

MORGAN AND MORECAMBE OFFSHORE WIND FARMS: TRANSMISSION ASSETS

Environmental Statement

Volume 3, Annex 10.1: Landscape and visual resources local planning policy context



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Prepared by:

RPS

Prepared for:

**Morgan Offshore Wind Limited
Morecambe Offshore Windfarm Ltd**

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Glossary

Term	Meaning
Environmental Impact Assessment	The process of identifying and assessing the significant effects likely to arise from a project. This requires consideration of the likely changes to the environment, where these arise as a consequence of a project, through comparison with the existing and projected future baseline conditions.
Local Authority	A body empowered by law to exercise various statutory functions for a particular area of the United Kingdom. This includes County Councils, District Councils and County Borough Councils.
Morgan and Morecambe Offshore Wind Farms: Transmission Assets	The offshore and onshore infrastructure connecting the Morgan Offshore Wind Project and the Morecambe Offshore Windfarm to the national grid. This includes the offshore export cables, landfall site, onshore export cables, onshore substations, 400 kV grid connection cables and associated grid connection infrastructure such as circuit breaker compounds. Also referred to in this report as the Transmission Assets, for ease of reading.
Policy	A set of decisions by governments and other political actors to influence, change, or frame a problem or issue that has been recognized as in the political realm by policy makers and/or the wider public.
Study area	This is an area which is defined for each environmental topic which includes the Transmission Assets Order Limits as well as potential spatial and temporal considerations of the impacts on relevant receptors. The study area for each topic is intended to cover the area within which an impact can be reasonably expected.
Transmission Assets	See Morgan and Morecambe Offshore Wind Farms: Transmission Assets (above).
Transmission Assets Order Limits	The area within which all components of the Transmission Assets will be located, including areas required on a temporary basis during construction and/or decommissioning

Acronyms

Acronym	Meaning
ES	Environmental Statement
NPPF	National Planning Policy Framework

Units

Unit	Description
%	Percentage

1 Landscape and visual resources planning policy context

1.1 Introduction

1.1.1.1 This document forms Volume 3, Annex 10.1: Landscape and visual resources planning policy context of the Environmental Statement (ES) prepared for the Morgan and Morecambe Offshore Wind Farms: Transmission Assets (referred to hereafter as ‘the Transmission Assets’). The ES presents the findings of the Environmental Impact Assessment process for the Transmission Assets.

1.1.1.2 **Table 1.1** sets out details of the local planning policy used to inform the landscape and visual impact assessment and these policies are summarised in Table 10.6 of Volume 3, Chapter 10: Landscape and visual resources of the ES. Where policies include many themes, only relevant extracts have been included and these are specified in **Table 1.1**.

1.1.1.3 The onshore elements of the Transmission Assets are located within the local authority administrative areas of Fylde Council, Blackpool Council, South Ribble Borough Council and Preston City Council (and Lancashire County Council at the County level). The following local development plans have been considered in the landscape and visual impact assessment:

- Blackpool Local Plan Part 1: Core Strategy 2012-2027;
- Blackpool Local Plan Part 2: Site Allocations and Development Management Policies;
- Blackpool Local Plan 2001-2016 – Saved Policies;
- Fylde Local Plan to 2032 (Incorporating Partial Review);
- Central Lancashire Local Plan;
- South Ribble Local Plan 2015; and
- Preston Local Plan 2012-26.

1.1.1.4 **Figure 1.1** shows the jurisdictional boundaries of the local authorities within and adjacent to the Transmission Assets Order Limits. An assessment against planning policy is provided in the Planning Statement (document reference J28).

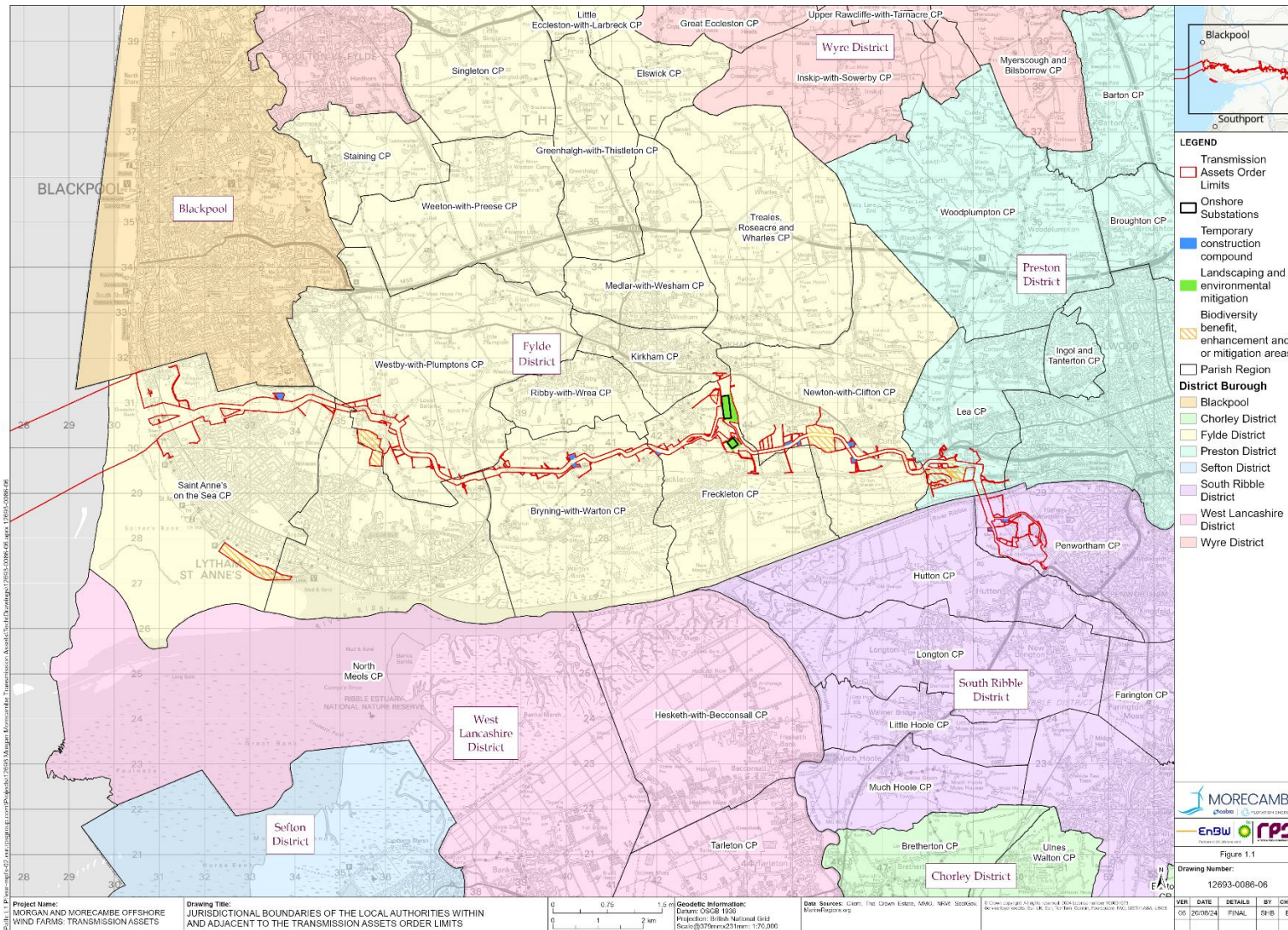


Figure 1.1: Jurisdictional boundaries of the local authorities within and adjacent to the Transmission Assets Order Limits

Table 1.1 Local planning policy covering the landscape and visual resources study area

Local Planning Policy	
Blackpool Local Plan Part 1: Core Strategy 2012-2027 (Adopted January 2016)	<p>CS8: Heritage</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Development proposals will be supported which respect and draw inspiration from Blackpool’s built, social and cultural heritage, complementing its rich history with new development to widen its appeal to residents and visitors. 2. Proposals will be supported that: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Retain, reuse or convert, whilst conserving and enhancing the significance of designated and non-designated heritage assets and their setting. b. Enhance the setting and views of heritage assets through appropriate design and layout of new development and design of public realm. c. Strengthen the existing townscape character created by historic buildings. 3. Developers must demonstrate how any development affecting heritage assets (including conservation areas) will conserve and enhance the asset, its significance and its setting. <hr/> <p>CS10: Sustainable Design and Renewable and Low Carbon Energy</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. The development of renewable, low carbon, or decentralised energy schemes, excluding wind turbines will be supported where proposals: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) Are located appropriately and do not cause an unacceptable impact on surrounding uses or the local environment, landscape character or visual appearance of the area, taking into account the cumulative impact of other energy generation schemes; and b) Mitigate any potential noise, odour, traffic or other impacts of the development so as not to cause an unacceptable impact on the environment or local amenity. 3. For development involving one or more wind turbine, planning permission will only be granted where: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) the development site is in an area identified as suitable for wind energy development in the Blackpool Local Plan Part 2: Site Allocations and Development Management Policies DPD and; b) following consultation, it can be demonstrated that the planning impacts identified by affected local communities have been fully addressed and therefore the proposal has their backing. <p>[Point 1 not relevant to Landscape and visual resources]</p>
Blackpool Local Plan Part 2: Site Allocations and Development Management Policies (Publication Version)	<p>Policy DM17: Design Principles</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. All development should be of a high quality, and should enhance and respond to any: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. positive character of the local area to create well designed, attractive and distinctive; and b. neighbourhoods in Blackpool. 2. Development should have regard to the following characteristics of the local area:

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January 2021) (Adopted
February 2023)

- a. the topography and landscape features;
 - b. heritage assets and features;
 - c. the pattern, size and arrangement of streets, buildings and building lines;
 - d. the scale, height, massing and roofscapes;
 - e. vertical and horizontal rhythms created by windows and other architectural features; and
 - f. materials, boundary treatments and landscaping.
3. New development should:
- a. have a consistent architectural style across the whole building;
 - b. provide a human scale at street level;
 - c. have sufficient texture, depth and detailing to provide visual interest;
 - d. providing active frontages on all elevations with a street presence;
 - e. not be dominated by car parking in front of the development;
 - f. be designed to prevent crime or the fear of crime; and
 - g. not be less than four storeys in scale on the Promenade or within the Town Centre unless the character of the site and its surroundings suggests that four storeys would be inappropriate.
- The materials used in developments should:
- h. be appropriate to the location and context in terms of their colour, texture, pattern and elements of detailing;
 - i. maintain a high quality visual appearance in the long term; and
 - j. wherever possible be re-used or recycled and be re-usable or recyclable.
4. Particular attention should be paid to the design of new buildings:
- a. in sensitive locations such as those affecting heritage assets; or
 - b. that would be highly visible due to the prominence of the location or the scale of the development proposed.
- Policy DM19: Strategic Views
1. Development should protect and enhance views of the following buildings and features of strategic importance:
 - a. Blackpool Tower – views from the seafront, from the piers and along main transport corridors leading into the Town Centre;
 - b. along the seafront and coastline;
 - c. into and within conservation areas;
 - d. views of listed and locally listed buildings;
 - e. views of buildings which provide a landmark and assist with wayfinding.
- Development that has a detrimental impact on these strategic views will not be permitted.
- Policy DM21: Landscaping
1. Development proposals are expected to contribute towards green and blue infrastructure and where appropriate, planning applications should include details of hard and soft landscaping. Development must:

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- a) ensure that the design and layout of the site retains and protects the distinguishing landscape features, trees and hedgerows and wherever possible enhances them through increased tree and shrub cover including soft edge and transitional areas of planting, prioritising the use of native species. Where the loss of trees (category A, B or C of BS 5837) is unavoidable, at least two replacement trees of a suitable species and level of maturity will be required for each tree felled, over and above other tree planting requirements. Where replacement trees would be inappropriate on site, a contribution towards the provision of trees off-site will be required;
 - b) where appropriate, include a landscaped buffer of appropriate depth and length which prioritises native species, unless there are site specific constraints which indicate this requirement cannot be achieved. In such cases, the use of green walls and green roofs will be encouraged;
 - c) use landscaping to screen and soften the appearance of hard surfaced areas, including surface level car parks and servicing areas;
 - d) provide appropriate, high quality boundary treatments which encourage and enables the passage of wildlife and consider the inclusion of hedges rather than impenetrable fencing and walls;
 - e) where appropriate, contribute towards tree planting in the town in accordance with the Greening Blackpool SPD (or any subsequent update); and
 - f) demonstrate, where appropriate, how the landscaping scheme connects to the wider green infrastructure and ecological networks in Blackpool and the neighbouring Authorities.
2. Financial contributions towards creating and enhancing green and blue infrastructure in Blackpool will be sought from all development where adequate onsite provision is not possible, in accordance with the Greening Blackpool SPD (or any subsequent update).
 3. Proposals involving the hard surfacing of more than 50% of a residential garden will not normally be permitted.
 4. Proposals for major development and public spaces which will attract large crowds should include well designed Hostile Vehicle Mitigation (HVM) measures which are integrated sensitively and seamlessly into the townscape.

Policy DM32: Wind Energy

1. The Whole Borough is designated as an area of search suitable for small scale wind turbine development comprising up to 20m in height above ground level to blade tip. Proposals for such development must meet the requirements of Core Strategy and Development Management policies and demonstrate that:
 - a) The proposed scale of the wind turbine(s) is efficient on power output and that this efficiency is not compromised at the proposed location by turbulence at low levels;
 - b) There is no unacceptable impact on residential and visitor accommodation amenity and other sensitive users in terms of noise, shadow flicker, vibration and visual dominance;

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> c) The impact on the natural environment including designated sites and the countryside area has been assessed and where necessary appropriate mitigation or enhancement provided; d) The impact on any heritage asset and their setting, including strategic views; has been assessed; e) The proposal takes account of the cumulative effect that would result from the proposal in conjunction with permitted and existing renewable energy schemes, including those in neighbouring authorities and there is found to be no significant adverse impact; f) The local road network can satisfactorily accommodate the development proposed; and g) All impacts on air traffic safety, radar and communications have been assessed.
	<p>Policy DM33: Coast and Foreshore</p> <p>Development proposals will be supported which secure further improvements to bathing water quality or flood protection. Development proposals that would adversely affect the appearance, integrity or environmental quality of the beach and foreshore will be resisted.</p>
	<p>Policy DM34: Development in the Countryside</p> <p>1. The intrinsic value and rural character of Blackpool's remaining area of countryside as shown on the Policies Map will be safeguarded.</p> <p>[Point 2 not relevant to Landscape and visual resources]</p>
<p>Fylde Local Plan to 2032 (Incorporating Partial Review) (Adopted December 2021)</p>	<p>Strategic Policy CL3: Renewable and Low Carbon Energy Generation – excluding onshore wind turbines</p> <p>Renewable and low carbon energy development potential – excluding onshore wind turbines - is significant within Fylde. Opportunities for renewable and low carbon development, including microgeneration, should be maximised, while ensuring that adverse impacts are addressed satisfactorily; including cumulative landscape and visual impacts. Proposed developments will be assessed in relation to the following criteria:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) The cumulative impact of the renewable and / or low carbon development within Fylde and across the boundary in Blackpool, Wyre and Preston; b) Singular or cumulative impacts on landscape and townscape character and value, and visual impact from a wide range of vantage points, in accordance with policy ENV1; c) Impact on local residents (including noise, odour, and reflected light); f) That the proposal for renewable and low carbon energy would not harm the significance of heritage assets and their settings unless the proposal meets the requirements of Policy ENV5; <p>Renewable and low carbon energy proposals within the Green Belt will need to demonstrate very special circumstances where elements of any proposed renewable energy project comprises inappropriate development. Renewable and low</p>

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carbon energy proposals within Areas of Separation will be assessed in terms of its impact upon the effectiveness of the gap between the settlements in protecting the identity and distinctiveness of settlements.

Applicants will not be required to justify the overall need for renewable and low carbon energy development, either in a national, regional or local context.

[Points d, e and g to j not relevant to Landscape and visual resources]

Strategic Policy ENV1: Landscape

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. In addition:

- a. A landscaped buffer of appropriate depth and species will be provided for development that impacts upon land in or adjacent to the Countryside, and wherever necessary includes advanced planting, in order to limit the visual impact of development;
- b. Development proposals will ensure that existing landscape features will be conserved, maintained, protected and wherever possible enhanced through increased tree and shrub cover including soft edge / transitional areas of planting;
- c. In the event of the loss of landscape features, the impact will be minimised or, where loss is unavoidable, their like-for-like replacements will be provided. Where such features, including trees, woodlands, hedgerows and field ponds, are lost and replaced, measures will be put in place to manage these new features;
- d. Suitable landscape planting of native species, appropriate to its context should be incorporated within or, where appropriate, close to new development. Measures should be put in place for the management of such landscaping. Specific consideration should be given to how landscaping schemes will minimise the rate of surface water run-off;
- e. Details of the ongoing maintenance of all landscaping areas will be presented for approval by the Council.

Coastal Change Management Areas:

The open and coastal character of the Coastal Change Management Areas, which are identified on the Policies Map including Inset Plans, will be protected. Development in the Coastal Change Management Areas will only be permitted where the development meets all of the following criteria:

- i. Exceptionally requires a coastal location;
- ii. Is appropriate and in keeping with the open character of the coastline;
- iii. Promotes the conservation, restoration and enhancement 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

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demonstrate that there will be no likely significant effect upon European Sites before the tourism and coastal defence developments can be granted consent.

iv. Does not detract from the tourism value or facilities along the coastline;

Where development does occur in these areas, developer contributions will be sought for the conservation, management and enhancement of important wildlife habitats and the creation of new habitats. This will include the improvement and management of Starr Hills Local Nature Reserve and the creation of new Local Nature Reserves. Contributions will be made through S106 Agreements and / or the Community Infrastructure Levy.

[Points v to vii not relevant to Landscape and visual resources]

Strategic Policy GD2: Green Belt

The Green Belt within Fylde is shown on the Policies Map. Within that area national policy for development in the Green Belt will be applied.

Strategic Policy GD3: Area of Separation

Areas of Separation shown on the Policies Map are designated between:

- Kirkham and Newton; and
- Wrea Green and Kirkham.

Development will be assessed in terms of its impact upon the Area(s) of Separation, including any harm to the to the effectiveness of the gap between the settlements and, in particular, the degree to which the development proposed would compromise the function of the Area(s) of Separation in protecting the identity and distinctiveness of settlements.

Development will be limited to:

- a) that needed for purposes of agriculture, horticulture or forestry; or other uses appropriate to a rural area, including uses which would help to diversify the rural economy, of a type and scale which would not harm the effectiveness of the gap between the settlements in protecting the identity and distinctiveness of settlements;
- b) the re-use or rehabilitation of existing permanent and substantial buildings;
- c) extensions to existing dwellings and other buildings in accordance with Policy H7;
- d) development essentially needed for the continuation of an existing enterprise, facility or operation, of a type and scale which would not harm the effectiveness of the gap between the settlements in protecting the identity and distinctiveness of settlements;

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Development that is needed for uses appropriate to a rural area situated within the Area of Separation should be sited carefully to avoid harm to the effectiveness of the gap between the settlements in protecting the identity and distinctiveness of settlements.

[Points e and f not relevant to Landscape and visual resources]

Strategic Policy GD7: Achieving Good Design in Development

Design and Access Statements

Where required, all development proposals should be accompanied by a Design and Access Statement that fully explains and justifies the design approach for the scheme.

General Principles of good design

Development will be expected to be of a high standard of design, taking account of the character and appearance of the local area, including the following requirements:

- a) In order to promote community cohesion and inclusivity, new development will be expected to deliver mixed uses, strong neighbourhood centres and active street frontages which bring together all those who live, work and play in the vicinity.
- b) Ensuring densities of new residential development reflect and wherever possible enhance the local character of the surrounding area.
- c) Ensuring that amenity will not be adversely affected by neighbouring uses, both existing and proposed.
- d) Ensuring the siting, layout, massing, scale, design, materials, architectural character, proportion, building to plot ratio and landscaping of the proposed development, relate well to the surrounding context.
- e) Taking account of landform, layout, building orientation, massing and landscaping to minimise energy consumption.
- f) Conserving and enhancing the built and historic environment.

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	<p>g) Applying Secured by Design principles to all new developments.</p> <p>h) Being sympathetic to surrounding land uses and occupiers, and avoiding demonstrable harm to the visual amenities of the local area.</p> <p>i) Taking the opportunity to make a positive contribution to the character and local distinctiveness of the area through high quality new design that responds to its context and using sustainable natural resources where appropriate.</p> <p>j) Ensuring parking areas for cars, bicycles and motorcycles are safe, accessible and sympathetic to the character of the surrounding area and that highway safety is not compromised.</p> <p>k) Ensuring the layout, design and landscaping of all elements of the proposal, including any internal roads, pedestrian footpaths, cycleways and open spaces, create user friendly, sustainable and inclusive connections between people and places resulting in the integration of the new development into the built and historic environment.</p> <p>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 and which promote health and wellbeing.</p> <p>m) Protecting existing landscape features and natural assets as an integral part of the development; requiring multi-functional green infrastructure to be integrated into urban areas; providing enhancements to open spaces to encourage people to use them; protecting and enhancing habitats; providing open spaces and linkages to the wider ecological networks as part of the Green Infrastructure network; and enhancing the public realm.</p> <p>[Points n to z not relevant to Landscape and visual resources]</p>
<p>Central Lancashire Adopted Core Strategy – Local Development Framework (Adopted July 2012)</p>	<p>Policy 21: Landscape Character Areas</p> <p>New Development will be required to be well integrated into existing settlement patterns, appropriate to the landscape character type and designation within which it is situated and contribute positively to its conservation, enhancement or restoration or the creation of appropriate new features.</p>
	<p>Policy 28: Renewable and Low Carbon Energy Schemes</p> <p>Proposals for renewable and low carbon energy schemes will be supported and planning permission granted where the following criteria are met:</p>

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	<p>a) The proposal would not have an unacceptable impact on landscape character and visual appearance of the local area, including the urban environment;</p> <p>b) The reason for the designation of a site with statutory protection would not be compromised by the development;</p> <p>c) Any noise, odour, traffic or other impact of development is mitigated so as not to cause unacceptable detriment to local amenity;</p> <p>d) Any significant adverse effects of the proposal are considered against the wider environmental, social and economic benefits, including scope for appropriate mitigation, adaptation and/or compensatory provisions.</p>
<p>South Ribble Local Plan 2015 (Adopted July 2015)</p>	<p>Policy G1: Green Belt</p> <p>The area covered by Green Belt is shown on the Policies Map. As set out in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (Department for Levelling Up, Housing & Communities, 2023), planning permission will not be given for the construction of new buildings unless there are very special circumstances. Exceptions to this are:</p> <p>a) buildings for agriculture and forestry;</p> <p>b) provision of appropriate facilities for outdoor sport, outdoor recreation and for cemeteries, as long as it preserves the openness of the Green Belt and does not conflict with the purposes of including land within it;</p> <p>c) the extension or alteration of a building provided that it does not result in disproportionate additions over and above the size of the original building;</p> <p>d) the replacement of a building, provided the new building is in the same use and not materially larger than the one it replaces;</p> <p>e) limited infilling in villages, and limited affordable housing for local community needs under policies set out in this Local Plan; or</p> <p>f) limited infilling or the partial or complete redevelopment of previously developed sites (brownfield land), whether redundant or in continuing use (excluding temporary buildings), which would not have a greater impact on the openness of the Green Belt and the purpose of including land within it than the existing development.</p> <p>There are a number of major developed employment sites within the Green Belt. These sites can be developed within their curtilage. These major developed employment sites should continue to secure jobs and prosperity without further prejudicing the Green Belt. Such development is considered appropriate in the terms of the NPPF.</p>
	<p>Policy G13: Trees, woodland and development</p> <p>a) Planning permission will not be permitted where the proposal adversely affects trees, woodlands and hedgerows which are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Protected by a Tree Preservation Order (TPO);

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- Ancient Woodlands including individual ancient and veteran trees and those defined in Natural England’s inventory of ancient woodlands;
 - In a Conservation Area; or
 - Within a recognised Nature Conservation Site.
- b) There will be a presumption in favour of the retention and enhancement of existing tree, woodland and hedgerow cover on site;
- c) Where there is an unavoidable loss of trees on site, replacement trees will be required to be planted on site where appropriate at a rate of two new trees for each tree lost;
- d) Tree survey information should be submitted with all planning applications, where trees are present on site. The tree survey information should include protection, mitigation and management measures;
- e) Appropriate management measures will be required to be implemented to protect newly planted and existing trees, woodlands and/or hedgerows.

Policy G17: Design Criteria for New Development

Planning permission will be granted for new development, including extensions and free standing structures, provided that, where relevant to the development:

- a) The proposal does not have a detrimental impact on the existing building, neighbouring buildings or on the street scene by virtue of its design, height, scale, orientation, plot density, massing, proximity, or use of materials. Furthermore, the development should not cause harm to neighbouring property by leading to undue overlooking, overshadowing or have an overbearing effect;
- b) The layout, design and landscaping of all elements of the proposal, including any internal roads, car parking, footpaths and open spaces, are of a high quality and will provide an interesting visual environment which respects the character of the site and local area;
- c) The development would not prejudice highway safety, pedestrian safety, the free flow of traffic, and would not reduce the number of on-site parking spaces to below the standards stated in Policy F1, unless there are other material considerations which justify the reduction such as proximity to a public car park. Furthermore, any new roads and/or pavements provided as part of the development should be to an adoptable standard;
- d) The proposal would sustain, conserve and where appropriate enhance the significance, appearance, character and setting of a heritage asset itself and the surrounding historic environment. Where a proposed development would lead to substantial harm or loss of significance of a designated heritage asset, planning permission will only be granted where it can be demonstrated that the substantial public benefits of the proposal outweigh the harm or loss to the asset; and
- e) The proposal would not have a detrimental impact on landscape features such as mature trees, hedgerows, ponds and watercourses. In some circumstances where, on balance, it is considered acceptable to remove one or more of these features, then mitigation measures to replace the feature/s will be required either on or off-site.

Local Planning Policy

Preston Local Plan 2012-26

Policy EN3 – Future Provision of Green Infrastructure

All developments will where necessary:

- a) provide appropriate landscape enhancements.
- b) conserve and enhance important environmental assets, natural resources and biodiversity including the City's ecological network;
- c) make provision for the long-term use and management of these areas; and
- d) provide access to well designed cycleways, bridleways and footpaths (both off and on road), to help link local services and facilities.

1.2 References

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