however the 2016 Air Quality Annual Status Report anticipates that the contribution of newer vehicles and cleaner technology will lead to general improvement in pollution levels.

Scoped OUT

3.2.2 Biodiversity

- Martin Mere Special Protection Area (SPA) /Ramsar Site is an internationally designated nature conservation site within the BPNP area.
- Martin Mere, Burscough SSSI is a nationally designated site located within the BPNP area, with the SSSI boundary overlapping the SPA / Ramsar boundaries
- The entire BPNP area is within an Impact Risk Zone associated with the Martin Mere, Burscough SSSI.
- The SPA /Ramsar and SSSI host the majority of the Biodiversity Action Plan priority habitats in the BPNP area.
- There is a corridor of Deciduous Woodland Priority Habitat located in the south east of the BPNP area, along with a 1.7ha patch of Traditional Orchard BAP Priority Habitat.

Scoped IN

3.2.3 Climatic factors

- Fluvial Flooding and surface water drainage flooding are an issue for the BPNP area.
- Based on the most recent level 2 SFRA, the Environment Agency declared that no Critical Drainage Areas (CDA) exist in the BPNP area due to the absence of surface water issues impacting upon the Leeds and Liverpool Canal.

⁶ The SEA Directive is 'of a procedural nature' (para 9 of the Directive preamble) and does not set out to prescribe particular issues that should and should not be a focus, beyond requiring a focus on '*the environment, including on issues such as biodiversity, population, human health, fauna, flora, soil, water, air, climatic factors, material assets, cultural heritage including architectural and archaeological heritage, landscape and the interrelationship between the above factors*' [our emphasis]

- New development has the potential to lead to impacts on surface water runoff and overloading of drainage infrastructure without appropriate increases in capacity.
- West Lancashire has recorded consistently higher greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions per capita than the North West and England since 2005. Also, the average reduction in emissions per capita for West Lancashire between 2005 and 2012 is lower in comparison to the regional and national counterparts.

Scoped IN

3.2.4 Landscape and historic environment

- The BPNP area is located within the 'Lancashire and Amounderness Plain' National Character Area, noted for the complex network of drainage channels, pasture and arable fields, mosses and meres, and farmland habitats, all of which contribute to the character of the area.
- The BPNP area has a rich historic environment, including thirty one listed buildings nationally designated for their cultural heritage resource.
- Junction Lane Conservation Area and Top Locks Conservation Area are located within the BPNP area, designated for their special architectural and historical interest.
- Briars Brook Conservation Area is located directly adjacent to the eastern boundary of the BPNP area.

Scoped IN

3.2.5 Land, soil and water resources

- A detailed agricultural land classification assessment has been undertaken in the BPNP area, with sections of land classified as Grade 2 and Grade 3a Agricultural Land present, recognised as being the best and most versatile for agricultural purposes.
- There are three recorded pollution incidents related to industrial sites within the BPNP area, along with five significant historical pollution incidents.
- The southern section of the BPNP area is located within Groundwater Source Protection Zone 3, with the entirety of the BPNP area designated as a Surface Water Nitrate Vulnerable Zone.
- The Leeds and Liverpool Canal is the main watercourse flowing through the BPNP area, with the Canal and River Trust's Water Resources Strategy (2015-2020) outlining a number of strategic actions to ensure water security and assess the pressures on this living watercourse.

Scoped IN

3.2.6 Population and community

- Recent population increases within the BPNP area is higher than the trend for West Lancashire.
- There is an ageing population within the BPNP area, with a higher proportion of residents within the 60+ age group than the average for the North West and England. Nevertheless, the percentage aligns to the proportion in West Lancashire, suggesting that this is a district-wide trend.
- The BPNP area has some of the lowest crime rates in England, however the area is fairly deprived in relation to the health deprivation and disability, and geographical barriers domains.
- All of the Lower Super Output Areas located within the BPNP area are outside the top 40% most deprived for the overall Index of Multiple Deprivation domain.

Scoped IN

3.2.7 Health and Wellbeing

- The majority of residents within the BPNP area consider themselves to have 'very good health' or 'good health'. However, whilst favourable if comparing with the averages for West Lancashire and the North West, the percentages are lower than those for England.
- 6.3% of residents within the BPNP area report either 'bad health' or 'very bad health', which is lower than the regional trend.
- An ageing population has the potential to increase pressures on healthcare services in the BPNP area.

Scoped IN

3.2.8 Transportation

- There are three mainline railway stations within the Neighbourhood Plan area, with links to regional destinations including Wigan, Southport, Preston and Manchester.
- The 2A is the only main bus service through the Neighbourhood Plan area, serving the village of Burscough via the A59. The nearest bus station is located in the town of Ormskirk to the south, with services to destinations further afield.
- There are two 'A' roads passing through the Neighbourhood Plan area, connecting Burscough to Preston to the north, Ormskirk to the south, and the M6 to the east.
- There are significant congestion issues along the A59, with future development potentially causing increases in traffic along this key route into the Neighbourhood Plan area, with implications for the wider highways network.
- Residents within the Neighbourhood Plan area have access to a variety of footpaths and cycle trails, some of which connect to national routes.

Scoped IN

3.3 SEA Framework

The SEA framework has been established through the identification of key issues and environmental objectives as part of the scoping exercise. This draws upon the baseline position and policy context that has been prepared for a range of SEA topics.

The framework consists of a set of headline objectives and ancillary questions, which has been used to appraise the environmental effects of the draft Plan.

Table 3.2 below outlines the full SEA Framework, which focuses on those issues that have been identified as the most important to consider in the preparation of the Plan; but acknowledging the limited influence that the Plan can/will have in some areas.

These issues were then translated into an 'SEA Framework'. This SEA Framework provides a methodological framework for the appraisal of likely significant effects on the baseline.

Table 3.2: SEA Framework for the Burscough Parish Neighbourhood Plan

SEA Objective	Supporting questions (Will the option/proposal help to..)
<p>1. Protect and enhance all biodiversity and geological features.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support continued improvements to the status of the European designated sites of significance within the BPNP area, including the Martin Mere Ramsar Site and Martin Mere SPA? • Support the status of the Martin Mere, Burscough SSSI? • Protect and enhance semi-natural habitats? • Protect and enhance priority habitats and species listed in the European Habitats Directive (92/43/EEC) and European Birds Directive (79/409/EEC)? • Achieve a net gain in biodiversity? • Support enhancements to ecological networks, including through enhancements to multifunctional green infrastructure networks? • Support access to, interpretation and understanding of biodiversity?
<p>2. Reduce the level of contribution to climate change made by activities within the BPNP area</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduce the number of journeys made? • Reduce the need to travel? • Promote the use of sustainable modes of transport, including walking, cycling and public transport? • Increase the number of new developments meeting or exceeding sustainable design criteria? • Generate energy from low or zero carbon sources? • Reduce energy consumption from non-renewable resources?

SEA Objective	Supporting questions (Will the option/proposal help to...)
<p>3. Support the resilience of the BPNP area to the potential effects of climate change, including flooding</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure that no inappropriate development takes place in areas at higher risk of flooding, taking into account the likely future effects of climate change? • Improve and extend green infrastructure networks in the plan area to support adaptation to the potential effects of climate change? • Sustainably manage water run-off, reducing surface water runoff (either within the plan area or downstream)? • Ensure the potential risks associated with climate change are considered through new development in the BPNP area? • Increase the resilience of biodiversity in the plan area to the effects of climate change, including enhancements to ecological networks?
<p>4. Protect, maintain and enhance the cultural heritage resource within the BPNP area, including the historic environment and archaeological assets.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conserve and enhance the Junction Lane and Top Locks Conservation Areas? • Protect the cultural heritage of the historical features directly adjacent to the eastern boundary of the BPNP area? • Conserve and enhance buildings and structures of architectural or historic interest? • Support the integrity of the historic setting of key buildings of cultural heritage interest? • Conserve and enhance local diversity and character? • Reduce street clutter from road signage? • Support access to, interpretation and understanding of the historic environment?
<p>5. Protect and enhance the character and quality of landscapes and townscapes</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conserve and enhance landscape and townscape features? • Support the integrity of the Junction Lane and Top Locks conservation areas? • Conserve or enhance the landscape and townscape settings of the historical features directly adjacent to the eastern boundary of the BPNP area?
<p>6. Ensure the efficient and effective use of land.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote the use of previously developed land? • Avoid the development of the best and most versatile agricultural land, which in the parish may comprise Grade 2 and 3a agricultural land?
<p>7. Promote sustainable waste management solutions that encourage the reduction re-use and recycling of waste.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduce the amount of waste produced? • Support the minimisation, reuse and recycling of waste? • Maximise opportunities for local management of waste in order to minimise export of waste to areas outside? • Encourage recycling of materials and minimise consumption of resources during construction?

SEA Objective	Supporting questions (Will the option/proposal help to..)
<p>8. Use and manage water resources in a sustainable manner</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support improvements to water quality? • Minimise water consumption? • Protect groundwater resources?
<p>9. Cater for existing and future residents' needs as well as the needs of different groups in the community, and improve access to local, high quality community services and facilities.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote the development of a range of high quality, accessible community facilities? • Encourage and promote social cohesion and encourage active involvement of local people in community activities? • Minimise fuel poverty? • Maintain or enhance the quality of life of existing local residents?
<p>10. Reduce deprivation and promote a more inclusive and self-contained community.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve the availability and accessibility of key local facilities, including specialist services for disabled and older people? • Support the provision of land for allotments and cemeteries?
<p>11. Provide everyone with the opportunity to live in good quality, affordable housing, and to ensure an appropriate mix of dwelling sizes, types and tenures.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support the provision of a range of house types and sizes? • Support enhancements to the current housing stock? • Meet the needs of all sectors of the community? • Provide quality and flexible homes that meet people's needs? • Promote the use of sustainable building techniques, including use of sustainable building materials in construction? • Provide housing in sustainable locations that allow easy access to a range of local services and facilities?

SEA Objective	Supporting questions (Will the option/proposal help to...)
<p>12. Improve the health and wellbeing of residents within the BPNP area.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote accessibility to a range of leisure, health and community facilities, for all age groups? • Align to the goals outlined in the Health and Wellbeing Strategy and address some of the key areas identified within the annual Joint Strategic Needs Assessment commentaries? • Provide and enhance the provision of community access to green infrastructure, in accordance with Accessible Natural Greenspace Standards? • Reduce noise pollution? • Promote the use of healthier modes of travel? • Improve access to the countryside for recreational use?
<p>13. Promote sustainable transport use and reduce the need to travel.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduce the need to travel through sustainable patterns of land use and development? • Encourage modal shift to more sustainable forms of travel? • Enable sustainable transport infrastructure enhancements? • Facilitate working from home and remote working? • Improve road safety? • Reduce the impact on residents from the road network?

4. What has plan making / SEA involved to this point?

4.1 Introduction

In accordance with the SEA Regulations the Environmental Report must include:

- An outline of the reasons for selecting the alternatives dealt with; and
- The likely significant effects on the environment associated with alternatives / an outline of the reasons for selecting the preferred approach in light of alternatives appraised.

The 'narrative' of plan-making / SEA up to this point is told within this part of the Environmental Report. Specifically, this section explains how preparation of the current version of the BPNP has been informed by informal and formal community consultations and the SEA Scoping Report.

4.2 Overview of plan making / SEA work undertaken

Plan making for the BPNP has been underway since 2014. Burscough Parish Council (BPC) set up a Neighbourhood Steering Group (NSG) to oversee the Neighbourhood Plan process and produce the BPNP on behalf of the community and Parish Council. The NSG consisted of Parish, Borough and County Councillors for the area. Nine theme groups were created which included members of the local community to look at specific issues within the BPNP area.

BPC carried out a number of informal and formal community consultation events throughout the preparation of the BPNP, these were organised around a theme, such as Business, Community, Natural and Built environment, and Burscough wide survey.

The SEA scoping report was published and consulted upon in March 2017. The scoping stage involved the collection of information relating to:

- the state of the environment in the plan area; *and*
- relevant objectives and targets set out within plans, policies and programmes.

This information allowed for a range of key issues to be identified, and to establish what topics should be the focus of the SEA. These topics then informed the development of a series of SEA objectives within a SEA Framework, which is the basis for appraising the Plan.

The following sections discuss the evolution of the BPNP in association with the SEA process.

4.3 Assessment of reasonable alternatives for the Neighbourhood Plan

The overall level, distribution and location of housing and employment growth to be delivered within the Borough and within the BPNP area up to 2028 has already been considered and set out within the adopted West Lancashire Borough Council (WLBC) Local Plan (Policies SP1 and SP3). The WLBC Local Plan sets an overall minimum housing target of 850 homes for Burscough, and 13ha of employment land. The majority of this development will be accommodated in the Yew Tree Farm Strategic Development Site.

The strategic allocation in the Local Plan at Yew Tree Farm proposes at least 500 new homes and safeguards land for up to 500 dwellings post 2027. In addition, the site will deliver 10ha of employment land and safeguarded land for 10ha more post 2027. WLBC also adopted a masterplan Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) for the site in January 2015.

This allocation, which is recommended for approval subject to a S106 agreement, combined with a number of other residential permissions since April 2012, results in a total number of dwellings,

granted planning permission in the BPNP area to at least 853, which is over and above the WLLP allocation for the Neighbourhood Plan area.

In terms of employment the WLLP allocates 13ha of employment land in the BPNP area. Of this, 10ha is allocated within the Yew Tree Farm strategic development site, with the remaining 3ha provision sought through existing allocations and remodelling of the industrial estates.

Given the context in which the BPNP is being prepared, it would not be appropriate for the BPNP or the SEA to reconsider alternatives for the level or location of proposed growth in Burscough as this has been established at a higher level of plan-making through the WLLP.

It is clear from the discussion above that the BPNP is limited in terms of potential alternatives that can be considered, which must be in general conformity with and support the strategic development needs set out in the WLLP. Significant effects against SEA objectives are most likely to arise through the consideration of alternatives for the level and location of growth to be delivered in the plan area, which is often one of the key issues for the plan to address.

Alternatives for the level and location of growth in Burscough up to 2028 have already been developed and subject to assessment at a higher level of plan-making through the WLLP. It is not considered necessary to develop and assess alternatives for every thematic issue considered in the BPNP as they are unlikely to result in significant effects against the SEA objectives.

4.4 Appraising the BPNP policies

Each policy has been appraised against the SA Framework, considering potential effects against each SEA Objective (as guided by the sub-questions). The significance of effects has been determined to take account of those factors outlined in the SEA Directive; including magnitude / scale, duration, frequency and reversibility (i.e. the 'extent' of the effects), the sensitivity of receptors, and the likelihood of effects occurring. These factors ultimately help to determine the significance of the effects. The likely effects are categorised as follows:

Table 4.1: Categories of Likely effects

✓	Likely to have a positive effect .
-	Likely to have a negligible / neutral effect .
✓ / ✗	Likely to have a mixture of positive and negative effects
✗	Likely to have a negative effect

A summary of the findings against each SEA objective is presented in chapter 5; Appendix C provides the assessment results against each individual policy.

4.5 Current approach in the Neighbourhood Plan and the development of Neighbourhood Plan policies

The BPNP does not allocate new housing or employment provision. Instead it seeks to shape the location of development in the Neighbourhood Plan area by introducing a range of Neighbourhood Plan policies which have been designed to shape development in the Neighbourhood Plan area and protect features of special local importance.

To support the implementation of the vision for the Neighbourhood Plan, the current version of the BPNP puts forward 24 policies to guide development in the BPNP area. The policies, which were developed following extensive community consultation and evidence gathering, are as follows:

Table 4.1: Burscough Parish Neighbourhood Plan draft Policies

Infrastructure

BPI1	Infrastructure and Development
BPI2	Infrastructure Provision
BPI3	High Quality Communications Infrastructure
BPI4	Sustainable Drainage System
BPI5	Foul Water Sewerage System

Housing

BPH1	New Residential Development
BPH2	Housing Mix

Employment

BPE1	Burscough Industrial Estate
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Retail

BPR1	Burscough Centre
BPR2	Lord Street Opportunity Area

Visitor Economy

BPVE1	Visitor Economy
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Transport

BPT1	Transport and Development
BPT2	Environmental Improvement Corridors
BPT3	Car Parking
BPT4	Sustainable Transport Routes

Environment

BPEV1	Local Green Space
BPEV2	Local Heritage Assets
BPEV3	Neighbourhood Heritage Areas

Design

BPD1	Development and Design Principles
BPD2	Development and Accessibility Principles
BPD3	Detailed Design Elements
BPD4	Microgeneration

Community

BPC1	Community Infrastructure
BPC2	Community Hub Opportunity Area

5. What are the appraisal findings at this current stage?

5.1 Introduction

The aim of this chapter is to present appraisal findings and recommendations in relation to the Regulation 14 version of the BPNP.

5.2 Approach to the appraisal

The appraisal is structured under each of the SEA Objectives that are set out in the SEA Framework.

For each theme 'significant effects' of the current version of the plan on the baseline are predicted and evaluated. Account is taken of the criteria presented within Schedule 2 of the Regulations.⁷ So, for example, account is taken of the probability, duration, frequency and reversibility of effects as far as possible. These effect 'characteristics' are described within the assessment as appropriate.

Every effort is made to identify / evaluate effects accurately; however, this is inherently challenging given the high level nature of the plan. The ability to predict effects accurately is also limited by an understanding of the baseline and the nature of future planning applications. Because of the uncertainties involved, there is a need to exercise caution when identifying and evaluating significant effects and ensure all assumptions are explained. In many instances it is not possible to predict significant effects, but it is possible to comment on merits (or otherwise) in more general terms.

5.3 SEA Objective 1: Protect and enhance all biodiversity and geological features

Part of the BPNP area includes the Martin Mere Special Protection Area (SPA) and Ramsar site, which is an internationally designated nature conservation area, whilst Martin Mere, Burscough SSSI is a nationally designated site, with the SSSI boundary overlapping the SPA and Ramsar boundaries.

In terms of the positive effects, policy BPI4 (Sustainable Drainage System) aims to increase the number of SuDS which not only perform a drainage function but can also be part of a Green Infrastructure Network and associated wildlife habitat networks. BPD1 (Development and Design Principles) requires development to take into account and reinforce the biodiversity assets of the site, and the water environment through the use of SUDs which help to support biodiversity. BPD4 (Microgeneration) is considered to support this objective as it supports proposals for microgeneration schemes provided they do not have an unacceptable adverse impact on nature conservation interests.

Potential negative effects were recorded against two of the BPNP policies. Policy BPEV1 (Green Space) is silent on any biodiversity or geological value a green space may have. Therefore it should be strengthened to reflect this. The other potential negative effect is recorded against BPC2 and the Community Hub Opportunity Area, as the policy is silent on potential impacts on biodiversity and geological features, despite referring to other matters such as scale, public realm, and amenity.

⁷ *Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004*

Mitigation – The policy on Green Space (BPEV1) could be amended to refer to any biodiversity or geological value the Green Space may have, whilst the Community Hub Opportunity Area policy (BPC2), could be amended to include a criteria relating to biodiversity and geological impacts.

5.4 SEA Objective 2: Reduce the level of contribution to climate change made by activities within the BPNP area

The BPNP policies recorded one notable positive effect. The Microgeneration policy BPD4 was considered to have a positive effect as this could increase the number of small scale renewable and low carbon energy generating schemes and therefore can help to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

There were a number of other minor positive and negative effects, although none were considered significant enough to have an effect on climate change mitigation. Issues relating to the sustainability of design are covered in the Local Plan policies and national standards.

Mitigation – None identified.

5.5 SEA Objective 3: Support the resilience of the Neighbourhood Plan area to the potential effects of climate change including flooding.

The BPNP policies recorded three positive effects on the Objective. Additional infrastructure (BPI1), for example increased drainage capacity, can help adapt to climate change, and linked to this, increased use of SUDs (BPI4) can play a role. Policy BPI5 (Foul Water Sewerage System) explicitly refers to developments not increasing the risk of flooding through increased pressure on the existing sewerage network; therefore the policy is expected to have a significant positive effect.

Although policy BPE1 does not refer to Flood Risk, other policy through the provisions of the NPPF, and the Local Plan will ensure that any development takes into account and addresses flood risk.

There were a number of minor positive and negative effects, although the extent of these was not considered significant. For example policy BPEV1 and Green Spaces, as the policy does not refer to the ability of such spaces to perform a mitigation role; increased tree cover, and links between areas of open green space could help with resilience to heat by providing shade.

Mitigation – None identified

5.6 SEA Objective 4: Protect, Maintain and enhance the cultural heritage resource within the Neighbourhood Plan area, including the historic environment and archaeological assets.

A number of BPNP policies provide locally specific context and protection to the character of the built and natural environment. Notably, policy BPEV2 (Local Heritage Assets) is predicted to have a significant positive effect on the historic environment as it seeks to protect non designated heritage assets and their setting.

Further protection should be achieved for built heritage through policy BPEV3 which establishes Neighbourhood Heritage Areas, and requires new development or changes of use to demonstrate how they recognise the special local architectural and historic interest and make a positive contribution to its local character and distinctiveness.

The Development and Design Principles (BPD1) policy requires proposals to demonstrate that the development responds to and reflects the local character integrating positive attributes into their design.

In addition to these built environment policies, other policies were considered to have positive effects. Both retail policies (BPR1 & BPR2) should help to protect and enhance the environment within the centre of Burscough, whilst the Microgeneration (BPD4) and the Community Hub Opportunity Area (BPC2) policies also include criteria to support the historic environment.

Overall, the Plan is predicted to have a **significant positive effect** on the cultural heritage resource, as it strengthens the existing policy context, particularly with regards to locally important buildings and features. This effect is likely to be throughout the lifetime of the BPNP.

Mitigation – Policy BPT1 is silent on the impacts transport infrastructure can have on the built and natural environment

5.7 SEA Objective 5: Protect and enhance the character and quality of landscapes and townscapes.

As with objective 4, the BPNP has resulted in a number of significant positive effects. Non designated heritage assets (BPEV2) make an important contribution to the local and wider landscapes and townscapes, whilst protecting the Neighbourhood Heritage areas (BPEV3) will reinforce the character and quality of the townscape and wider landscape and therefore have a significant positive effect on this objective. Policy BPD1 (Development and Design) requires proposals to demonstrate that the development responds to and reflects the local character integrating positive attributes into their design, provide visually attractive architecture, landscaping and public realm, as well as reinforcing the existing landscape character of the site.

Both retail policies (BPR1 & BPR2) should help to protect and enhance the environment within the centre of Burscough, whilst the Microgeneration (BPD4) and the Community Hub Opportunity Area (BPC2) policies also include criteria to support the character and quality of the townscape and wider landscape.

Overall, the Plan is predicted to have a **significant positive effect** on the landscape and townscape as it strengthens the existing policy context, particularly with regards to locally important buildings and features. This effect is likely to be throughout the lifetime of the BPNP.

Mitigation – Policy BPT1 is silent on the impacts transport infrastructure can have on the built and natural environment.

5.8 SEA Objective 6: Ensure the efficient and effective use of land

The BPNP policies recorded two overall positive effects on this objective. Both these were policies relating to specific sites. In terms of the Lord Street Opportunity Area (BPR2) the policy aims to deliver development that secures a more efficient use of land than is the case at present, whilst the Community Hub Opportunity Area (BPC2) supports this objective as the site is in a sustainable location and by reconfiguring the existing uses to allow space for addition facilities this would result in a more efficient use of land. Both these effects were likely to be mid to long term.

There were no other significant effects, and much will be dependent on the specific nature of the proposed development.

Mitigation – None identified.

5.9 SEA Objective 7: Promote sustainable waste management solutions that encourage the reduction re-use and recycling of waste

The BPNP is not considered to have a significant effect on this objective as none of the policies recorded significant positive or negative effects. Although the Development and Design Principles policy (BPD1) does not refer to designing in appropriate bin storage areas for residential and commercial developments, this is addressed through policy BPD3 (Detailed Design Elements) which refers to bin stores and recycling facilities being considered early on in the design process.

Mitigation – None identified

5.10 SEA Objective 8: Use and Manage water resources in a sustainable manner

It is considered that a number of BPNP policies would have a positive effect on the objective. A significant reason behind a number of the infrastructure policies is to ensure development can deliver benefits to the drainage and sewerage network and reduce incidences of flooding; therefore a significant positive effect was recorded against Infrastructure Provision (BPI2). By increasing the number of SUDs (BPI4) the policy would have a positive impact on this objective across the lifetime of the BPNP. The other infrastructure policy considered to have a significant positive effect is BPI5 (Foul Water Sewerage System), as the policy requires new development to, where appropriate ensure they do not harm the existing capacity of the foul water sewerage system.

Other positive effects were recorded against the Development and Design Principles policy (BPD1) as it refers to providing sustainable drainage to manage surface water run-off and incorporate water efficiency measures, whilst the Community Hub Opportunity Area policy (BPC2) refers to sustainable design and therefore development should support the objective.

Mitigation – None identified

5.11 SEA Objective 9: Cater for existing and future residents' needs as well as the needs of different groups in the community, and improve access to local, high-quality community services and facilities.

The BPNP recorded a number of positive effects on the objective. In terms of Housing Mix (BPH2), the policy is attempting to support and maintain a balanced community through delivering housing that meets local needs. The centre of Burscough is a focus for community services and facilities, and in ensuring appropriate development is delivered in this location the Burscough Centre policy (BPR1) supports this objective. In terms of the Lord Street Opportunity Area (BPR2) the policy is considered to have a positive effect on the objective, however there is some uncertainty concerning where any existing community facilities would be relocated to, although the policy refers to alternative sites being within or adjacent to the centre.

Through the policy on Development and Accessibility Principles (BPD2) there is a positive effect as it requires proposals where appropriate to provide Lifetime Homes, and include measures for all pedestrians including those with mobility impairments e.g. dropped kerbs, tactile paving.

In terms of the community infrastructure policies, BPC1 includes criteria that attempts, where applicable and possible, to secure appropriate and proportionate new facilities, either on or off site as a result of new residential developments. In addition it is protecting existing community facilities. The remaining effect of note was recorded against the Community Hub Opportunity Area policy (BPC2), which seeks to ensure that development on the site improves and enhances leisure, recreation and community facilities.

Mitigation – None identified

5.12 SEA Objective 10: Reduce Deprivation and promote a more inclusive and self-contained community

A small number of policies in the BPNP recorded positive effects. With regards to housing, the housing mix policy (BPH2) is considered to have a positive impact on this objective as it is attempting to support and maintain a balanced community through delivering housing that meets local needs. Increased economic development (BPE1) would lead to more local employment opportunities, whilst Development and Design Principles (BPD2) requires proposals to demonstrate they will provide an inclusive and accessible environment. The remaining effect of note was recorded against the Community Infrastructure policy (BPC1), as the policy aims to ensure additional community facilities are secured alongside the protection of existing facilities.

Mitigation – None identified.

5.13 SEA Objective 11: Provide everyone with the opportunity to live in good quality, affordable housing, and ensure an appropriate mix of dwelling sizes, types and tenures.

Policy BPH1 (New Residential Development) requires new development to include a mix of housing that meets identified needs, therefore it is considered to have a positive effect on this objective. Policy BPH2 (Housing Mix) is also considered to have a positive impact on this objective as it is attempting to support and maintain a balanced community through delivering housing that meets local needs.

The effects are likely to be across the lifetime of the BPNP, although increasing in the mid to long term.

Mitigation – None identified

5.14 SEA Objective 12: Improve the Health and Wellbeing of residents within the Neighbourhood Plan Area.

Only one policy recorded a positive effect: the Community Hub Opportunity Area (BPC2) as it aims to secure improved and enhanced leisure, recreation and community facilities. There were a small number of policies that recorded minor effects.

Mitigation – None identified

5.15 SEA Objective 13: Promote sustainable transport use and reduce the need to travel.

Five of the BPNP policies have an effect on the objective. By including a policy that supports sustainable transport routes (BPT4) there is a positive effect recorded against the objective. The Design and Accessibility Principles policy (BPD2) refers to how the design and layout of new roads should prioritise the safe and efficient movement of pedestrians and cyclists.

Other policies that could reduce the need to travel include policy BPI3 (High Quality Communications Infrastructure); improving the speed and availability of broadband could have a positive effect as this could reduce the need to travel for example through increased opportunities to shop online and home working. By developing a mixed use site adjacent to the town centre the Lord Street Opportunity Area (BPR2) is supporting this objective by potentially reducing the need to travel. The remaining positive effect was recorded by the Community Hub Opportunity Area policy (BPC2) as this is promoting a facility in a sustainable location, predominantly within the existing settlement boundary and therefore is considered to support this objective.

The effects of the plan on this objective are likely to be mid to long term, as developments are delivered.

Mitigation – None identified.

6. Conclusions at this current stage

6.1 Potential significant effects

The Plan is predicted to have a **significant positive effect** on objective 4 'Protect, maintain and enhance cultural heritage resource within the Neighbourhood Plan area, including the historic environment and archaeological assets' as it strengthens the existing policy context, particularly with regards to locally important buildings and features. For the same reason, the Plan records a **significant positive effect** on objective 5 'Protect and enhance the character and quality of landscapes and townscapes'.

A number of other effects were recorded against various objectives, although these were not deemed to be significant. A **positive effect** was recorded against objective 3 'Support the resilience of the Neighbourhood Plan area to the potential effects of climate change, including flooding' as a result of the plan promoting the application of SUDs and additional drainage infrastructure.

Concerning objective 6 'Ensuring the efficient and effective use of land' there was a **positive effect**, as a result of the policies dealing with a more efficient use of land at Lord Street (BPR2) and the Community Hub Opportunity Area (BPC2).

Positive effects are predicted in relation to objective 8 'Use and manage water resources in a sustainable manner' through the application of policies relating to SUDs, Foul Water Sewerage Systems, and water efficiency measures.

The Plan recorded **positive effects** against objective 9 'Cater for existing and future residents needs as well as the needs of different groups in the community, and improved access to local high quality community services and facilities' through delivering a mix of housing, supporting Burscough centre, the Lord Street Opportunity Area, securing additional community facilities, and the Community Hub Opportunity Area.

With regards to objective 10 'Reduce deprivation and promote a more inclusive and self-contained community' there is a **positive effect** as the BPNP aims to deliver housing according to needs, increase employment opportunities (at Yew Tree Farm), and an inclusive and accessible environment.

Further **positive effects** were recorded against objective 11 'Provide everyone with the opportunity to live in good quality, affordable housing, and ensure an appropriate mix of dwelling sizes, types and tenures' as the plan includes policies relating to delivery of a mix of housing according to needs,

A **positive effect** was recorded against objective 12 'Improve the health and wellbeing of residents within the Neighbourhood Plan area' as apart from the Community Hub Opportunity Area policy (BPC2) only minor effects were recorded by the other policies, whilst the remaining **positive effect** was recorded against objective 13 'Promote sustainable transport use and reduce the need to travel' as a number of policies aim to reduce the need to travel whilst also ensuring the safe and accessible movement of cyclists and pedestrians.

The plan is predicted to have neutral effects with regards to objective 1 'Protecting and enhancing all biodiversity and geological features'; objective 2 'Reducing the level of contribution to climate change made by activities within the Neighbourhood Plan area'; and objective 7 'Promoting sustainable waste management solutions that encourage the reduction, re-use and recycling of waste'.

No overall negative effects on the SEA objectives have been predicted, which reflects the nature of the draft Plan with regard to environmental factors, although potential negative effects arising from individual policies are discussed in the following section.

6.2 Recommendations at this current stage

A small number of mitigation measures were identified in order to reduce any negative effects resulting from individual policies. With regards to objective 1, the policy on Green Space (BPEV1) could be amended to refer to any biodiversity or geological value the Green Space may have, whilst the Community Hub Opportunity Area policy (BPC2), could be amended to include a criteria relating to impacts on biodiversity and geological impacts.

In terms of objective 2, policy BPEV1 could be amended to include reference to the ability of green spaces to perform a mitigation role e.g. through increased tree cover which can act as a carbon sink.

Policy BPE1 could be strengthened with reference to reducing flood risk and run –off levels, with regards to objective 3. Policy BPEV1 could be amended further to reflect the role green spaces can play in climate change adaptation e.g. providing shade and temporary flood storage areas. In terms of objectives 4 and 5, policy BPT1 is silent on the impacts transport infrastructure can have on the built and natural environment.

No further enhancement measures have been identified through the SEA process.

6.3 Monitoring

There is a requirement to present measures that could be used to monitor the effects of the Plan identified through the SEA. It is particularly important to monitor effects that are predicted to be significant, whether this be positive or negative. Monitoring helps to track whether the effects turn-out as expected, and to identify any unexpected effects.

A small number of significant effects have been predicted in the SEA. Whilst these are all positive, it is still important to monitor whether the effects that occur in reality are as positive as expected. Other positive effects are also included as in combination these could become significant in the mid to long term of the plan. Potentially suitable indicators are identified below.

Table 6.1: Monitoring of the BPNP

Significant effects	Monitoring measures
Objective 4 'Protect, maintain and enhance the cultural heritage resource within the Neighbourhood Plan area, including the historic environment and archaeological assets' and Objective 5 'Protect and enhance the character and quality of landscapes and townscapes'.	Number of heritage assets at risk Number of buildings and structures registered on the local list of heritage assets.
Objective 8 'Use and manage water resources in a sustainable manner'.	Number of SuDS schemes adopted. Surface water flooding incidents.
Objective 9 'Cater for existing and future residents needs as well as the needs of different groups in the community, and improve access to local, high quality community services and facilities'.	Retail vacancy rates in Burscough centre. Completed new homes by type and tenure (including Lifetime Homes). Mix of uses delivered in the Lord Street development. Number of additional community facilities delivered.
Objective 11 'Provide everyone with the opportunity to live in good quality, affordable housing, and ensure an appropriate mix of dwelling sizes, types and tenures.	Completed new homes by type and tenure. Median average house price House price to income ratio
Objective 13 and promoting sustainable transport and reducing the need to travel.	New development linked to existing and new Cycle routes Broadband Speed Total amount of new floorspace for 'town centre uses' located outside of Burscough village centre.

At this stage, the above monitoring proposals are preliminary and will be updated as the plan evolves to adoption.

7. What are the next steps?

Subsequent to the current consultation on the Regulation 14 version of the BPNP, the draft plan will be updated to reflect comments received. This Environmental Report will be updated to reflect the changes made to the plan.

The BPNP will then be submitted to the Local Planning Authority, West Lancashire Borough Council, for its consideration alongside the updated Environmental Report. West Lancashire Borough Council will consider whether the plan is suitable to go forward to Independent Examination in terms of the BPNP meeting legal requirements and its compatibility with the Local Plan.

Subject to West Lancashire Borough Council's agreement, the BPNP will then be subject to independent examination. The Examiner will consider whether the plan is appropriate having regard to national policy and whether it is in general conformity with the WLLP.

The Examiner will be able to recommend that the BPNP is put forward for a referendum, or that it should be modified or that the proposal should be refused. West Lancashire Borough Council will then decide what should be done in light of the Examiner's report. Where the report recommends modifications to the plan, West Lancashire Borough Council will invite the BPNP Steering Group to make modifications to the plan, which will be reflected in an updated Environmental Report. Where the Examiner's Report recommends that the proposal is to be refused, West Lancashire Borough Council will do so.

Where the examination is favourable, the BPNP will then be subject to a referendum, organised by West Lancashire Borough Council. If more than 50% of those who vote agree with the plan, then it will be passed to West Lancashire Borough Council with a request it is 'made'. Once 'made', the BPNP will become part of the Development Plan.

Appendix A – Burscough Neighbourhood Plan Area

Appendix B – Scoping Report

Appendix C Policy appraisal proformas

