

7.0 NATURAL ENVIRONMENT

7.1 Introduction

- 7.1.1 With the exception of Broughton Parish South (to the south of the M55 and on the edge of Preston's Urban Area), and Broughton Village Settlement itself, the Plan area largely comprises gently undulating farmland mainly of Grade 3 Agricultural value interspersed with scattered associated farm buildings and properties.
- 7.1.2 The most significant exceptions to this in terms of developed sites are off Garstang Road and comprise the Broughton Marriott Hotel (once a grand Victorian Manor House), Lancashire and Cumbria Ambulance service headquarters both in landscaped parkland settings, Birley House First Trust Hospital (off D'urton Lane), and Broughton Church, Vicarage and associated Primary School. However these built developments are significantly set back from the road and, St Johns Church apart, are significantly screened from public view by intervening trees and landscaping.
- 7.1.3 There are no large areas of woodland within the plan area. However the edges of the defined Broughton village settlement and many roads and lanes through the area are well wooded, screening the influence of any other built development on the surrounding rural landscape. Mature trees within hedgerows and watercourses create a sense of enclosure to fields and mature trees individually and in groups are also common in the rural landscape. A large number of trees within the open countryside and surrounding the larger scale buildings are protected by Tree Preservation Orders (TPOs)
- 7.1.4 As you approach Broughton village on Garstang Road from Preston, School and Public Playing Fields to each side of the road provide a swathe of green space between the southern boundary of the village settlement and the farmland to the south.
- 7.1.5 Where some very limited housing development has been allowed in "Open Countryside" north of the M55 this has generally been in locations and of a form and scale that has not impacted significantly on the rural character of the immediate area e.g. along D'Urton Lane south of the Church.
- 7.1.6 Open countryside can be enjoyed to either side of Garstang Road in gaps between trees and over hedgerows. More extensive open views of open countryside can be enjoyed from Whittingham Lane and from the Guild Wheel cycle/pedestrian route southwards as it passes the High School playing fields and along Sandy Gate Lane, as well as from public rights of way.
- 7.1.7 Within Broughton Village Settlement Boundary there are some larger properties with extensive mature rear gardens particularly to properties on the North side of Whittingham Lane some of which extend for over 180 yards/138 metres. Other than this the largest green space is to the front of the United Utilities site on the corner of Woodplumpton Lane.
- 7.1.8 There are two waterways. Blundell Brook, runs from west to east, to the north of M55 and south of St Johns Church and Broughton House and is an identified wildlife corridor. Barton Brook, runs to the north of Broughton Village to the south of Barton Hall.

7.1.9 There are no designated Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs) or Biological Heritage Sites within the plan area. As in much of this part of the North West some ponds do contain Greater Crested Newts. Detailed ecological surveys have been undertaken in planning the Bypass and major development allocations in Broughton Parish South and necessary mitigation undertaken.

7.2 Existing Development Plan Policy

7.2.1 Central Lancashire Core Strategy and Preston Local Plan include objectives and policies relating to landscape character, natural environment, development in open countryside, biodiversity and nature conservation.

7.2.2 Of relevance to this neighbourhood plan are

- Core Strategy Policy 21 **Landscape** Character Areas requiring any development to be well integrated into existing settlement patterns, and appropriate in terms of landscape character.
- Preston Local Plan Policies EN1 heavily restricting built development within **Open Countryside**,
- EN2 Protecting and enhancing **green infrastructure** in all its forms,
- EN4 **Area of Separation** - maintaining the identity and distinctiveness of Broughton Village.
- EN10 protecting conserving and enhancing **designated sites of nature conservation importance**, wildlife habitats more generally and ecological networks and
- EN11 on **protected species**.

7.3 Consultation, Issues, Objectives & Vision

7.3.1 Consultation has served to emphasise the enormous value that respondents place on the environment and rural setting of Broughton Village. These were rated the most important contributors to the quality of life in Broughton.

7.3.2 The challenge of safeguarding the rural setting and environmental quality of the village (and seizing the opportunities to enhance this upon the bypass removing through traffic) emerged as a key issue for the plan. The following objectives were identified:-

RURAL SETTING To retain Broughton Village's **rural setting** and enhance its identity as **a distinct settlement and community physically separate from Preston's Urban Area**.

DEVELOPMENT To ensure that any new development is of an appropriate, nature, location, scale and design, and **in the case of Broughton Village is in keeping with and does not undermine the character, rural setting and environmental quality of the village (including through the impact of associated vehicle traffic)**.

ENVIRONMENT & HERITAGE To realise the potential created by provision of the bypass **to secure improvements to the quality of both the natural and built environment**; ensuring that heritage assets (designated and non-designated) are identified, conserved and enhanced

OPEN COUNTRYSIDE To safeguard and enhance the special character and identity of the open countryside areas

7.4 Neighbourhood Plan Policy-General

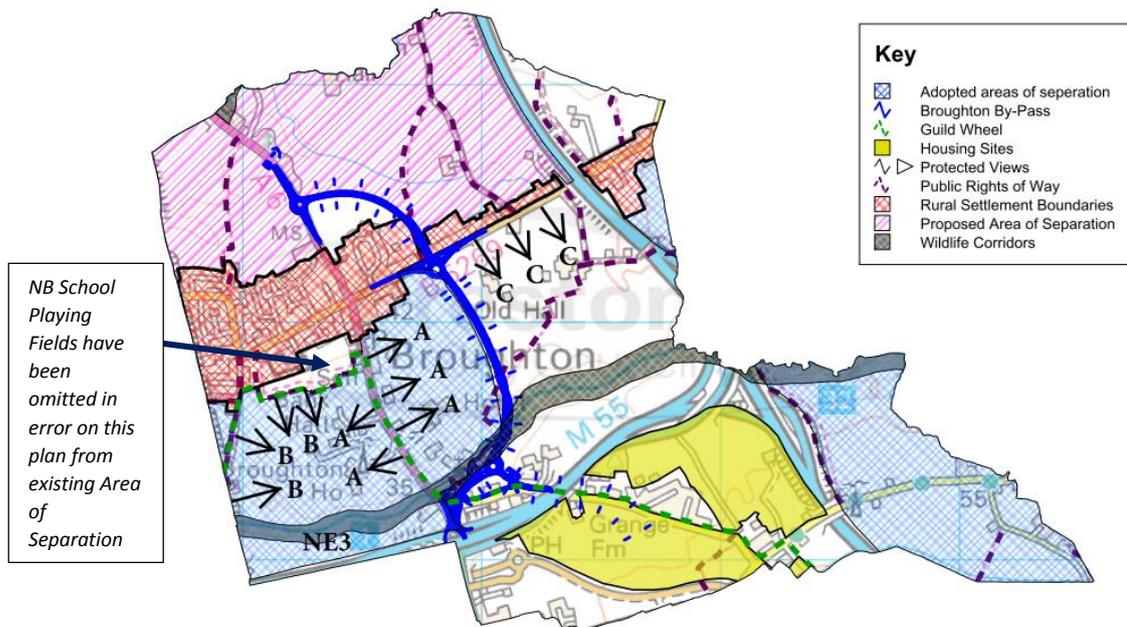
NE Broughton’s natural environment and its rural setting will be protected and enhanced by managing development so as to:-

- Strictly limit built development within Open Countryside and maintain Areas of Separation between Broughton and Preston Urban Area, between Broughton and Barton; and between Broughton Parish East and Grimsargh and Goosnargh.
- Maintain and enhance Green Infrastructure including wildlife corridors.
- Protect key public views, particularly of Open Countryside
- To minimise any loss of natural features that contribute to the character of the area and quality of the natural environment.
- Secure replacement and/or additional planting and landscaping as part of new development

7.5 Neighbourhood Plan Policies – Specific

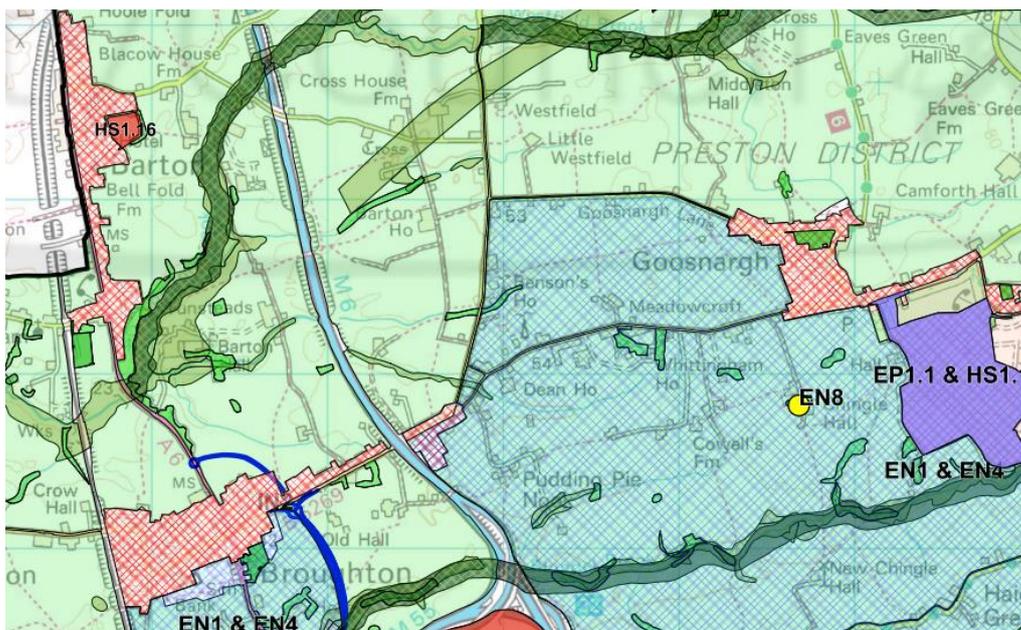
NE1 BROUGHTON-BARTON AREA OF SEPARATION – In addition to those Areas of Separation identified by Preston Local Plan Policy EN4, an additional Area of Separation is designated between Broughton and Barton as shown on Plan 1 and the Proposals Map. This will be subject to the provisions of that policy as follows:

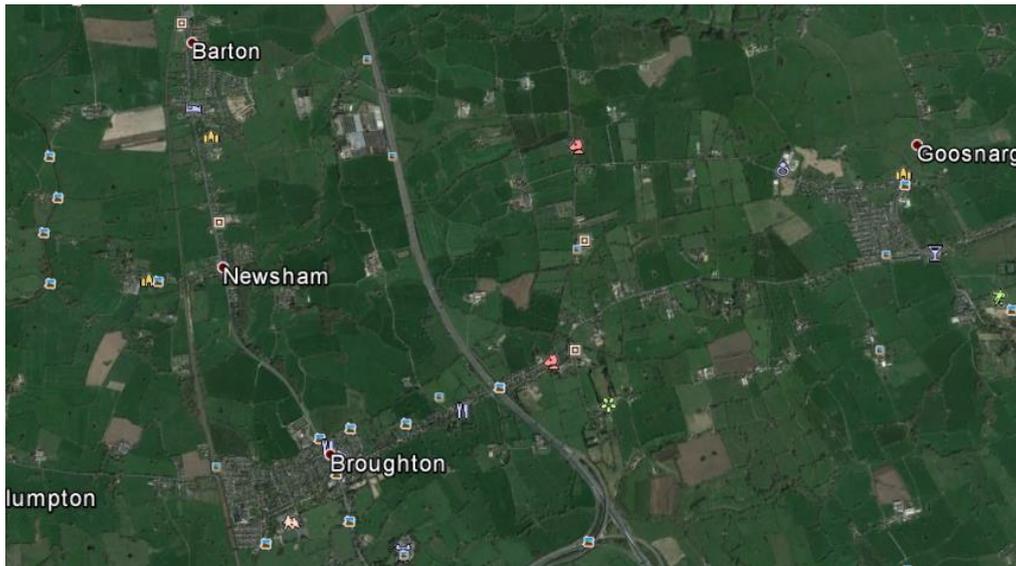
Development will be assessed in terms of its impact upon the Area of Separation including any harm to the effectiveness of the gap between the two settlements and, in particular, the degree to which the development proposed would compromise the function of the Area of Separation in protecting the identity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



PLAN 1 – PROPOSED ADDITIONAL AREA OF SEPARATION (POLICY NE1) AND PROTECTED VIEWS (POLICY NE2 – BELOW)

- 7.5.1 At the time that the Core Strategy and Preston Local Plan were developed, the main threat to the identity and distinctiveness of Broughton as a settlement was seen to be potential development to the south towards Preston's Urban Area in the context of plans for North West Preston and to the east towards Goosnargh/Whittingham and the major development proposed there at the former Whittingham Hospital.
- 7.5.2 Over recent times, and in the context of shortages of housing land and more particularly of a deliverable 5 year supply of such land, Barton has seen significant pressures for development, both within Preston's and Wyre's Local Authority Area. Most recently an application has been considered (albeit eventually refused on highway grounds), that if approved would have extended the current settlement boundary on the West of the A6 significantly southwards to within 0.6 miles of Broughton Village. Developers have also expressed an ambition to extend Broughton Village significantly northwards up to, and slightly beyond the northern end of the bypass.
- 7.5.3 Whilst not identifying an Area of Separation between Broughton and Barton both the Core Strategy and Preston Local Plan acknowledge through their provisions the importance of maintaining the identity and distinctiveness of settlements. The significant northward extension of Broughton's settlement boundary in combination with the southward extension of Barton could be damaging in this way and it is appropriate that any development proposals be assessed in this regard.
- 7.5.3 Reference to Preston Local Plan's Policies Map and to aerial photos (see below) shows that there is a larger expanse of Open Countryside between Broughton and Goosnargh/Whittingham than that between Broughton and Barton. In this context, consistent with strategic development plan policy, designation of a further Area of Separation, as shown on the Neighbourhood Plan Proposals Map is considered fully warranted.





NE2 KEY PUBLIC VIEWS The key public views listed below and as identified on Plan 1 will be protected from any adverse impact of development.

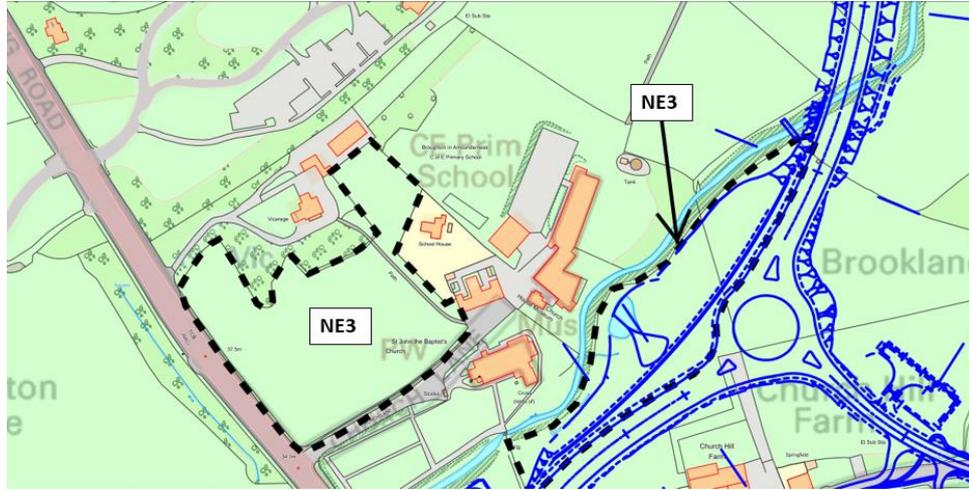
Development proposals will need to demonstrate through their design and access or planning statement that their design, scale, height and massing does not adversely impact on these views and enhances them where possible.

- A. Views of Open Countryside to either side of Garstang Road from the M55 to Broughton Crossroads
- B. From the route of the Guild Wheel southwards and eastwards between Garstang Road and the pedestrian/cycle bridge over the railway.
- C. From Whittingham Lane Southwards between the roundabout with the by-pass and the M6 motorway bridge

7.5.4 Safe-guarding of the above views is vital in maintaining Broughton’s rural setting, and the quality of its local environment. These views are also essential in ensuring that walking and cycling both for leisure, and as a chosen mode of transport, grow still further in popularity once the bypass is completed. This will make an important contribution to the health not only of the local community but also of the wider Preston population (particularly those using the Guild Wheel).

NE3 LOCAL GREEN SPACES The following sites, as defined on Plan *, and indicated on the Proposals Map, are designated as Local Green Spaces in accordance with NPPF paragraph 77 and Planning Practice Guidance:-

- **Glebe Field between the Parish Church of St John Baptist and the Vicarage.**
- **Land between Blundell Brook and Broughton Bypass**



PLAN 2 PROPOSED LOCAL GREEN SPACES (POLICY NE3)

7.5.5 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) provides for the designation in Local and Neighbourhood Plans of local green spaces that hold a particular significance for the local community whether this be for their beauty, historical significance, recreational value, tranquillity or richness of wildlife. Such designation rules out development other than in very special circumstances.

7.5.6 The Parish Church of St John Baptist, an impressive Grade II Listed Building, lies just north of the M55, and is framed to the south of the Church and graveyard as you look East by tree lined views of open countryside alongside Blundell Brook (with public footpath) and to the north by Church Meadow, a sloping area of pasture rising up to the Vicarage and the wooded parkland landscape surrounding the Marriott Hotel. As well as providing a scenic, rural setting to the church, these areas play an important role signalling the transition from urban Preston into rural Broughton.

7.5.7 The construction of the bypass west-east to the south of the church will inevitably intrude upon the tranquil rural setting to the south of the church but will still leave a significant green corridor between the bypass and Blundell Brook (a wildlife corridor).

7.5.8 Protecting these green areas from development will safeguard the scenic and historic rural setting of the Church (and Church Cottage, another listed building), and the attractive views they provide from both Garstang Road and from the footpath along the Brook.

NE4 TREES The importance to the areas rural character of trees and hedgerows will be safeguarded by

- **Application of the provisions of Neighbourhood Plan Policy ***

- **Reviewing the extent of local Tree Preservation Orders and, where appropriate, proposals being put forward to the Local Planning Authority for further Orders**
- **Agreeing with Preston Council a plan for the management and future replacement of ancient street trees and maintenance of hedgerow tree.**

7.5.7 Trees, whether in belts (e.g. lining Garstang Road), coppices or individually contribute hugely to the quality of Broughton's natural environment and to local wildlife. Their preservation and proper management is crucial to retaining this quality, and in safeguarding the rural character and appearance of the area.

7.5.8 Whilst many trees are protected by Tree Preservation Orders, it is important that these be reviewed given the development pressures on the area. It is also important that the Parish Council work with the local authority to ensure that avoidable losses are prevented through proper management and that trees are replaced. .

NE5 VISUAL IMPACT OF NEW DEVELOPMENT WITHIN BROUGHTON VILLAGE
The visual impact of new development particularly that on the edge of the defined settlement of Broughton when viewed from approaching routes should be minimised by landscape screening and tree planting.

7.5.8 The Aecom report describes a key characteristic of Broughton as *enclosure created by mature tree cover focussed around residential areas*. Where housing can be seen from outside the village this is in most instances softened and greened by trees and hedgerows, contributing greatly to the quality of the landscape and rural environment. It is important that any small-scale housing developments on the edge of or outside the current settlement boundary do not undermine this.

NE6 DRAINAGE Sustainable drainage schemes will be used to drain land:-

- **for development**
- **where waterlogging is an obstacle to use of public open spaces or to enjoyment and use of public rights of way**
- **to provide wildlife areas.**

7.5.9 It is important that sustainable drainage solutions are found for new development limiting run-off into drains and sewers but also that steps are taken to ensure poor drainage does not continue to restrict enjoyment of public rights of way and make many of the areas sports pitches at best poor quality and at worst unplayable. Sustainable drainage schemes can also provide additional opportunities for wildlife and introduce attractive features into the landscape.

Parish Action Points

- Review the existing Tree Protection Orders in the village and secure TPO's for trees/groups of trees with high visual and amenity value

