

# Marton Moss Neighbourhood Plan 2020 - 2030



Referendum Plan  
June 2023

*MARTON MOSS NEIGHBOURHOOD FORUM*

*Front cover picture – open land at Chapel Road as viewed from Eastbank Avenue*

This Plan has been prepared by Marton Moss Neighbourhood Forum with the assistance of



## Foreword

I never thought I would become involved in planning the future of the Moss (I'm a dentist by trade, now retired) let alone lead the Forum. However, having attended the public meetings put on by the Council, to consider how the area should be planned, I became drawn in. I realised this was a good opportunity to properly guide what should and shouldn't happen.

I am a great believer in doing things the 'right' way, doing it 'by the book'. This plan is offered as the book. I know many local residents have been frustrated by the very strict controls on new building, set by Core Strategy Policy CS26. Yet at the same time the residents want to keep the open aspects, green spaces and the distinctive charm of the area.

Despite Policy CS26, some inappropriate development and housing has been allowed in recent years on appeal, justified on land supply grounds. This is no way to properly plan or to preserve local character.

The challenge with the Neighbourhood Plan has been to get the right balance between enabling well designed modest amounts of development whilst still keeping the local character of the Moss. I hope you agree we've pitched it about right.

Preparing the Plan has been a big effort. I would like to thank the Forum's Committee for their big commitment to the task and the assistance of Julian Jackson from Envision. I also thank all the Members of the Forum for your support.

Stephen Woodhouse - Chairman of Marton Moss Neighbourhood Forum

## MARTON MOSS NEIGHBOURHOOD FORUM

The Forum came into being in unusual circumstances. The Blackpool Core Strategy – Part 1 of the Local Plan – includes Policy CS26 that only applies to Marton Moss. This Policy has two parts to it. One part strictly limits new development in a manner that treats Marton Moss as an area of countryside. However, those restrictions are intended to apply only until such time as they are replaced by “*neighbourhood policy which supports the retention and enhancement of the [area’s] distinctive character, whilst identifying in what circumstances development including residential may be acceptable.*” The full text relating to Policy CS26 is reproduced in Appendix A.

The background to Policy CS26 is that at an early stage of preparing the Blackpool Core Strategy large scale development was considered a possibility in the south east part of Blackpool, including Marton Moss. Following receipt of many local objections to this proposal and the Council reassessing the amount of housing needed across Blackpool, the scale of proposed development in this part of the borough was greatly reduced.

Following adoption of the Core Strategy in 2016 Blackpool Council started a dialogue with the Marton Moss community as to how a neighbourhood planning type approach could be taken forward. During November 2017 the Council held engagement ‘drop-in’ events for local people as part of a consultation process. The publicity material produced explained the two options of how a neighbourhood planning type approach could come about. At the time Blackpool Council were about to start work on the Part 2 Local Plan – the Site Allocations and Development Management Policies document. Developing neighbourhood policy as part of the Part 2 Local Plan was presented as one option, the other option put to local people was for the community to prepare a Neighbourhood Development Plan.

The consultation asked local people to send in written comments to the Council saying which neighbourhood planning type approach they supported. The outcome of this ‘poll’ was that most people who replied, all but by a small margin, voted for a Neighbourhood Plan to be prepared.

Given that the Marton Moss area does not have a Parish Council a Neighbourhood Forum comprised of local people needed to be established to produce the Neighbourhood Plan. To help with setting up a Forum the Council arranged a residents’ meeting in May 2018 to explain what would be involved.

Out of this meeting a group of people came together to consider the remit of a Forum and discuss the planning issues affecting the area. The Place Standard<sup>1</sup> approach was used to help these people express their understanding of the Moss. These discussions were later pursued with the wider community at regular, formally minuted meetings and from these the applications seeking designation of the Neighbourhood Area and Forum were prepared and submitted to the Council.

On 26 March 2019 Blackpool Council formally designated the Marton Moss Neighbourhood Area and Forum. The boundaries of the Area are identical to the spatial extent of Policy CS26. The overall purpose of the Forum, along with its aims and ambitions are set out in Appendix B.

At the time of designation, the Forum had over 70 members. As of January 2022, Forum membership stood at over 300 households drawn from all sectors of the local population including the traveller community, there are also approximately 650 members of the private Marton Moss Facebook group.

The establishment of the Forum means that the Neighbourhood Plan and Part 2 of the Local Plan are being prepared separately but alongside one another. Certain general policies in Part 2 of the Local Plan relate to the whole of Blackpool including Marton Moss, but site-specific policies for the Neighbourhood Area are only put forward in the Neighbourhood Plan.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.placestandard.scot/>

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# 1. INTRODUCTION

1. It would be all too easy to dismiss why local residents place Marton Moss in such high regard. This is because at first sight the Area appears to comprise a random mixture of buildings with different design styles. However, it is a place with a fascinating history that once played an important part in providing fresh food produce for the tourism related demands of Blackpool and town dwellers elsewhere in Lancashire and Yorkshire. There are a few fine surviving buildings that pre-date that period and numerous remaining residences characteristic of market gardening.

2. Today the many once thriving horticultural businesses of the Moss are very much reduced with only very few now operating. The area has become a predominantly residential one, all be it interspersed with a few other commercial enterprises. This change over the last 50 years or so has meant that the Moss has become generally more open and pastoral in character typified by homes (some original, some modern replacements) with large gardens, interspersed with numerous plots of land used for equestrian related activities and larger tracts of open land. These uses each contribute to the distinctive appearance of Marton Moss and provide touchstones for its future development.

## What is a Neighbourhood Plan?

3. It is a development plan that is prepared by representatives of a local community, either a Parish Council, or where there is not one, as in Marton Moss, a specially set up Neighbourhood Forum. A Neighbourhood Plan can cover a wide range of planning matters but not those of a strategic nature, nor minerals extraction and waste management. Those latter aspects along with a full range of detailed planning policies applicable across Blackpool are the responsibility of the Borough Council set out in the various documents that make up the Local Plan. Once the Marton Moss Neighbourhood Plan is completed it will have equal official status to the Local Plan for the matters it covers.

## How far into the future will the Neighbourhood Plan look?

4. The time period over which a Neighbourhood Plan can apply can range from 5 to 15 years. The Blackpool Local Plan Part 1: Core Strategy and Part 2: Site Allocations and Development Management Policies have a plan period of 2012 to 2027. However, the Forum has decided that the appropriate period for this Neighbourhood Plan is 10 years. In precise terms this means the Plan period is from 1 April 2020 to 31 March 2030.

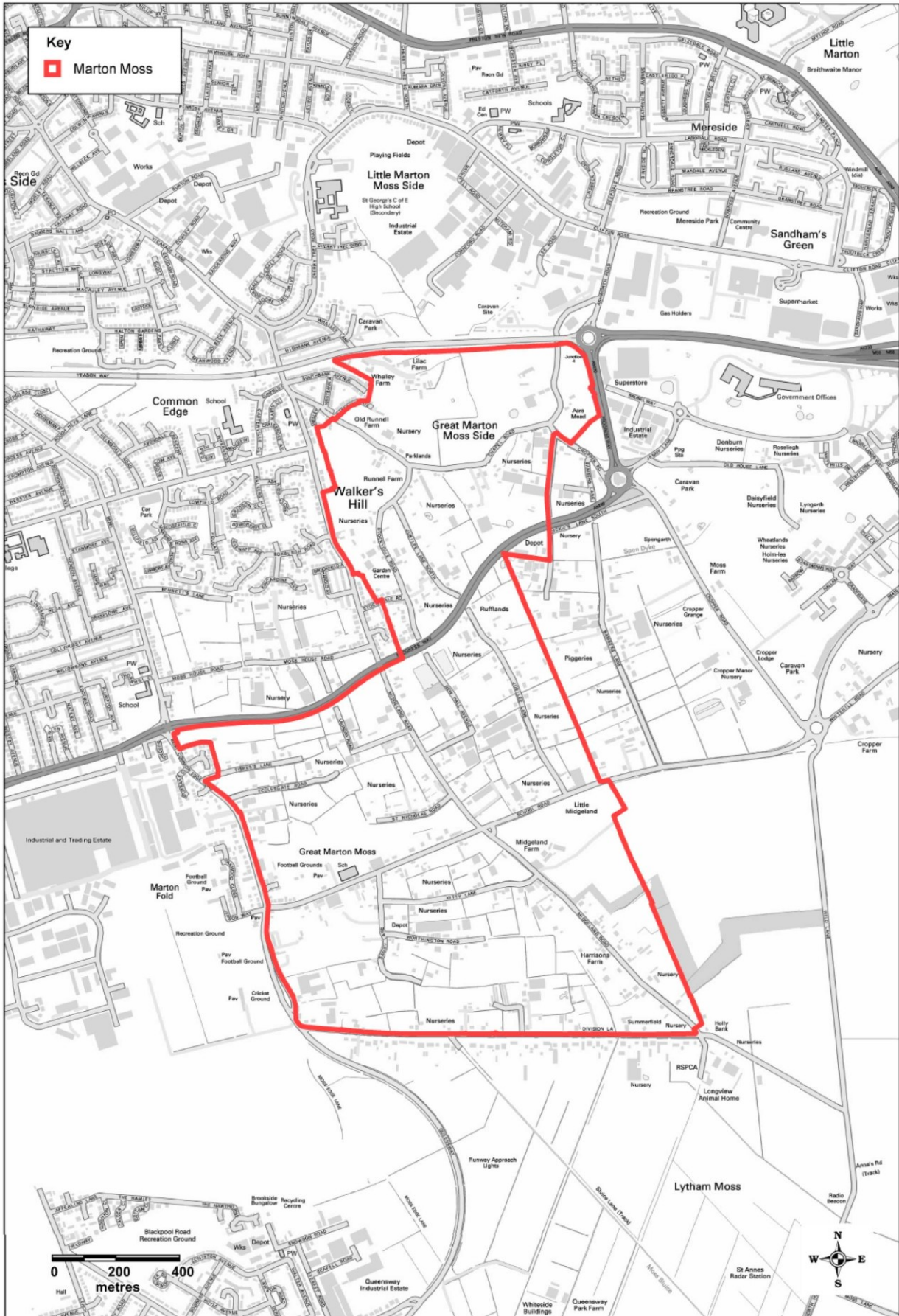
## What area does the Plan cover?

5. The Plan Area coincides with the spatial extent of Core Strategy Policy CS26 which will be replaced by the Neighbourhood Plan. The Plan Area is shown on the next page.

## What stage of preparation has the Plan reached?

6. The Plan has now been examined by independent Examiner Andrew Mead. He recommended the Plan should be modified and then proceed to referendum. The Examiner's Report can be viewed at <https://www.blackpool.gov.uk/Residents/Planning-environment-and-community/Documents/Marton-Moss-NP-Examiner-Report-290323.pdf>. The Council has considered each of the recommendations and the reasons given for them in the Examiner's Report as required by Regulation 12 of Schedule 4B of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990. The Council endorses all the recommended modifications and the reasons given for them. The Council is satisfied that the Plan, as modified to accord with the recommendations in the Examiner's Report, meets the legal requirements and basic conditions as set out in legislation.





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## Neighbourhood Plan Area

## **What are the main changes that have been made to the content of the Plan since the previous engagement stage?**

7. The proposed modifications are set out in the [Examiner's Report](#).

## **What must Neighbourhood Plans take account of?**

8. Neighbourhood Plans cannot be produced in isolation from other planning policies. Neighbourhood Plans are required by the relevant regulations to accord with certain Basic Conditions or requirements, these are reproduced in full in Appendix C. Firstly Neighbourhood Plans must have regard to national planning policies and advice issued by the Government. These are set out in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and the Planning Practice Guidance. Both contain relevant general considerations as well as specific aspects that refer directly to Neighbourhood Plans.

9. Neighbourhood Plans are also required to generally conform with the strategic policies of the development plan (see Appendix D). The development plan mainly comprises the various parts of the Blackpool Local Plan. This means the adopted Core Strategy (Part 1) and in the adopted Site Allocations and Development Management Policies (Part 2 of the Local Plan). The various documents that make up the Minerals and Waste Local Plan (produced in partnership with Lancashire County and Blackburn with Darwen Borough Councils) also comprise parts of the development plan. All planning applications are decided first and foremost taking account of the relevant policies and proposals of the development plan; account is also taken of other - 'material considerations' – i.e. relevant matters.

10. A further Basic Condition relevant to Neighbourhood Plans is that they should contribute to the achievement of sustainable development – the separately produced Strategic Environmental Assessment refers to this in detail. Finally, Neighbourhood Plans are expected to comply with other environmental requirements in the case of Marton Moss this is particularly in relation to internationally protected wildlife; that is covered by the Habitats Regulations Assessment. A Basic Conditions Statement has been produced and shows how this Neighbourhood Plan meets all the Basic Conditions.

11. This Plan uses information from a wide range of sources. Appendix E lists the key evidence documents that have been drawn on, including specially commissioned work that has also been carried out. Through the Government funded Neighbourhood Support Programme, numerous Technical Support packages have been used to contribute evidence to the Plan's preparation. These packages include Housing Needs Assessment, Design including Design Codes and Site Options & Assessment, the latter building on a Call for Sites – plots of land suggested for housing development by their owners, and Housing Site Viability.

## **What are the future stages of the Plan?**

12. The next stage is the referendum of all voters in the Marton Moss Area. If the Plan passes the referendum with a majority of local residents' support the Council will be able to formally 'make' the Plan and it will come into full effect.



## 2. VISION AND OBJECTIVES

13. Taking its cue from the overall purpose, aims and ambitions of the Forum (Appendix B) the Plan's Vision of what the area will be like by the end of the Plan period (in 2030) is as follows:

### **Vision – The Forum's view of what Marton Moss will be like by 2030**

**14. Marton Moss has stayed mainly open and green in appearance with well-maintained public spaces and attractive main thoroughfares. It is a place that is easy to walk, cycle and horse ride through in safety on well connected-up signed routes and off-road paths that provide for healthy recreation. Midgeland Farmhouse and its' associated original buildings are partially retained and land nearby is a community park popular with local people.**

**15. The housing built over the 2020 – 2030 period has been in keeping with the character of the Moss and provides accommodation for a range of needs. The other significant buildings constructed over the Plan period are also well designed and respectful of the area. The development provided is well adapted to climate change by having minimal impact, including in terms of greenhouse gas emissions and energy use. The natural environment is home to a wider range of wildlife than it was in 2020. The area is now well drained with a very low risk of flooding.**



*Midgeland Road South*

16. To help to achieve the Vision a series of Objectives have been produced. The Objectives help decide the scope of the Plan and the remit of the key provisions of it – the Policies. The Objectives and how they relate to the Policies is set out in the following two tables.

## Objectives

	OBJECTIVE	HOW ACHIEVED?	OTHER BENEFITS
1	To preserve and enhance the distinctive heritage character, landscape, and overall appearance of the area.	Through good building design, limiting development densities and keeping important tracts of open land substantially undeveloped.	Increases local pride in the area and an aesthetically pleasing location is recognised to improve health and wellbeing.
2	To save from complete loss the historic Midgeland Farmhouse and original buildings.	By measures to preserve any remaining structures and/or a programme of archaeological recording.	Reduces the risk of vandalism and fly-tipping.
3	To safeguard and enhance natural habitats and improve the variety of wildlife, with new development required to achieve a net gain in biodiversity.	Through development avoiding harm to internationally as well as locally significant habitats and important species as well as requiring developers to contribute to biodiversity improvements.	Contributes to the open character and appearance of the area as well as feelings of well-being.
4	To ensure that new development is in keeping with the look, scale, and form of existing buildings.	Through good building design in accordance with the provisions of the Marton Moss Design Code.	Increases local pride in the area.
5	To enable housing development that meets a range of accommodation needs.	By supporting on appropriate sites new housing comprising a variety of accommodation types.	Helps enable local people to stay within the area and attracts in new residents, so diversifying the population.
6	To protect existing recreation grounds and provide additional open leisure space that is away from the coast and its wildlife functionally linked land.	By protecting existing recreational grounds as Local Green Space and opening-up land at Midgeland Farm for community park use.	Increases opportunities for physical exercise, improves mental well-being and the amount of social interaction.
7	To make it easier and safer to move through the area without being dependent on motor vehicles.	Through the provision of new/improved footpaths, bridleways and cycling opportunities connected to existing thoroughfares and open spaces.	Increases opportunities for physical exercise, improves mental well-being and amount of social interaction. Improvements in air pollution would be a direct benefit of reducing reliance on motor vehicles.
8	To support locally appropriate development proposals associated with horticultural and equestrian activities.	Through allowing appropriately sited installations and buildings plus for horticultural enterprises allowing complementary uses to financially support the main business.	Helps support local employment, and with equestrian uses, retain the openness of the area. There would also be improvements to health and wellbeing.
9	To ensure that new development will be safe from flooding for its lifetime without increasing risk elsewhere and, where feasible, improves land drainage.	By new development avoiding land at risk of flooding, incorporating fully compliant sustainable drainage systems, and providing improvement works to adjacent drainage dykes where necessary.	Helps maintain open water features for the benefit of local wildlife.
10	To allow tourism accommodation uses that are in keeping with the open character of the area.	By supporting tourism proposals that maintain the open, pastoral character of the Moss.	Helps support local employment and bring benefits to the local economy as a whole.

## Which Policies Will Deliver What Objectives?

	OBJECTIVES	POLICIES									
		MM1	MM2	MM3	MM4	MM5	MM6	MM7	MM8	MM9	MM10
1	To preserve and enhance the distinctive heritage character, landscape and overall appearance of the area.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
2	To save from complete loss the historic Midgeland Farmhouse and original buildings.								✓		
3	To safeguard and enhance natural habitats and improve the variety of wildlife, with new development required to achieve a net gain in biodiversity.	✓	✓		✓	✓					
4	To ensure that new development is in keeping with the look, scale and form of existing buildings	✓			✓	✓		✓			
5	To enable housing development that meets a range of accommodation needs.				✓	✓					
6	To protect existing recreation grounds and provide additional open leisure space that is away from the coast and its functionally linked land.								✓	✓	
7	To make it easier and safer to move through the area without being dependent on motor vehicles.		✓								✓
8	To support locally appropriate development proposals associated with horticultural and equestrian activities.						✓	✓			
9	To ensure that new development will be safe from flooding for its lifetime without increasing risk elsewhere and where feasible improves land drainage.	✓			✓	✓					
10	To allow tourism accommodation uses that are in keeping with the open character of the area.		✓								

### 3. SPATIAL PORTRAIT

#### Physical Profile

##### Where is Marton Moss?

17. The designated Marton Moss Neighbourhood Area is at the south eastern extremity of Blackpool, to the east of the Airport. It is away from the sea, being over 2km from the coastline. The north east corner of the Area is close to the western end of the M55 motorway.

18. The term 'Marton Moss' historically refers to a larger area than is covered by this Neighbourhood Plan. Some of the land excluded from the Neighbourhood Plan Area within Blackpool has been, or is in the process of, being developed; the remaining part is within Fylde Borough. However, for the purposes of this Neighbourhood Plan the terms 'Marton Moss', and the 'Moss' for short, relate only to the designated Neighbourhood Area.

##### What comprises Marton Moss?

19. The northern boundary of the Neighbourhood Area is formed by Yeadon Way which continues the westward alignment of the motorway towards the South Shore part of Blackpool town. The eastern boundary of the Area coincides with the administrative boundary of Blackpool with Fylde Borough as does the southern boundary also marked by Division Lane, land on the northside of which is within the Area. The south western boundary of the Area broadly follows Common Edge Road and then cuts eastwards along the south side of Progress Way before switching northwards approximately aligned with Midgeland Road and finally heads diagonally north eastward across to Yeadon Way.

20. The Area comprises approximately 2 square kilometres. The land is largely flat and low lying, mostly between 5 and 10 metres above sea level. Prior to human settlement, Marton Moss, as the name suggests, was an area of open moss land with poorly drained mainly peaty soils. The land immediately to the east and south in Fylde Borough had similar natural characteristics.

21. It is not possible to say precisely how many people currently live at Marton Moss because the official statistical areas do not closely coincide with the Neighbourhood Area boundary. At the time of the 2011 Census of Population the 'best matching' four of the five statistical areas which cover at least part of Marton Moss had 1,249 residents, whereas counting all five areas the number was 1,616 residents but a substantial proportion of those lived outside the Area. However, in comparison with the Borough as a whole, these figures equate to only approximately 1% of the total population of Blackpool.

##### Historic Character

22. Only a few discovered remains of early human occupation of the Area exist. A Bronze Age axe and animal skin coracles have been found. However, there are some surviving traces of human settlement construction from these times. It appears likely that the generally marshy ground conditions did not lend themselves to human habitation although there were small areas of slightly higher, drier land. The first recorded works to drain the wider area date from the 14<sup>th</sup> Century however for the most part intensive draining of Marton Moss did not occur until the widespread enclosure of fields, from the mid-18<sup>th</sup> to mid-19<sup>th</sup> Centuries. The exception to this is the slightly higher ground in the vicinity of the long-established Chapel Road where the land was enclosed earlier, in Medieval times, a process referred to as 'Ancient Enclosure'. Typically though, across most of the Area, the field boundaries from the

later land enclosures were marked by drainage ditches accompanied by trees (often pollarded) and hedgerows. Paths and bridleways followed the same alignments. Many of these features still exist.

23. Human habitation of the Area only occurred very gradually in the post-Medieval period. Building construction was confined to the few areas of dry land when the use of locally sourced materials prevailed - stone cobbles for walls and thatching over timber cruck framed roofs. A few preserved examples of these structures remain as listed buildings (see Appendix F) they provide a tantalising glimpse of what the building forms were like when the Area was sparsely populated. In other buildings dating from this time the traditional construction has since been replaced by or concealed by tiled roofs and brick facades.

24. The mossland was first used in Medieval times for peat extraction, with excavations spreading out from the few main trackways that existed. It was not until this upper layer of peat had been removed that the ground was used for cultivation. Initially there was no exceptional demand for food produce from the reclaimed land. That situation changed when Blackpool, itself up until then only a small settlement, was connected to the national railway network; the first train services operated from 1846. A market for horticultural produce was then opened-up not just with the burgeoning seaside resort but also through demand from elsewhere in Lancashire, and especially Yorkshire.

25. The architectural tradition of the Area prevailing today is mainly derived from the relatively recent past - the 19<sup>th</sup> Century - when the main demand for building construction came from the horticultural businesses. Typically, market garden plots were between 1¼ and 1¾ of an acre in size (about half a hectare) and were usually occupied by a road frontage house with an access track down one side of the dwelling to the cultivated area at the rear. Such houses were originally modest proportioned cottages which were often later replaced by taller Victorian villas. The need to house other horticultural workers led to numerous additional dwellings being built as 'twin' (semi-detached) and short terraces on or near the holding.

26. The accessibility of the railway opened-up a source of mass-produced bricks from east Lancashire and roofing slate from Cumbria and Wales. The bricks used were typically red and glossy finished particularly when used on the front elevations of houses. Vertical sliding sash windows became popular instead of the earlier casement ones and Yorkshire style (horizontal sliding) sashes. Wealthier owners added more elaborate detailing to their residences with stone lined window openings, perforated bargeboard detailing and terracotta ridge tiles and finials. The road frontages of these homes were usually marked with brick-built garden walls and stone gate posts.

27. The 20<sup>th</sup> Century brought different building styles reflective of the widely prevalent national fashions of the times. As elsewhere in the country, increased mobility of people with the rising use of the motor car led to an influx of new residents into the Area particularly during the 1930's. At that time numerous semi-detached brick-built houses were constructed with harling (rendered finish) first floor facades. Also, many bungalows were erected as detached or semi-detached properties with central doorways flanked by bays on either side.

28. From the 1950's onwards various individually designed detached houses and bungalows were constructed on infill plots between other properties or as replacements for earlier residences. These homes were sited on either main road frontages or directly facing the narrower side lanes. Very little in-depth housing development occurred in the Area during the 20<sup>th</sup> Century. More recently, housing on small culs-de-sac has occurred mostly just outside the boundary of the designated Area, except that is for the substantial 'Magnolia Point' housing estate between Midgeland Road and Stockydale Road.

29. Market gardening activity on the Moss probably reached its peak in the 1960s. Since then, the large rise of international trade in salad foodstuffs and flowers has led to highly competitive market conditions with the business being increasingly dominated by large-scale producers. This has caused most of the local growers to cease their activities and led to the redundancy of their glasshouses.

## Present Day Character

30. The settlement pattern that exists over most of Marton Moss today largely stems from individual landowners buying up and sub-dividing land into small plots to devote to market gardening during the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> Century. However, some parts were not used for intensive horticulture. In the north of the Area, particularly the land between Chapel Road and Yeadon Way was generally not so used. The latter remains as open land and is considered to be of archaeological significance due to early field enclosure. It also acts as an open break separating the more built-up parts of Marton Moss from the more urbanised parts of Blackpool.

31. Further south another tract of land that has long remained largely open is around Midgeland Farm on the eastern edge of the Area. The locally listed former farmhouse is now derelict, the surrounding land was used as a landfill site in the late 1960s and 1970s, it is now mown for hay. Two more substantial areas of open land – south of Ecclesgate Road and in the vicinity of Worthington Road and Sandy Lane are also tracts that have largely not been used for market gardening.

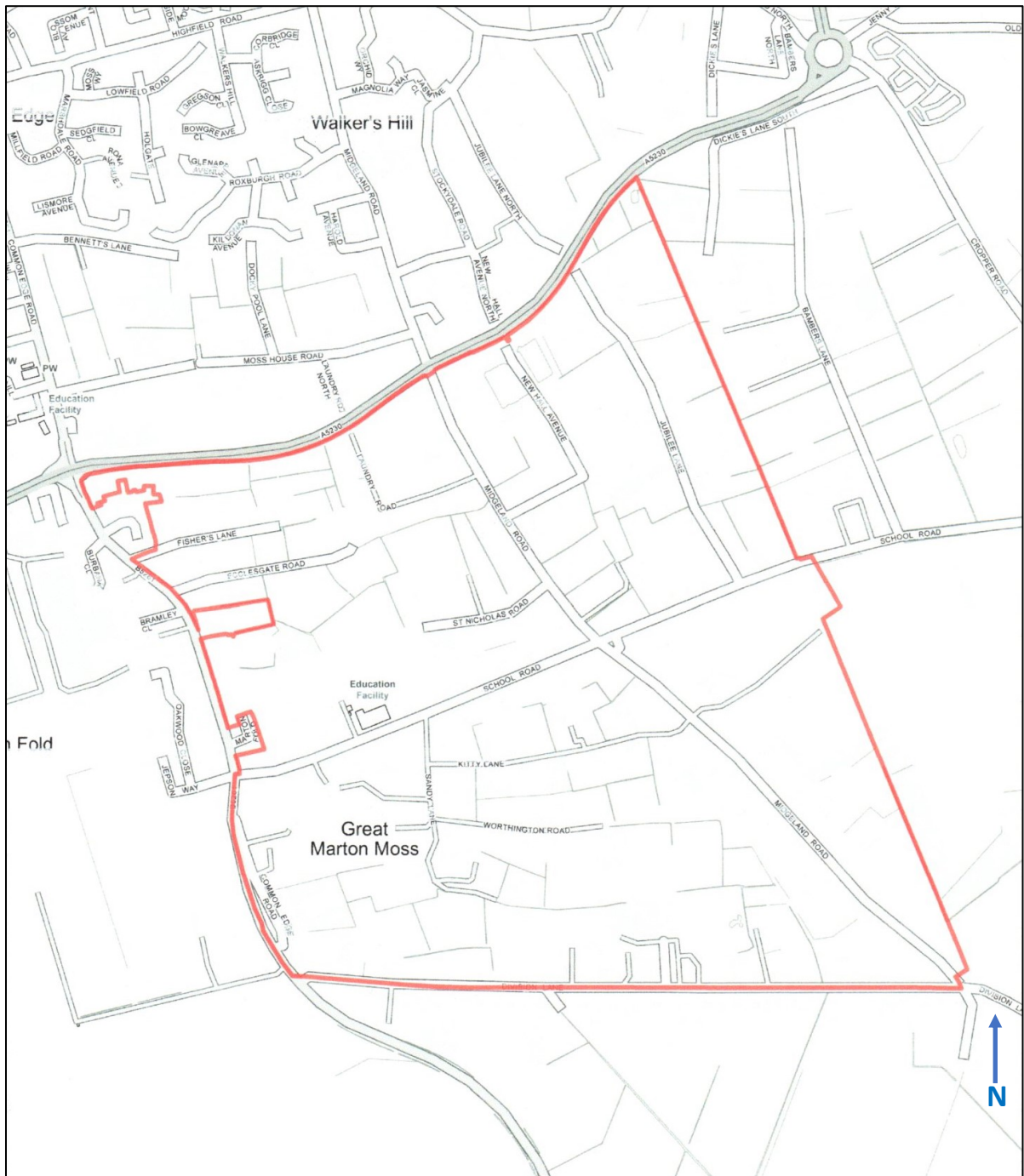
32. These landholdings, with their naturalised field boundaries and quiet lanes, are the basis of the pastoral semi-rural present-day character of the Moss. However, this is an appearance that has partly evolved from the decline of horticultural activities such that the Area has become predominantly residential. Similarly, whilst away from the main through roads the Area has a peaceful charm, by contrast the arterial routes of Progress Way, Common Edge Road and School Road are busy with traffic and congested at peak hours.

33. Now only very few market garden producers remain active within the Area. Some former glasshouses lie derelict, but most have been completely removed with many of the plots acting as large open gardens for individual houses. Other plots have become paddocks for horses, flanked by stable blocks. There are also caravan uses in numerous guises that occupy former market garden plots – such as vehicle storage, tourist camping sites and compounds for the Traveller and Showperson families. Some of the former horticultural land is mown occasionally for hay, grazed mainly by horses or is completely un-used. There are various other small business uses scattered across the Moss.

34. Two locations have been re-modelled to act as surface water flood attenuation basins, one south of Chapel Road and the other off Ecclesgate Road. These only exceptionally hold water in times of heavy storms. Elsewhere there are some static water bodies - a man-made fishery lake at New Hall Avenue just south of Progress Way and a few isolated naturalised ponds. The Area however supports an extensive network of drainage dykes that developed as the Moss was drained and became used for market gardening. These watercourses remain important for drainage and flood control purposes today, they also act as significant wildlife habitats.

35. The southern two-thirds of the Moss was designated a Conservation Area in 2019 – the extent of this is shown on the map overleaf. The land excluded from the Conservation Area, north of Progress Way to Yeadon Way, is of a similar character except there is a modern housing estate at 'Magnolia Point', served off Midgeland Road North, and a small enclave of mixed commercial uses off Dickies Lane North in the north east of the Area.





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### Marton Moss Conservation Area

## Community Profile

36. The characteristics of the Marton Moss population, the homes people live in, and their economic status differ quite markedly from the residents of Blackpool as a whole. Given that only about 1% of Blackpool's population lives on the Moss it would be surprising if there were not some differences. However, the variations between the two are not a statistical quirk but highly relevant to how the two areas should be planned. Unfortunately, up to date data are hard to come by given that the main source originates from the 2011 Census of Population.

37. Nevertheless, compared to Blackpool as whole, Marton Moss has:

- a greater proportion of older people and fewer in younger age groups (adults under 45 and children) a situation that became more pronounced between 2001 and 2011 suggesting that families moved away from the Neighbourhood Area during that time<sup>2</sup>;
- a much higher percentage of detached properties, a similar proportion of terraced houses but far fewer flats;
- a greater incidence of owner-occupied homes and far lesser occurrence of rented properties, especially socially rented ones;
- much higher average house prices; and,
- far less social deprivation.

38. The nationally produced Indices of Multiple Deprivation 2019 provide ranks for localities across a wide range of social and economic factors. Again, the statistical areas used do not fit exactly within the extent of the Neighbourhood Area but using the data output area that is most centrally located within the Moss, the overall deprivation ranking here is close to the median average for England. Whereas parts of Blackpool town centre have some of the most deprived communities nationally.

39. Looking at the individual factors behind the data, reveal that the Moss fares better than the national average in terms income levels, unemployment rates, frequency of crime and incidence of children in deprived families. Whereas the Neighbourhood Area performs less well in terms of health disability, local environment and education, skills and training. The health disability is probably linked to the older than average population, whereas the low local environment ranking is likely connected with the limited amount of publicly accessible open space.



*Jubilee Lane South*

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<sup>2</sup> This was likely due to a lack of suitable housing being available locally; a trend that has probably continued in more recent times due to policy restrictions on new residential development.

## 4. LOCAL PLAN CONTEXT

40. To help appreciate where the Neighbourhood Plan will fit into the overall set of policies that guide new development in the Area it is important to know the scope of the various Plans that make up the statutory development plan for Blackpool as a whole.

41. There are several Local Plans that cover the Marton Moss Neighbourhood Area:

- Blackpool Core Strategy – Part 1 of the Local Plan adopted in January 2016
- Blackpool Site Allocations and Development Management Policies - Part 2 of the Local Plan adopted in February 2023
- Joint Lancashire Minerals and Waste Local Plan – partly being reviewed

42. For minerals and waste matters Blackpool Council works in partnership with Lancashire and Blackburn with Darwen Councils. There are various documents that make up the Joint Lancashire Minerals and Waste Local Plan and part of it is currently being reviewed. There are no minerals and waste proposals that apply to the Marton Moss Area. However, small parts of the Moss are covered by Minerals Safeguarding Areas. These apply to land around the junction of Midgeland Road and School Road and the south eastern corner of the Midgeland Farm site.

43. Policy M2 of the Minerals and Waste Local Plan aims to restrict permanent development within the Safeguarding Areas so as to allow the prospect of future extraction of valuable, workable underground minerals. The mineral being safeguarded at Marton Moss is silica sand and the implications for surface development are limited and referred to in more detail in the separate Housing Site Allocation Appraisal document.

44. The other Local Plans that cover the Marton Moss Area are those prepared solely by Blackpool Council. Overall strategic direction is provided by the Core Strategy. The strategic policies relevant to the Neighbourhood Plan are listed in Appendix D. During the preparation of the Core Strategy a strategic development option considered was major growth in the south east of Blackpool including Marton Moss. This option was subsequently scaled back and not pursued within the 'remaining lands' of the Moss which although identified as a 'strategic site' in Policy CS1 were also made subject to Policy CS26. This latter policy and its justification text are reproduced in Appendix A.

45. Policy CS26 applies a very restrictive approach to controlling development at Marton Moss, similar to the approach generally taken in countryside areas. These restrictions are to apply until a Neighbourhood Planning type approach for the Area is brought in to replace them.

46. The Plan period for the Core Strategy is 2012 to 2027. This is particularly significant for deciding what the housing indicator for the Neighbourhood Plan should be, especially as the time period for this Plan is 2020 to 2030. Not surprisingly given the lapse of time, more up to date household projections have been published and the method for calculating housing numbers has also been revised. This matter is explained in more detail in Appendix F.

47. The Site Allocations and Development Management Policies - Part 2 of the Local Plan contains general policies that will apply to development proposals in the Moss but no site-specific ones relating to the Neighbourhood Area. So, some policies in Parts 1 and 2 of the Local Plan are relevant to the Neighbourhood Plan and are referred to in Chapter 5 in relation to each proposed Neighbourhood Plan Policy.

## 5. POLICIES

48. This is an important Chapter of the Neighbourhood Plan as it sets out the policies for how new development will be managed – i.e. guided and controlled. When this Plan is finalised, the policies will be used to help decide all relevant planning applications on the Moss. Some of the policies will apply across the whole Area, others refer to proposals for individual sites.

49. Each policy is presented in the same way. First the *Background Justification* section explains what the issues are for the topic covered by the policy. The *What the Community Says* section summarises the views given by local people in the Residents' Survey carried out in the autumn of 2019 and the Evidence and Policy Options Engagement in the summer of 2020.

50. The *Sources of Evidence* section lists the main documents and other survey work that have informed the topic covered by each policy. The *National Planning Policy and Advice* section refers to the key relevant aspects of the National Planning Policy Framework and Planning Practice Guidance published by the Government that are relevant to the policy. The *Relevant Local Plan Policies* are briefly mentioned in this section citing both the Blackpool Local Plan Part 1 Core Strategy policies and the Part 2 of the Local Plan – Site Allocations and Development Management policies.

51. Each proposed policy is shown in **bold blue text**. Where a policy refers to the 'Policies Map' it means the Marton Moss Neighbourhood Plan's proposed additions to and, in the case of Core Strategy Policy CS26, deletion from the Blackpool Policies Map. This is reproduced as an A4 sized image as the last page of this Plan, it can be viewed at higher magnification on the Marton Moss Neighbourhood Forum website<sup>3</sup> where all the Neighbourhood Plan documents can also be viewed.

52. How the policies will be used and brought into effect is set out in Chapter 6 – Plan Implementation, Monitoring and Review.

**53. Whenever relevant, the policies of the Plan need to be read together to help fully establish whether a development proposal is likely to be acceptable or not.**



*Blowing Sands, Common Edge Road*

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<sup>3</sup> <https://www.martonmossforum.org/>

## A. Design and the Local Environment

### 5.1 Building Design – To require new buildings to be well designed, be in character with the local Area and improve biodiversity

#### *Background Justification*

54. Although at first sight Marton Moss appears to have a random mix of architectural styles, there are numerous remaining traditional buildings that provide a cohesive design context. Also, across most of the Area is the legacy of one-acre-plus (half hectare) sized market garden plots which have provided an enduring low building density template. Although nearly all the glasshouses have been removed the boundary features – hedges and dykes – of many of the holdings remain. Of the vernacular buildings, many are former market garden residences – typically individual Victorian villas and short terraces of houses. A few older structures with cobble walls and/or thatched roofs stand out as listed buildings. Numerous residential properties on the Moss are served by minor lanes and stand close to the carriageway edge.

55. Specific Design Code work, which included engagement with local people, has been carried out to inform the Neighbourhood Plan and the essential defining elements of the design for new development so that is in character with the local vernacular styles are summarised below:

- *Cul-de-sac layouts* – not appropriate in the Conservation Area (so here new development should front on to existing roads), elsewhere new access roads should not exceed 60 metres in length, be straight and serve no more than 8 dwellings;
- *Parking* – a minimum of two on-plot spaces to reduce the visual impact from on-street parking;
- *Landscape* – protection of major open land tracts from development;
- *Set-backs, gardens and boundary treatments* – dwelling plots to have front gardens behind a hedge or low brick wall with dwellings set back at least 5 metres from the road;
- *Public rights of way* – retained within new developments and kept clear from encroaching vegetation;
- *Drainage* – to use Sustainable Drainage Systems incorporating retained dykes, with clearance required for any that are blocked; the avoidance of culverting;
- *Materials* – red brick or rendered building elevations under slate or red pantile roofs;
- *Density and housing mix* – except for short terraces, densities shall not exceed 8 dwellings per hectare (dph) in the Conservation Area and 15 dph elsewhere, with dwelling sizes to contribute to a mix of provision in the wider area; and,
- *Traffic calming* – any new streets to be designed to allow only slow vehicle movements.

For full details see the separate document – Marton Moss Design Code 2020.

56. As the Moss is a flat lowland area an extensive drainage dyke system was created when the land became cultivated. This network of water courses was maintained by the market garden proprietors as their businesses depended on well drained soils. Following the decline of horticultural production many of the dykes have fallen into disrepair, some are culverted, and others have been filled in. Localised surface water flooding occurs on occasions and although two large water attenuation basins have been constructed, the likelihood of such events could increase in the future with climate change. For Sustainable Drainage Systems to work they need to be connected to a fully functioning dyke network. Works that would involve raising the level of the ground to create a higher site often cause surface water to back up elsewhere and are also inappropriate in overall design terms.



57. Existing tree cover is limited on the Moss so new building construction should aim to retain existing healthy trees which along with improvements to ponds and watercourses would help achieve a net gain in biodiversity from development proposals. An exemplar way of delivering accredited wildlife-friendly schemes is for developers to sign up to the Building with Nature<sup>4</sup> initiative.

58. The Marton Moss Biodiversity Strategy 2022, identifies the following opportunities biodiversity improvement measures that can be included in new developments based on wildlife assets of the Area:

- Protecting existing ponds, reedbeds and watercourses along with restoring/creating these as part of Sustainable Drainage Systems.
- Retaining existing hedgerows and trees as well as adding new planting to these features.
- Setting aside parts of sites and gardens for scrub, tall herb and/or long grass.
- Providing log piles of rotting wood.
- Installing bird and bat boxes on buildings.
- Building grassed-over low mounds of brick/stone rubble, branches, and old pipes as hibernacula.
- Creating extensive areas of wildlife meadow.

59. The Habitats Regulations Assessment for the Neighbourhood Plan considers to what extent development proposals on the Moss might adversely affect the integrity of internationally designated (Special Protection Area /Ramsar) wildlife sites located at the nearby Ribble and Alt Estuaries. The Assessment concludes that such an effect is possible and recommends in relation to the aspect of recreational pressure the Neighbourhood Plan:

- should add a caveat that residential development will only be supported if the developer commits to providing homeowner packs to new residents identifying the disturbance sensitivity of the wintering waterfowl using the Ribble Estuary, encouraging responsible dog ownership and identifying other areas of accessible greenspace that could be visited as an alternative. Similarly, improvements to access to existing footpaths and bridlepaths should be contingent on them not exacerbating recreational pressure issues at the SPA/Ramsar site<sup>5</sup>.

60. The Strategic Environmental Assessment Draft Environmental Report for the Neighbourhood Plan makes the following general recommendation relating to development proposals on land associated with ancient enclosure and so having a high potential for the presence of archaeological remains, in such instances:

- that archaeological potential must be explored and appropriate action taken to protect and record features of importance.

### *What the Community Says*

61. Many local people cherish the existing character of the Moss and want to see it retained as much as possible. In the Residents' Survey the Area was commonly described as having a 'peaceful rural aspect'. The natural environment of the Moss was rated as its most important feature. Although there is a common acceptance from many of the Survey respondents that some development should be allowed, a major concern is that this might cause a loss of identity through new buildings being built which are out of character. Several respondents also expressed concerns about the state of repair of the dyke network. Most of the responses received to the Evidence and Policy Options Engagement supported a broadly based policy citing general good design principles that refer to the Design Code. The earlier feedback on the Code itself supported lower density schemes, off-road parking, protection of open land, traditional boundary treatment, useable public rights of way, and well-maintained drainage ditches.

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<sup>4</sup> <https://www.buildingwithnature.org.uk/about>

<sup>5</sup> See Policy MM10 for this latter matter to be taken account of



### *Sources of Evidence*

Historic Characterisation of Marton Moss, 2009

Marton Moss Conservation Area Appraisal, 2018

Marton Moss Design Code, 2020

Watercourse and flood risk mapping, latest published

Marton Moss Biodiversity Strategy, 2022

Habitats Regulations Assessment: Marton Moss Neighbourhood Plan, 2022

Strategic Environmental Assessment: Marton Moss Neighbourhood Plan, Environmental Report, 2022

### *National Planning Policy and Advice*

62. Achieving high quality buildings beautiful and sustainable buildings and well-designed places are key features of National Policy. Plans should have a clear design vision and expectations as can be achieved through the production of design codes so as to establish or maintain a strong sense of place, with policies developed along with the local community to reflect residents' aspirations and an area's defining characteristics. National Policy also advocates that development plans should have policies that support appropriate measures to help ensure future resilience of communities and infrastructure to climate change impacts including with the assistance of Sustainable Drainage Systems. Achieving biodiversity net gain is also a fundamental requirement of new development proposals, an aspect that should be integrated into a scheme's design.

### *Relevant Local Plan Policies*

63. Local Plan Part 1 Core Strategy Policy CS1: Strategic Location of Development point 3 refers to recognising the important character of land at Marton Moss. Policy CS6: Green Infrastructure – sets out how high-quality and well-connected networks of green infrastructure in Blackpool will be achieved. Policy CS7: Quality of Design - requires that new development should be well designed and enhances the character and appearance of the local area. In respect of heritage – Policy CS8 - development proposals should respect and draw inspiration from the built, social, and cultural heritage of Blackpool and complement its rich history.

64. Core Strategy Policy CS9: Water Management - requires that all new developments must incorporate appropriate mitigation and resilience measures to minimise the risk and impact of flooding, incorporating appropriate Sustainable Drainage Systems (i.e. that meet approved technical specifications) and avoiding the discharge of surface water into the sewer network.

65. Part 2 of the Local Plan in Policy DM1: Design Requirements for New Build Housing Development - reinforces the importance of designs and layouts responding to a local character. The Policy also sets out a series of minimum expectations on internal and external space requirements, waste management and parking arrangements. It also advocates what energy and carbon saving measures should be built into new homes. Policy DM41: Transport Requirements for New Development – sets out all the factors to be taken account of in terms of accessibility.

66. Local Plan Part 2 Policy DM17: Design Principles – sets out the fundamental aspects of good design and Policy DM27: Conservation Areas – the particular design expectations that apply in these locations. Policy DM21: Landscaping – outlines the design requirements of outdoor areas that developments need to incorporate and Policy DM31: Surface Water Management – underlines the importance of incorporating the most sustainable drainage option available for new development. Policy DM35: Biodiversity - covers all the minimum expectations in relation to wildlife matters, including habitat creation where opportunities exist.

## Policy MM1 Building Design

The design of proposals for new development will be supported provided that:

- a. the provisions set out in the Marton Moss Design Code are appropriately reflected in the submitted scheme; and,
- b. consistent with the Code, schemes would minimise their impact on the appearance of the wider area through retaining existing trees and hedgerows, providing appropriate landscaping, and garden layouts; and,
- c. a Sustainable Drainage System compliant with the most up to date requirements of CIRIA \* Manual 753, or any future replacement thereof, is to be installed with suitable arrangements to be put in place for its future maintenance and proposals for this system to outfall to a fully functioning and intact local dyke network, subject to advice on sustainable drainage and flood risk in the [National Planning Practice Guidance](#); and
- d. there is a commitment to provide nature conservation information packs to new residential development occupiers, and to wildlife habitat creation within the site as set out in the Marton Moss Biodiversity Strategy; and
- e. in respect of land with high archaeological potential, that aspect has been fully assessed and there is a commitment to take appropriate action to protect and record features of importance.

\* Construction Industry Research and Information Association



*Primrose Terrace, School Road*

## 5.2 Open Land Character – To safeguard significant open land from being inappropriately developed and secure environmental improvements

### *Background Justification*

67. The defining visual feature of Marton Moss is its open pastoral character. The generally low density of development with numerous areas of open land gives the place a rural feel. The Plan aims to preserve this important characteristic whilst at the same time allowing some appropriate development to take place. The Marton Moss Design Code recognises the importance of four large open tracts of land and the significance of these areas are considered in more depth in the Marton Moss Major Open Land Study. The four tracts are:

- Between Chapel Road and Yeadon Way
- South of Ecclesgate Road
- East of Sandy Lane and Worthington Road
- Midgeland Farm

68. These tracts are well spread across the Moss; they are longstanding areas of open land little used in the past for intensive market gardening and are now more typically fields for cattle and horse grazing. The Midgeland Farm site is the only one bordering the wide, open countryside of the Fylde Plain beyond, but it has specific heritage significance and community re-use potential - matters that are considered separately under Policy MM8.

69. The three other Major Open Land areas represent enclaves of countryside that the strict Core Strategy CS26 Policy has helped keep undeveloped. They serve as 'Green Lungs' and being open to view from nearby roads and/or public rights of way, overtly contribute to the open feel of the Neighbourhood Area. The land at Chapel Road/Yeadon Way also serves as a buffer between the Moss and the more built-up area of Blackpool further north. To the south, the open land tracts at Ecclesgate Road and Sandy Lane/Worthington Road are embedded in the heart of the Moss. All three areas have the potential to offer better public access with path improvements.

70. Furthermore, Blackpool Council's open space and green infrastructure mapping evidence shows how these areas of Major Open Land connect with other open areas on the Moss. As such they serve as a linked network of spaces that not only benefit the human population but also serve as natural habitats and wildlife corridors of ecological importance, albeit with the potential to be more biodiverse. As in many places of human settlement and agricultural use the surviving extents of natural vegetation are remnants of once larger habitats and these tracts of land represent local nature recovery opportunities. It is therefore appropriate that as much as possible of the open land should be retained and appropriately used not just to safeguard the local character but also for recreation, open-air leisure pursuits such as equestrian events and golf, and nature conservation benefits. Any buildings proposed on such land will need to be kept to a minimum and limited to those essential to the intended predominantly open use envisaged. Camping tourist accommodation comprising tent and touring caravan sites would also be acceptable within areas of Major Open Land.

### *What the Community Says*

71. The open pastoral character of the Moss is seen as its attractive defining feature by many local people. The Residents' Survey showed that the greatest concerns were the loss of green space arising from new development and protecting the natural environment.

72. The majority of responses received to the Evidence and Policy Options Engagement supported the safeguarding of specific key larger tracts of open land from development. However, it was also pointed out that as well as the large open tracts there are also areas of significant open land comprising smaller open spaces interspersed within the more built-up areas of the Moss that also contribute to its overall character.

### *Sources of Evidence*

Historic Characterisation of Marton Moss, 2009

Marton Moss Conservation Area Appraisal, 2018

Blackpool's Green and Blue Infrastructure Strategy 2019-2029, 2019

Marton Moss Design Code, 2020

Marton Moss Major Open Land Study, 2022 (Further Revised)

Marton Moss Footpaths, Bridleways and Cycle Routes Study, 2022 (Revised)

M55 Hub Extended Phase 1 Ecology Report, 2009 and miscellaneous nature conservation records, various

Marton Moss Biodiversity Strategy, 2022

Habitats Regulations Assessment: Marton Moss Neighbourhood Plan, 2022

### *National Planning Policy and Advice*

73. Although making effective use of land (when it is being developed) is a central feature of national planning policy that approach does also recognise the benefits of keeping land undeveloped. Such open land can serve a variety of functions (e.g. for wildlife, recreation, flood risk mitigation, cooling/shading, carbon storage, food production) and in terms of maintaining an area's character and setting. Achieving biodiversity net gain is also a fundamental requirement of new development proposals.

### *Relevant Local Plan Policies*

74. Local Plan Part 1 Core Strategy Policy CS1: Strategic Location of Development point 3 refers to recognising the important character of land at Marton Moss. Policy CS6: Green Infrastructure - promotes protecting, enhancing, creating and connecting all the facets of the green infrastructure network. Policy CS7: Quality of Design - recognises the importance of green infrastructure in the overall design of places. Policy CS21: Leisure and Business Tourism – aims to focus tourism investment in central parts of Blackpool and at existing outdoor leisure and tourism facilities elsewhere, only exceptionally will new holiday accommodation be allowed in peripheral locations outside these areas. Part 2 of the Local Plan in Policy DM35: Biodiversity - covers all the minimum expectations in relation to wildlife matters, including habitat creation where opportunities exist.

### **Policy MM2 Open Land Character**

**To maintain their vital contribution to the overall character of Marton Moss and their green infrastructure significance the following areas, as shown on the Policies Map, are safeguarded as Major Open Land:**

- 1. Between Chapel Road and Yeadon Way**
- 2. South of Ecclesgate Road**
- 3. East of Sandy Lane and Worthington Road**

**Development proposals on Major Open Land will be supported provided that the open appearance of the site would be substantially retained, and limited to the following:**

- a. outdoor recreational, camping or other open-air leisure uses appropriate to a rural area, provided any buildings are demonstrated to be essential and no larger than is necessary to serve the use proposed; or,**
- b. conversion or change of use of existing buildings for agricultural or equestrian purposes; or,**
- c. extensions or replacement dwellings in keeping with the scale and character of the area and not exceeding 33% of the original ground floor footprint of the existing dwelling.**

**Where appropriate schemes should provide better public access and encompass local nature recovery measures.**

## 5.3 School Road/Midgeland Road Junction – To improve the roadside appearance and retain the open character of the land here

### *Background Justification*

75. The appearance of an entrance to a place has a significant impact on informing first impressions on users of what that place is like. The School Road/Midgeland Road crossroads serves as a gateway for people arriving at Marton Moss. Unfortunately, the land around this crossroads has a poor appearance. There is an unkempt former bus turnaround/layby, underused and disused land at each quadrant and unsightly, dilapidated fences. There are opportunities to enhance the location in various ways in addition to better maintenance of the public spaces.

76. Despite its poor appearance the land around the junction, given its significant extent and absence of buildings, positively contributes to the open character of the Area therefore any development would need to be in accordance with the provisions of Policy MM2. Any development land use proposals that come forward will need to provide appropriate boundary treatment to the road frontage. Normally a proposal to put up a wall or fence up to 1 metre high would not require planning permission to be applied for and therefore the Council would not be able to control the design and materials to be used. However, it is intended that this 'right' be removed with an Article 4 Direction under the provisions of the General Permitted Development Order.

77. The former bus turnaround/layby is next to the Midgeland Farm site (see Policy MM9) and has the potential to be a point of access thereto for pedestrians, horse riders and cyclists. There is also sufficient space here capable of accommodating a sizeable public art installation, such a feature could also serve to signpost the way to the proposed community park at Midgeland Farm.

### *What the Community says*

78. There was very high level of support from respondents to Evidence and Policy Options Engagement for improving the appearance of this road junction.

### *Sources of Evidence*

79. Visual survey of land use and its condition at Marton Moss (no published documents).

### *National Planning Policy and Advice*

80. National Planning Policy urges that plan makers and decisions on planning applications take account of the sense of place, arrangement of streets, spaces, building type and materials to create attractive, welcoming, and distinctive places to live, work and visit.

### *Relevant Local Plan Policies*

81. Local Plan Part 2 Policy DM25: Public Art – outlines the Council's approach to encouraging appropriate public art installations and specifically mentions Marton Moss as a location opportunity.



### Policy MM3 School Road/Midgeland Road Junction

The design of any proposal for development on land adjacent to the School Road/Midgeland Road crossroads, as shown on the Policies Map, will be supported provided it:

- a. is in accordance with Policy MM2; and,
- b. includes appropriately designed boundary treatment adjacent to the road frontage.

An appropriately designed and sited art installation will be supported at this location.



*Land at School Road/Midgeland Road Junction*



## B. Housing Development

### 5.4 Housing Site Allocations – To identify land for new housing and guide the number, sizes, and types of new homes on each site

#### *Background Justification*

82. People have changing residential accommodation requirements and abilities to afford housing as they go through their lives. Wherever possible it is clearly important that households occupy accommodation that best suits their current and foreseeable short-term needs. Housing comes in various basic sizes (numbers of bedrooms) and types – houses, bungalows, and apartments. There are also more specialist forms designed to suit less able and/or older persons in terms of their accessibility and care needs. There are also several different forms of tenure – homes to buy, rent, or some combination of the two in terms of shared ownership.

83. Housing specifically intended to be affordable is cheaper to buy or rent than the market rate so in some way it is subsidised (see Appendix G). Generally, most housing is constructed ahead of the future occupiers being known (i.e. it is speculatively built) but many individual homes are provided to the specific requirements of the initial purchaser – i.e. they are custom-built.

84. A Housing Needs Assessment of the population of the Moss has been prepared to inform this Plan. This identifies both the overall quantity of additional housing indicated for the 10-year Plan period (broadly derived from the projected increase in the total number of households), and what different forms of housing would best meet the needs of local people over this time frame. However, the scope to provide everyone in the Area with ideal types of newly built accommodation is limited by the relatively small overall number of additional homes indicated – 28 dwellings to be provided between 2020 and 2030. This is a minimum figure that can be modestly exceeded without detriment to the integrity of the Plan.

85. The theoretical total amount of new housing indicated to meet the needs of Marton Moss over the 10-year Plan period is a complicated calculation (see Appendix H). The Neighbourhood Plan needs to be in general conformity with the strategic policies of the Local Plan and as such should aim to meet its share of the overall Blackpool housing requirement figure. That share is approximately 1% based on the size of the population of the Moss. However, the Local Plan Part 1 Core Strategy has a plan period of 2012-2027. It therefore finishes three years short of the Neighbourhood Plan's period. However, having said all this as the whole amount of housing required to meet Blackpool's needs can be met in the Borough outside of Marton Moss, the 28 dwelling figure is only an indicator.

86. The Marton Moss Housing Needs Assessment work takes account of both the Core Strategy approach and the Standard Method. So, although the amount of new housing in the Area will be relatively small it needs to be remembered that most people find and move to locally available 'secondhand' housing as their accommodation needs and financial circumstances change. However, people with more specific requirements may not be able to do so through a lack of choice in the existing housing stock.

87. The overall housing indicative figure is less than the estimated total number of homes specially designed for older people ideally needed over the coming 10 years. There is very little existing housing within or near Marton Moss designed for the needs of older people. This is common in many communities but in practice many older people prefer to stay living in accommodation they brought their families up in and manage to cope with health limiting impairments with the assistance of home adaptations and visiting carers. However, a 12- bungalow development is already under construction on the former Baguley's Garden Centre site at Midgeland Road and this could be appropriately extended with a few more bungalows using adjoining land proposed for such in the Plan. Occupation of the permitted bungalows and the additional properties will be restricted to older people for which they are designed to suit.

88. The Housing Needs Assessment also identifies a need for at least 20 affordable (cheaper than market) homes over the coming 10 years. Again, there is very little subsidised existing housing on the Moss and the prospect of funding being available for future provision is limited. Affordable housing is provided in one of two ways – either through cross-subsidy from market housing developments or via grant funded housing association/council schemes. The low number of new market homes envisaged to be built in the Neighbourhood Area means the scope to cross-subsidise affordable housing is very small as is the prospect of grant finance being available with the limited funds available to public sector landlords and the pressing needs for affordable elsewhere in the Borough.

89. However, terraced housing can provide a cheaper form of accommodation than most properties on the market locally and such dwellings are likely to well meet the needs of newly forming younger households. Again, the Plan is bringing forward sites that can be developed for this type of housing. So, by allocating sites for residential development suited to providing a range of different forms of housing and promoting such choices through an appropriate policy a varied selection of new accommodation can be achieved across the Area.

90. The Neighbourhood Plan period started on 1 April 2020 and will run until 31 March 2030. All homes that are completed (built and ready for occupation) during that period will count towards the housing indication figure no matter what source they come from, including:

- Sites already with planning permission with homes remaining to be completed
- New sites identified (i.e. allocated) for housing
- Unidentified (i.e. windfall) sites that come forward and gain planning permission during the Plan period

91. This means that the twelve bungalows being built at the former Baguley's Garden Centre site will, when completed, count towards the housing indication figure. It should be noted that the Local Plan Part 2 is not proposing any housing allocations at Marton Moss.

92. In deciding what land to propose as housing allocations (in Policy MM4 below) account has been taken of the site suggestions made by local people, landowners, and developers in the Call for Sites. These sites have been analysed for their suitability in the Marton Moss Site Options and Assessment and those found 'suitable' or 'potentially suitable' have been considered in more detail in the Marton Moss Housing Site Allocations Appraisal 2022. The potential financial viability of housing development in the Area has also been considered in two documents.

### *What the Community Says*

93. Housing overall was not rated as the most important issue for local people responding to the Residents' Survey. That is probably because most of the local population have their housing needs appropriately met. However, several people commented on the need for new individual houses, and some recognised a requirement for 'starter homes', properties for younger households. However, when asked in the Survey what sizes of new housing developments they would prefer to see built, local people responded as follows:

Large development (more than 30 houses)	1%
Medium development (15-30 houses)	6%
Smaller development (2-14 houses)	31%
Individual houses	35%
None	24%

Note: The above figures do not add to 100% due to rounding

94. At the Evidence and Policy Options Engagement stage the vast majority of people commenting favoured the Plan allocating sites for residential development and most respondents supported a specific policy which would specify in advance the sizes and types of homes that would suit each allocated site rather than leaving this open until the planning application stage.

### *Sources of Evidence*

Marton Moss Housing Needs Assessment, 2020

Marton Moss Site Options and Assessment, 2020<sup>6</sup>

Marton Moss Housing Site Allocations Appraisal, 2022 (Revised)

Marton Moss Housing Site Viability Study, 2022

Marton Moss Housing Viability – a Local Commentary, 2022 (Revised)

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<sup>6</sup> The site reference numbers used by the authors of this report (consultants AECOM) are shown in Policy MM4 overleaf alongside the lettering of the allocation sites.

### *National Planning Policy and Advice*

95. A long-standing Government policy is to significantly boost the overall supply of new homes across the country. Neighbourhood Plans are not required to bring forward land for housing development but are encouraged to do so. National policy advises neighbourhood planning groups should consider the opportunities for allocating suitable small and medium sized sites taking account of local market conditions and viability, availability and capacity of infrastructure and services, maintaining an area's prevailing character and setting, as well as the importance of securing well-designed, attractive and healthy places. Where there is a shortage of land to meet housing needs low density development should be avoided – note there is no shortage at Marton Moss but in any event the Neighbourhood Plan makes provision for housing well in excess of the housing indicator.

96. National policy states that Plans should reflect in their policies the different residential accommodation requirements of different groups in the community. Also, the specific need for affordable housing is acknowledged but national policy states this is normally not to be sought on market housing schemes of less than ten dwellings. Above this size at least 10% of homes to be provided on a site should be for affordable home ownership (unless this would prejudice the ability to meet the identified affordable housing needs of specific groups). Also at least a quarter of the affordable homes on a site should be 'First Homes' (see Appendix G). The exceptions to this are developments that are solely 'Build for Rent' schemes, specialist accommodation such as for elderly or student accommodation, self or custom-built housing, and schemes exclusively for affordable housing.

### *Relevant Local Plan Policies*

97. Local Plan Part 1 Core Strategy Policy CS2: Housing Provision - sets out an overall housing requirement figure for the whole of Blackpool for the 2012-2027 Plan period of 4,200 homes. The following policies also apply to the whole of the Borough including Marton Moss: Policy CS13: Housing Mix, Density and Standards – specifies the sizes of homes on sites so as to achieve a balanced mix of properties and Policy CS14: Affordable Housing – seeks on sites in the 3-14 dwelling size range, the direct provision of such housing, or a financial contribution to be used on another site. On larger sites thirty percent of the total number of units provided are required to be affordable. These provisions are all subject to the financial viability of the overall scheme.

98. The various requirements for new developments to contribute to infrastructure and community facilities are Policy CS11: Planning Obligations, Policy CS12 Sustainable Neighbourhoods and, specifically school places, in Policy CS15: Health and Education. Local Plan Part 2 Policy DM3: Supported Accommodation and Housing for Older People – sets out criteria for the various forms of specialist housing for older people and the acceptable distribution of such developments.

## Policy MM4 Housing Site Allocations

The following sites, as shown on the Policies Map, are proposed for housing development:

Site	AECOM	Location	Appropriate forms of development
B	MM19	Adj. to 322, Common Edge Road	4 detached dwellings facing Common Edge Road
C*	MM26 (part)	Land on the Corner of Common Edge Road and School Road	No more than 11 dwellings
D~	MM20	Adj. to Ral Mar, Sandy Lane	2 detached dwellings
E~	MM27	Adj. to Lemmington House, Worthington Road	1 detached dwelling
F	MM21	The Bungalow Nurseries, Worthington Road	1 detached dwelling
G	MM18	Corner of Midgeland Road and Kitty Lane	No more than 8 dwellings
H	MM13	Caradaw Farm, School Road	No more than 6 dwellings
I	MM22	Adj. to Rushy Meade, School Road	1 detached dwelling fronting School Road
J	MM23	Adj. to Larchfield, St. Nicholas Road	2 detached dwellings
L	MM24	Adj. to 9 Fishers Lane	2 detached dwellings
N	MM16	Former Marina Nurs, New Hall Avenue	2 detached dwellings
O	MM17b	Remaining land at former Baguley's Garden Centre, off Midgeland Road	5 detached bungalows, reserved for older people, accessed off new estate road
P~	MM14b	Dean Nurseries, Chapel Road	6 detached dwellings off new estate road
Q~	MM14a	The Hollies, Chapel Road	1 detached dwelling
R^	MM10	Adj. to 1 Runnell Villas, Chapel Road	2 detached dwellings off short private drive fronting Chapel Road
S^	MM5	Off Magnolia Way	10 detached dwellings and 5 terraced houses accessed off Magnolia Way
T	MM31	Adj. to Moss Lodge, Jubilee Lane North	3 detached dwellings fronting Jubilee Lane – avoiding surface water sewer
U	MM30	Adj. to 58 Stockydale Road	2 detached dwellings fronting Jubilee Lane – avoiding surface water sewer
V	-	Grazing Land, Jubilee Lane North	1 detached dwelling
W''	-	41 Stockydale Road	2 detached dwellings - avoiding surface water sewer
X	-	Amarella, School Road	1 detached dwelling fronting School Road and 3 detached dwellings fronting Kitty Lane/Sandy Lane

\*Plus subsequent site suggestion. ~Site within the vicinity of a sewer flooding incident – prospective developers advised to engage early with United Utilities. “Subject to demonstrating there would be no amenity impact of the nearby pumping station on any proposed development of the site. ^ Site with high archaeological potential – see Policy MM1

## 5.5 Windfall Housing – To allow unallocated sites to be developed for housing

### *Background Justification*

99. It is not feasible at the start of the Plan period to identify all suitable sites that may become available for housing in the years up to 2030 and allocate them in advance. Inevitably over time circumstances will change, some long standing uses will cease, and landowners will revise their future intentions. Therefore, it is appropriate to have a policy to cover how unidentified sites will be treated if they come forward as ‘windfall’ opportunities in planning applications for residential development.

100. The key consideration is to ensure that these sites are no less appropriate for development than the sites allocated for housing. The over-riding requirement will be for windfall housing schemes to not significantly undermine the open character of the Area. Large scale development of greenfield land would be unacceptable and contrary to the Marton Moss Design Code. Housing schemes comprising small scale infilling of gaps in built-up street frontages or the redevelopment of previously developed ‘brownfield’ sites are much less likely to have a detrimental impact on the appearance of the Moss.

101. All windfall housing proposals, to be acceptable, must accord with the basic standard construction requirements (as set out in the Local Plan and other relevant documents) that are applicable to all developments and be appropriate in terms of all the relevant policies of this Plan and the Design Code, such as in terms of building densities. Proposals that seek to cram in new dwellings on vacant plots or in existing gardens would therefore not be acceptable. Schemes that aim to meet specific local housing needs (such as to provide cheaper accommodation or specially to suit older persons) will though be favoured provided they are appropriate in all other respects.

### *What the Community Says*

102. A common comment made by respondents to the Residents’ Survey was that local people should be allowed to build an additional home on their land. This opportunity has been denied under Local Plan Part 1 Core Strategy Policy CS26 and this probably means there is a pent-up demand for such developments.

103. At the Evidence and Policy Options engagement stage of the Neighbourhood Plan a substantial majority of respondents favoured a policy that would limit windfall housing schemes to small infill and/or brownfield sites, rather than a policy that would cover a greater variety of types and sizes of site.

### *Sources of Evidence*

Visual survey of land use on the Moss

Marton Moss Major Open Land Study, 2022 (Further Revised)

### *National Planning Policy and Advice*

104. National policy recognises the contribution windfall sites can make to help meet housing requirements but cautions that there should be compelling evidence that this will be a reliable source of supply in the future if there is reliance on this source of provision to help meet the housing requirement figure. National policy also says that Plans should consider the case for policies that would resist development of residential gardens, such as where schemes would cause harm to the local area.



### *Relevant Local Plan Policies*

105. Local Plan Part 1 Core Strategy Policy CS2: Housing Provision - recognises the contribution to overall housing provision that can be made by windfall sites.

106. Local Plan Part 2 Policy DM2: Residential Annexes refers to ancillary living accommodation proposed as additional to the main dwelling, such proposals will be restricted in accordance with their occupancy and whether the development would create a separate dwelling.

### **Policy MM5 Windfall Housing**

**Housing development proposed on land not allocated for such purposes will be supported provided the site comprises either:**

- a. a small gap in an otherwise built-up street frontage; or,**
- b. land currently or recently occupied by buildings,**

**and the scheme would not significantly reduce the open character of the immediate locality or undermine the intentions of Policy MM2.**

**Subject to these provisions, proposals that would help meet a specific locally identified housing need will be favoured.**



Fishers Lane

## *C. Horticultural and Equestrian Uses*

### **5.6 Market Gardening Businesses – To support where possible horticultural businesses and guide future alternative uses**

#### *Background Justification*

107. Widespread market gardening across much of the Moss has left an important legacy in terms of the vernacular architecture of the older houses and the scale and form of many land plots. These aspects are picked up by Policy MM1. Unfortunately looking forward, the prospects for continued market gardening locally look slim with only one such use known to be currently in operation (producing bedding plants) and there is limited scope for the diversification of these enterprises. Many glasshouses have been removed over the last 60 years, some of those that remain are in a derelict condition and others stand intact but unused. However, given the rising concerns about climate change and the benefits of local food sourcing, the demand for and viability of greenhouse cultivation on the Moss may become more positive in the future.

108. Given the historic contribution market gardening has made to the character of the area and to local employment, efforts to support the remaining businesses are justified. Glasshouses though have limited alternative uses and various activities ancillary to horticulture such as farm shops or pick-your-own outlets would not require planning permission to be applied for. However, novel proposals may arise that would constitute a change of use of a glasshouse or necessitate minor building works that would require planning approval.

109. Such proposals will be supported provided they are acceptable in all other respects including in terms of traffic generation and disturbance to neighbouring property, as would similarly appropriate redevelopment schemes where the scale and form of the horticultural plot is respected and the design requirements of Policy MM1 are met.

110. Strategic Environmental Assessment Draft Environmental Report for the Neighbourhood Plan makes the following specific recommendation relevant to proposals on former horticultural sites that have been left to go ‘wild’ for several years:

- that Policy MM6 include a requirement for an ecological survey of the site(s) considered for re-development to avoid potential harm to established biodiversity on such sites.

#### *What the Community Says*

111. Market gardening uses, and their employment benefits, were not specifically referred to in responses to the Residents’ Survey, probably because very few people are now directly employed in these businesses.

112. At the Evidence and Policy Options engagement stage a substantial majority of respondents favoured a policy that would encourage other suitable uses to help support the main enterprise.

#### *Sources of Evidence*

Visual survey of land use and its condition

Specific engagement with local market gardeners

Strategic Environmental Assessment: Marton Moss Neighbourhood Plan, Environmental Report, 2022

#### *National Planning Policy and Advice*

113. National policies recognise that the diversification of agricultural and other land-based rural businesses should be enabled but also that the role of town centres should be supported.

#### *Relevant Local Plan Policies*

114. Part 2 of the Local Plan does not have a specific policy concerning market garden uses although Policy DM34: Development in the Countryside - does recognise horticulture as being appropriate to a rural area. However, both Parts of the Local Plan (Policies CS4 and DM15 respectively) are relevant in terms of town centre uses.

#### **Policy MM6 Market Gardening Businesses**

**Proposals for development involving the re-use of an existing glasshouse and/or the diversification of an operating horticultural business will be supported providing that the proposed use:**

- a. can be appropriately accessed by delivery vehicles; and,**
- b. has sufficient vehicle parking provision within the site; and,**
- c. would not unduly disturb neighbouring residential occupiers.**

**Proposals to re-develop land previously used for market gardening will be required to respect the scale and form of the horticultural plot, accord with the design requirements of Policy MM1 and, where the land has been left to go wild, include an ecological survey of the site. Where the proposal is for a town centre use, it will need to comply with Blackpool Local Plan Policies CS4: Retail and Other Town Centre Uses; and DM15: Threshold for Impact Assessment.**



*Amatiello Nursery, New Hall Avenue*



## 5.7 Horse Stabling and Riding Activities – To support equestrian development

### *Background Justification*

115. The keeping and riding of horses is both an important local business sector and a popular hobby across the Moss. Many former market gardening plots are now used for the grazing, exercising, and stabling of horses. The use of land here for those activities has significantly helped retain the open and pastoral character of the Area. Some of these activities do not require planning permission to be applied for. However, others involve buildings of a significant scale that require consent. Policy MM2 recognises that equestrian development would be appropriate on the major tracts of open land as long as any buildings proposed (such as stables) here are essential, no larger than is necessary and are acceptable in terms of detailed siting considerations. Elsewhere across the Moss more substantial structures (such as for indoor riding) will be supported under Policy MM7 provided these are sited close to existing buildings. The Policy also points promoters of such schemes to the good practice produced by the British Horse Society<sup>7</sup> in respect of their recommended standards for structures and ground surfaces.

### *What the Community Says*

116. Horse riding is clearly a popular local activity and is seen as contributing to the appearance of the area but there is a concern at the loss of bridleway paths as mentioned in responses to the Residents' Survey.

117. At the Evidence and Policy Options engagement stage a substantial majority of respondents favoured a policy to openly support equestrian development.

### *Sources of Evidence*

118. Visual survey of land use and its condition at Marton Moss (no published documents).

### *National Planning Policy and Advice*

119. Equestrian uses are essentially rural in character, whether they be run as businesses or are personal leisure activities. National policies support the sustainable growth and expansion of such rural enterprises provided they respect the character of the area.

### *Relevant Local Plan Policies*

120. There are no Local Plan policies directly relevant to this topic.

## **Policy MM7 Horse Stabling and Riding Activities**

**Proposals for development involving equestrian use will be supported provided the buildings and any other installations proposed accord with:**

- a. British Horse Society good practice; and,**
- b. Policy MM2 where they relate to designated major open land; or elsewhere,**
- c. any substantial structures (such as indoor riding centres) are appropriately located adjacent to existing buildings.**

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<sup>7</sup> <https://www.bhs.org.uk/our-work>

## D. Heritage and Community

### 5.8 Midgeland Farm – To enable restoration and community use

#### *Background Justification*

121. There has been a 'Midgeland Farm' since at least the 16<sup>th</sup> century. The oldest buildings that remain today on the site, the farmhouse, stable, barn and two shippens date back to at least the early 19<sup>th</sup> century. These buildings have been disused for many years and are now in a very poor state of repair. However, the farmhouse is largely unaltered in plan form. The barn is almost entirely cobble built. These buildings are locally listed; later constructed farm buildings on the site are of little or no architectural merit, they are also in a poor state of repair.

122. After several private owners, Midgeland Farm (the buildings and associated fields) was bought by the former Blackpool Corporation in 1968 and the bulk of the land was used as a landfill site. Subsequently all the land and buildings became owned by Lancashire County Council.

123. Today the site remains closed to the public. All the buildings have recently been structurally surveyed and are now considered by the owners to be beyond economic repair, a high safety risk and should be demolished. Clearance of the buildings would release the potential of the northern field of the site at the south east corner of Midgeland Road and School Road (which has never been landfilled) for open space and tree planting uses at minimal cost.

124. The remaining land overlies the former landfill and is capped with a clay layer. This part of the site is interspersed with boreholes used for gas monitoring and water sampling. Gas wells and a flare are used to burn off methane gas emissions. Leachate (water that has percolated through a solid and leached out some of the constituents) is collected and pumped to the treatment plant where it is treated before being discharged in to the sewer. A recently completed risk assessment undertaken by the owners concludes that the landfill is still actively producing emissions and should remain closed to public access for the time being. United Utilities point out that there is a modelled flood risk for the site and ask to be consulted as more detailed re-use proposals are drawn up.

125. The land associated with the farmstead mainly comprises open fields with a few hedgerows. There are, however, substantial belts of trees on the south western and south eastern boundaries of the site. There is a good standard of vehicular access to the land directly from a full width stretch of Midgeland Road and an internal, surfaced roadway dating from the landfill operations. This access could feasibly be adapted to allow public access to the northern field. In recent times plans to plant more trees on the site were only partially implemented.

126. The area that has been land-filled at Midgeland Farm extends eastwards beyond the Blackpool Borough boundary (into Fylde) and hence outside the Neighbourhood Area. The extent of land within the Area is about 11 hectares (27 acres). The northern field equates to about half that area, so still a substantial size that could accommodate the first phase of a community park with sufficient space for a range of paths for various users - walkers, joggers, cyclists and horse riders and room for significant landscape planting. At present there are no public parks within the Neighbourhood Area and limited public rights of way paths in good condition. There is particularly a shortage of bridleways and off-road cycle paths.

127. The principle of opening-up the site for community use is supported by Lancashire County Council, provided the land is made safe for public access. Blackpool Civic Trust is particularly keen to save from loss and help restore the traditional farm buildings. Blackpool Council is considering taking a long lease on the land and the authority also supports community use. Progress can best be achieved by the two Councils, the Civic Trust and the Forum working together.



### *What the Community Says*

128. The future of Midgeland Farm is considered a high priority by many local people who responded to the Residents' Survey and were supportive of safeguarding heritage features and providing more leisure/recreation amenities in the area.

129. At the Evidence and Policy Options engagement stage all but one respondent agreed with the aim to save the main traditional buildings from being lost and to then pursue their restoration and re-use, including the creation of a community park on the surrounding land.

### *Sources of Evidence*

Midgeland Farm Historic Building Assessment, 2009

Historic Characterisation of Marton Moss, 2009

Marton Moss Conservation Area Appraisal, 2018

### *National Planning Policy and Advice*

130. National policies state that plans should be positive about the conservation and enjoyment of the historic environment including heritage assets most at risk of loss through neglect, decay and other threats. National policies encourage plan makers to provide for social, recreational, and cultural facilities. Access to high quality open spaces is recognised as providing opportunities for physical activity that is important for the health and well-being of communities.

### *Relevant Local Plan Policies*

131. Local Plan Part 1 Core Strategy Policy CS8: Heritage – supports proposals to retain, reuse or convert heritage assets whilst conserving or enhancing their significance. Design Policy CS7 promotes new pedestrian and cycle routes as well as the provision of green infrastructure. The latter is also supported by Policy CS6: Green Infrastructure. Policy CS15: Health and Education - advocates developments that encourage healthy and active lifestyles.

132. In Part 2 of the Local Plan Policy DM28: Non-Designated Heritage Assets – supports a presumption in favour of repairing and appropriate re-use of structures such as locally listed buildings. Policy DM36: Controlling Pollution and Contamination – stresses the importance of development proposals relating to contaminated land properly dealing with any risks through appropriate management and remediation measures.

### **Policy MM8 Midgeland Farm**

- a. The Midgeland Farm site, as shown on the Policies Map, is safeguarded for future use as a community park complete with paths for people to use on foot, cycle, or horse as well as appropriate tree planting and other landscaping; and,**
- b. measures to retain, as far as reasonably practical, the structure of the farmhouse, stable, barn and early shippens will be supported. Any loss will be mitigated by measures to preserve any remaining structures and/or programme of archaeological recording.**

## 5.9 Local Green Space – To protect land that is used for recreational purposes

### *Background Justification*

133. There is little land in the Neighbourhood Area that is freely open to public recreational use. The formal sports pitches off School Road, used by two local football clubs, provide good facilities to their members as does the South Shore Lawn Tennis Club on Midgeland Road. However, these sites are already protected from inappropriate development proposals by national policies and the Local Plan so do not require any further safeguarding in the Neighbourhood Plan.

134. The Marton Moss Local Green Space Study assesses all the potential candidate sites for designation as Local Green Space. There are some local ‘amenity greens’ mainly associated with housing developments that serve as landscape and drainage features rather than recreational spaces. The one recreational exception is a well-used area of informal open space popular with local people to the north of St Nicholas Primary School. A through public footpath links the land with School Road and Ecclesgate Road. There is also an informal path through to The Shovels public house carpark which provides access to Common Edge Road and as such this space is well located to serve local residents. The land is owned by Blackpool Council but is not formally designated in any way. It fully meets the criteria for being designated as Local Green Space.

### *What the Community Says*

135. Many people responding to the Residents’ Survey had concerns about the lack of open recreational facilities on the Moss. Some respondents specifically referred to the need to protect the open space land from development between School Road and Ecclesgate Road.

136. At the Evidence and Policy Options engagement stage there was over whelming support to have a Local Green Space policy. This was envisaged to apply to the sports grounds as well but following representations from Sport England it is accepted that these do not need such protection in the Neighbourhood Plan and are in any event shown as existing Green Infrastructure on the Local Plan Policies Map.

### *Sources of Evidence*

Blackpool’s Green and Blue Infrastructure Strategy 2019-2029, 2019

Marton Moss Local Green Space Study, 2022 (Revised)

### *National Planning Policy and Advice*

137. Designating Local Green Space is a task that national policy specifies for Neighbourhood Plans but states the designation should only be used where the green space is:

“

- a) *in reasonably close proximity to the community it serves*
- b) *demonstrably special to the local community and holds a particular local significance, for example because of its beauty, historic significance, recreational (including as a playing field), tranquility or richness of its wildlife;*  
*and*
- c) *local in character and is not an extensive tract.*

*Policies for managing development within a Local Green Space should be consistent with those for Green Belts.”*

### *Relevant Local Plan Policies*

138. Local Plan Part 1 Core Strategy Policy CS6: Green Infrastructure - refers to the wide-ranging benefits of protecting and improving open green space. However, there is no specific mention in any part of the Local Plan to the School Road /Ecclesgate Road land (which includes that North of St Nicholas School).

### **Policy MM9 Local Green Space**

**Open land used for informal recreation immediately to the North of St Nicholas School, as shown on the Policies Map is designated as Local Green Space where development will be managed in accordance with national policy for Green Belts.**



*Open land immediately adjoining the northern boundary of St Nicholas School*

## *E. Movement*

### **5.10 Footpaths, Bridleways and Cycle Routes – To improve local opportunities for walking, horse riding and cycling**

#### *Background Justification*

139. Marton Moss has a quite extensive network of designated public rights of way. However, most of these are only classed as footpaths and several of them are difficult to use due to being blocked by overgrown vegetation or in some cases buildings. There are few paths purpose-designed for horse riding use (bridleways) and no dedicated cycleways or signed cycle routes.

140. Resolving the issue of blocked paths is first and foremost an enforcement matter for the Council, as Highway Authority. Creating new paths other than on land set aside for community use (such as those proposed at Midgeland Farm – Policy MM8) is difficult as it requires willing landowners. However, where there are related development proposals that could improve accessibility, developers will be expected to either improve existing paths or provide routes for new paths in places identified as missing gaps in the network – see Map 3 in Appendix I. Providing better and additional paths within the Moss would encourage more localised activity away from land linked with the sensitive and internationally important wildlife habitats associated with the Ribble Estuary. The land made available should be at least 2 metres wide so that a multi-use path can be provided.

141. Creating a network of cycle routes is beyond the scope of this Neighbourhood Plan as it requires the use of solely Highways Act powers. This matter is however covered in the Marton Moss Footpaths, Bridleways and Cycle Routes Study 2022 as revised, which includes a map (see Map 4 in Appendix I) showing a suggested route network that could be signed for cyclists; it uses less trafficked roads and existing bridleways. However, requiring relevant developments to provide cycle use connections to roads and bridleways is a legitimate use of planning powers.

#### *What the Community Says*

142. The Residents' Survey shows that many in the community are concerned at the condition and loss of public rights of way as well as the safety of using roadside pavement footways. Numerous people suggested there should be more off-road paths provided.

143. At the Evidence and Policy Options engagement stage there was over whelming support to enable more opportunities for walking, horse riding and cycling.

#### *Sources of Evidence*

Mapping records of the public rights of way network.

Marton Moss Footpaths, Bridleways and Cycle Routes Study 2022 (Revised)

Habitats Regulations Assessment: Marton Moss Neighbourhood Plan, 2022

#### *National Planning Policy and Advice*



144. National policy urges plan makers to identify opportunities to promote walking and cycling with policies that provide for high quality path networks. Planning policies and decisions on planning applications should protect and enhance public rights of way and be added to where appropriate.

#### *Relevant Local Plan Policies*

145. Local Plan Part 1 Core Strategy Policy CS5: Connectivity - puts emphasis on the need for a safe, enhanced, and extended network of well signed routes for pedestrians and cyclists to increase the number of these types of journeys. Policy CS27 reaffirms this in South Blackpool and Policy CS15 stresses the importance new development helping to enable the leading of healthy and active lifestyles. Policy CS6: Green Infrastructure - recognises the value of public rights of way in connecting-up open spaces.

#### **Policy MM10 Footpaths, Bridleways and Cycle Routes**

**Development proposals will, wherever feasible, be required to:**

- a. incorporate measures to improve accessibility to/off nearby existing off-road paths (including where these are currently blocked or obstructed); and,**
- b. take opportunities to create new multi-mode paths along routes that represent missing links provided they would not lead to increased access to land associated with internationally designated wildlife habitats.**



*Bridleway from Midgeland Road to Division Lane*

## 6. PLAN IMPLEMENTATION, MONITORING AND REVIEW

### Implementation

146. For the Neighbourhood Plan to be effective in managing development proposals coming forward for the Moss the policies need to achieve what they set out to do. Except for minor schemes classed as ‘permitted development’ such as small house extensions, most other development proposals will need planning permission. When finalised, the policies in the Plan will be used by Blackpool Council, and Planning Inspectors in appeals, to help decide whether planning permission should be granted or refused. However, for the policies to be truly effective they need to either lead to the approved schemes being built or the protected features fully safeguarded from harm. In other words, the policies are in those cases being properly implemented.

147. Most of the development proposals that the policies relate to in the Plan will be put forward by private developers or private individuals and be dependent on the schemes being financially viable. For private developers this means that the money to be made from selling the completed development needs to exceed the costs of provision (land and construction) and enable a reasonable profit to be made. For individuals building properties for their own use, they need to be able to afford all the costs involved.

148. Some of the policies in the Plan are, however, at least partially dependent on additional funding, to ensure they are implemented. The following policies fall into this category:

- *MM3 School Road/Midgeland Road Junction* – providing the public art here is likely to require grant funding.
- *MM8 Midgeland Farm* – the traditional buildings are now considered beyond economic repair and because they are unsafe, may need to be demolished. However that could represent an opportunity to retain at least part of the structure and greatly reduces the remaining finance needed to create a community park. The National Lottery Community Fund is a potential source of monies. Likewise, the Lancashire Environmental Fund (especially given the former landfill status of the site) and Government bodies such as Sport England may also be eligible sources of grant aid to help fund the community park proposal.

### Monitoring

149. As time goes on it is important to check at regular intervals whether each policy in the Plan is being implemented as intended. The Forum is committed to annually monitoring how planning application decisions are being made in terms of conforming to the provisions of the policies and whether approved developments are being built. These checks will particularly apply to the progress being made on new housing provision. An annual monitoring report will be produced and published.

### Plan Review

150. The Plan has an expected ‘life’ of 10 years, the period it plans for being 2020 to 2030. Before the end of that period the Forum will consider whether to review the Plan and replace it with a new one. However annual monitoring work may reveal that the Plan’s policies are not proving effective far sooner than that. Early in the Plan period this may be a short-term blip and as time goes on the policies may come to achieve their intentions. If after around 5 years into the Plan period monitoring shows consistent under-performance of at least some of the policies, the Forum will decide whether to carry out a review and proceed to alter the Plan at that stage.



# Appendices

## Appendix A - Core Strategy Policy CS26, Justification and Key Diagram Extract

### Policy CS26: Marton Moss

1. The character of the remaining lands at Marton Moss is integral to the local distinctiveness of Blackpool and as such is valued by the local community. A neighbourhood planning approach will be promoted for this area to develop neighbourhood policy which supports the retention and enhancement of the distinctive character, whilst identifying in what circumstances development including residential may be acceptable.
2. Prior to developing a local policy framework through the neighbourhood planning process development on the remaining lands of the Moss will be limited to:
  - a. Conversion or change of use of existing buildings for agricultural or horticultural purposes;
  - b. Outdoor recreational uses appropriate to a rural area;
  - c. New homes that meet the requirements of NPPF paragraph 55;
  - d. Extensions or replacement dwellings in keeping with the scale and character of the area and not exceeding 35% of the original ground floor footprint of the existing dwelling.

### The justification text from the Core Strategy that further explains this Policy reads:

*'8.23 The distinctive character of the Moss reflects its historic past and its importance in more recent times as a market gardening area. Alongside remaining glasshouses, the lands are now used for a mix of horse grazing, other animal welfare, garden centres and dwellings set in large gardens, with other land in need of enhancement. The Moss lands are criss-crossed by lanes and tracks with scattered dwellings and small businesses. While more development exists along the main highway frontages, the lands behind these frontages retain an essentially rural character, although very different from typical more open countryside.*

*8.24 Whilst there is support to safeguard the essentially green open nature of the Moss, at the same time there is the view that the Countryside Policy in the current Blackpool Local Plan (2006) is overly restrictive. Proposing a neighbourhood planning approach therefore provides the community with the opportunity to directly determine the future for their area improving the interest and value of the Moss lands. Policy CS26 does not propose any housing development on the remaining lands on the Moss unless this emerges through the neighbourhood planning process from the community, in which case it will be set out in a Neighbourhood Plan or a Site Allocations Development Plan Document.*

*8.25 In advance of the neighbourhood planning process, no development will be permitted in the area unless it accords with the criteria set out in part 2 of the policy. The provisions of part 2 essentially restrict development to agricultural or horticultural purposes or outdoor recreational uses appropriate to a rural area; and extension and replacement proposals to no greater than 35% of the original ground floor footprint of the existing dwelling. This restriction is proposed so as not to undermine the outcome of the neighbourhood planning process for the enhancement of the Moss.*

8.26 A comprehensive characterisation study and a Phase 1 Habitats Survey have been undertaken to inform the future approach on Marton Moss and the built and natural environment characteristics and features of the area that need to be considered in planning its future.

8.27 The survey highlights that while much of the area is a mix of residential/smallholdings use, particular areas of interest identified include marshy grassland and the dyke system, as well as the network of gardens, hedgerows, verges and associated habitats. There are some original buildings typical of the historic origins of the Moss, with a wide variety of building types and ages. Although there is no defining architectural style, it is this variety together with the hedgerows, trees and lanes which defines much of the Moss land character. Allotments and community gardens provide continuing opportunities to grow fruit and vegetables locally, as well as having clear benefits in terms of community cohesion, health, heritage and the environment.

8.28 The neighbourhood planning process will need to conserve and enhance the existing natural features and habitats. In particular, any future development must not have a significant impact upon the foraging/roosting habitat of any of the “Annex 1” listed bird species that visit ‘Natura 2000’ sites (Morecambe Bay and Ribble and Alt estuaries). A biodiversity strategy for Marton Moss will be required to ensure that consideration is given to biodiversity throughout the development process, including appropriate ecological surveys and mitigation measures. In addition, any proposals may require licensed mitigation in accordance with existing best practice and legislative requirements to protect wildlife.




8.29 Access to existing leisure facilities, such as the South Shore Lawn Tennis Club, Squires Gate and Blackpool Wren Rovers Football Clubs and the range of equestrian uses, remain important to the area. The enhancement of the Moss could provide improved local leisure and recreational opportunities whilst retaining the rural character in parts of the area. Beyond the existing lanes and tracks, public access into the open lands is currently limited and some development may also enhance recreational access and potentially improve the ecological value of the Moss.’

**Key Diagram extract:**



**Legend Extract:**

**South Blackpool Growth & Enhancement**

-  Marton Moss Strategic Site (Neighbourhood Planning Approach)
-  Employment Growth
-  Housing Growth

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## Appendix B - Purpose, Aims and Ambitions of the Forum

These were all set out in the Forum designation application:

### *Purpose*

The main purpose of the Marton Moss Neighbourhood Forum is to produce a Neighbourhood Plan for the Area. Ancillary to this is to establish an influential voice with the Council and other key agencies involved in providing local services and infrastructure.

### *Aims*

1. Plan for and enable appropriate development
2. Ensure such development is properly serviced with suitable infrastructure
3. Safeguard the character of the area, avoid significant harm to the local environment and where possible achieve improvements
4. Work with Blackpool Council to establish a Conservation Area
5. Improve local opportunities for walking, cycling and horse riding
6. Help provide needed community infrastructure and other amenities
7. Work with Blackpool Council to promote a high standard of greenspace maintenance
8. Work with Blackpool Council and the Police to help reduce the adverse impacts of road traffic on local routes
9. Work with United Utilities, Blackpool Council and landowners to secure drainage improvements and avoid any further deterioration

### *Ambitions*

1. Produce clear policies for managing new development that are understood and supported by local people
2. Deliver a community centre at Midgeland Farm working with other local groups
3. Provide public access to attractive green space at Midgeland Farm
4. Enable a convenient and safe off-road route through the Area for pedestrians, cyclists and horse riders
5. Ensure that the character of the Area remains unharmed and the Moss is an attractive place to live

## Appendix C - The Basic Conditions

(For details as to how this Plan meets these please refer to the separately produced Basic Conditions Statement)

All Neighbourhood Development Plans are required to meet the following Basic Conditions:

- a. **have regard to** national policies and advice contained in guidance issued by the Secretary of State – this means the relevant policies in the National Planning Policy Framework<sup>8</sup> and the pertinent advice contained in the Planning Practice Guidance<sup>9</sup>, also produced by the Government.
- b. **contribute to** the achievement of sustainable development - this is consistent with the planning principle that all plan-making and decision-making will either help achieve improvements in environmental, economic and social conditions or that consideration has been given to how any potential adverse effects arising from the proposals may be prevented, reduced or offset (referred to as mitigation measures).
- c. **be in general conformity with** the strategic policies contained in the development plan for the area of the authority (or any part of that area) – for this Neighbourhood Plan this essentially means relevant policies in the Blackpool Local Plan Part 1 (Core Strategy). To assist neighbourhood planning groups with Plan preparation local planning authorities are obliged to identify which Local Plan policies are strategic. Those identified by Blackpool Council are set out on the following page in Appendix D.
- d. **does not breach, and is otherwise compatible with**, specific obligations and meets prescribed conditions – those relevant to a Neighbourhood Plan are those relating to Human Rights law, Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA), the conservation of natural habitats and wild fauna (including wild birds) and flora (all considered in the Habitat Regulation Assessment (HRA) process) plus any aspects pertaining to the Waste Framework, Air Quality and Water Framework Directives. This Neighbourhood Plan has been subject to both a SEA and HRA.

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<sup>8</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-planning-policy-framework--2>

<sup>9</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/planning-practice-guidance>

## Appendix D - Relevant Strategic Local Plan Policies

At the outset of preparing the Neighbourhood Plan Blackpool Council identified a list (see below) of Local Plan Part 1 - Core Strategy Policies – that may, dependent on the subsequently decided scope of the Neighbourhood Plan be relevant for it to be in general conformity with. Those policies which are considered by the Neighbourhood Forum to be relevant to the Neighbourhood Plan as now produced are shown in **bold type**. The separately published Basic Conditions Statement considers how the draft Neighbourhood Plan produced for the Regulation 16 stage meets the general conformity requirement.

**CS1: Strategic Location of Development (point 3)**

**CS2: Housing**

CS3: Economic Development and Employment

CS4: Retail and Other Town Centre (point 3 a-e)

**CS5: Connectivity**

**CS6: Green Infrastructure**

**CS7: Design**

**CS8: Heritage**

**CS9: Water Management**

CS10: Sustainable Design and Renewable and Low Carbon Energy

**CS11: Planning Obligations**

**CS12: Sustainable Neighbourhoods (point 1 a-f)**

**CS13: Housing Mix, Density and Standards**

**CS14: Affordable Housing**

**CS15: Health and Education**

CS16: Traveller Sites

**CS21: Leisure and Business Tourism (point 2)**

CS23: Managing Holiday Bed Spaces (point 2)

CS24: South Blackpool Employment Growth

**CS26: Marton Moss (will be superseded by the Neighbourhood Plan once adopted)**

**CS27: South Blackpool Transport and Connectivity**

## Appendix E - List of Evidence Documents

The following documents (in order of first citation) have been used to help inform the preparation of the Neighbourhood Plan:

- Census of Population, 2011, Office for National Statistics
- Indices of Deprivation, 2019, Office for National Statistics
- Historic Characterisation of Marton Moss, 2009, Archaeo-Environment
- Marton Moss Conservation Area Appraisal, 2018, Blackpool Council
- Marton Moss Design Code, 2020, AECOM
- Watercourse and flood risk mapping, latest published, Environment Agency/Gov.uk
- Blackpool's Green and Blue Infrastructure Strategy 2019-2029, 2019, Blackpool Council
- Marton Moss Major Open Land Study, 2022 (Further Revised), Envisionuk
- Marton Moss Footpaths, Bridleways and Cycle Routes Study, 2022 (Revised), Envisionuk
- M55 Hub Extended Phase 1 Ecology Report, 2009, Bowland Ecology
- Nature conservation records, various
- Marton Moss Housing Needs Assessment, 2020, AECOM
- Marton Moss Site Options and Assessment, 2020, AECOM
- Marton Moss Housing Site Allocations Appraisal, 2022 (Revised), Envisionuk
- Midgeland Farm Historic Building Assessment, 2009, Stephen Haigh
- Marton Moss Local Green Space Study, 2022 (Revised), Envisionuk
- Marton Moss Biodiversity Strategy, 2022, Envisionuk
- Habitats Regulations Assessment: Marton Moss Neighbourhood Plan, 2022, AECOM
- Strategic Environmental Assessment: Marton Moss Neighbourhood Plan, Environmental Report, 2022, AECOM
- Marton Moss Housing Site Viability Study, 2022, AECOM
- Marton Moss Housing Viability – a Local Commentary, 2022, (Revised) Envisionuk



## Appendix F - Statutory and Locally Listed Buildings

### Statutory

- Blowing Sands and attached wall, 166 Common Edge Road – Grade II
- 1 & 2 Fishers Lane – Grade II

### Local

- Runnell Farm, East Gate Avenue
- Runnell Cottage, Barn and associated cobble wall, Chapel Road
- Boundary Stone, near Trebarrons Garden Centre, Common Edge Road
- Werneth House, off Division Lane
- Butcher's Farm Cottage, Worthington Road
- Midgeland Farm (farmhouse, stable, barn and shippons), Midgeland Road
- St Nicholas School (original building), School Lane
- Railway Building, Lilac Farm, Whalley Lane
- Whalley Farm, Whalley Lane

## Appendix G – National Policy Definitions of Affordable Housing

### Taken from the National Planning Policy Framework

**Affordable housing:** housing for sale or rent, for those whose needs are not met by the market (including housing that provides a subsidised route to home ownership and/or is for essential local workers); and which complies with one or more of the following definitions:

**a) Affordable housing for rent:** meets all of the following conditions: (a) the rent is set in accordance with the Government’s rent policy for Social Rent or Affordable Rent, or is at least 20% below local market rents (including service charges where applicable); (b) the landlord is a registered provider, except where it is included as part of a Build to Rent scheme (in which case the landlord need not be a registered provider); and (c) it includes provisions to remain at an affordable price for future eligible households, or for the subsidy to be recycled for alternative affordable housing provision. For Build to Rent schemes affordable housing for rent is expected to be the normal form of affordable housing provision (and, in this context, is known as Affordable Private Rent).

**b) Starter homes:** is as specified in Sections 2 and 3 of the Housing and Planning Act 2016 and any secondary legislation made under these sections. The definition of a starter home should reflect the meaning set out in statute and any such secondary legislation at the time of plan-preparation or decision-making. Where secondary legislation has the effect of limiting a household’s eligibility to purchase a starter home to those with a particular maximum level of household income, those restrictions should be used.

**c) Discounted market sales housing:** is that sold at a discount of at least 20% below local market value. Eligibility is determined with regard to local incomes and local house prices. Provisions should be in place to ensure housing remains at a discount for future eligible households.<sup>10</sup>

**d) Other affordable routes to home ownership:** is housing provided for sale that provides a route to ownership for those who could not achieve home ownership through the market. It includes shared ownership, relevant equity loans, other low cost homes for sale (at a price equivalent to at least 20% below local market value) and rent to buy (which includes a period of intermediate rent). Where public grant funding is provided, there should be provisions for the homes to remain at an affordable price for future eligible households, or for any receipts to be recycled for alternative affordable housing provision, or refunded to Government or the relevant authority specified in the funding agreement.

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<sup>10</sup> A further evolution of this category is ‘**First Homes**’ – discounted market sale units that are discounted a minimum of 30% against market value (and on their first sale priced no higher than £250,000 (£420,000 in Greater London) after discount), sold to first time buyers with a combined annual income not exceeding £80,000 (or £90,000 in Greater London), with restrictions on resales to maintain the discount proportion of the price of the property. First Homes are the government’s preferred discounted market tenure and should account for at least 25% of all affordable housing units delivered by developers through planning obligations.

## Appendix H - Housing Indicator Calculation

The following was provided to the Forum by Blackpool Council and is included in AECOM's Housing Needs Assessment report. **However please note since the below calculation was done the Forum has been informed by the Council that as there is no reliance on housing development in the Neighbourhood Area towards meeting Blackpool's overall housing requirements the housing number for Marton Moss is only an indicator and not a requirement.**

### **Core Strategy Housing Requirement**

*The Core Strategy requirement for the borough over the period 2020 – 2027 is 2,110 dwellings (280 dwellings per annum from 2020 – 2022 and 310 dwellings per annum from 2022 – 2027).*

*Assuming Marton Moss forms 1.16% of the population (borough population: 139,300, Marton Moss population 1,616) this would equate to **24 dwellings over the period 2020 – 2027.***

*Notwithstanding the above and as an observation. Applying the methodology to the whole of the plan period (2012 to 2027) the dwellings for Marton Moss would equate to approx. 49 dwellings. It should be noted that this does not take account of any completions that have already taken place at Marton Moss. There have been 83 completions at Runnell Farm, which is located in the Moss, as well as a small number of other completions elsewhere. This equates to more than 1.16% of the borough requirement over the entire Core Strategy period, so the Marton Moss area has already delivered more dwellings than would be required under a strict proportional approach.*

### **Standard Methodology (calculated as set out in PPG)**

*The Core Strategy requirement only runs for 7 years from 2020, which is three years short of a 10 year requirement. Therefore, the outstanding requirement has been calculated using the standard methodology. This provides **the minimum** number of dwellings needed for the 3 years 2027 to 2030.*

*Under the standard methodology the minimum local housing need figure for the borough per annum for the period 2020 – 2030 is calculated to be: 122 dwellings. Therefore, the minimum local housing need figure for the borough for 2027 – 2030 would be  $3 \times 122 = 366$  dwellings.*

*Assuming Marton Moss forms 1.16% of the population (borough population: 139,300, Marton Moss population 1,616) this would equate to **4** dwellings over the period 2027 – 2030.*

*Therefore, based upon the adopted Core Strategy requirement for the period 2020 – 2027 and the standard methodology minimum local housing need figure for the period 2027 – 2030 the housing requirement<sup>11</sup> for Marton Moss would be **28** dwellings (24 + 4) over the 10 year period 2020 – 2030.*

*The calculation used for the standard methodology is set out below:*

#### Step 1: Setting the baseline

*Baseline calculated using 2014 based household projections:*

- 64,165 households in 2020
- 65,338 households in 2030

*This is a total of 1,173 new households over the 10 year period, equivalent to an average household growth of **117** dwellings per year.*

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<sup>11</sup> It is considered more appropriate to refer to this as an 'indicator' as there is no requirement for Neighbourhood Plan to provide any housing contribution to meet the overall requirement for Blackpool.

### Step 2: An adjustment to take account of affordability

The average annual projected household growth figure is then adjusted based on the affordability of the area.

The most recent ONS published median workplace-based affordability ratio for Blackpool is **4.62** (2018)

No adjustment is applied where the ratio is 4 or below, but Blackpool's affordability ratio is higher than 4, so an adjustment is made using the formula in PPG.

**Local affordability ratio minus 4 :**  $4.62 - 4 = 0.62$

**This answer is divided by 4:**  $0.62/4 = 0.155$

**This answer is multiplied by 0.25:**  $0.155 \times 0.25 = 0.039$

**1 is then added to this answer:**  $0.039 + 1 = 1.039$

The adjustment factor is therefore 1.039 and is used as:

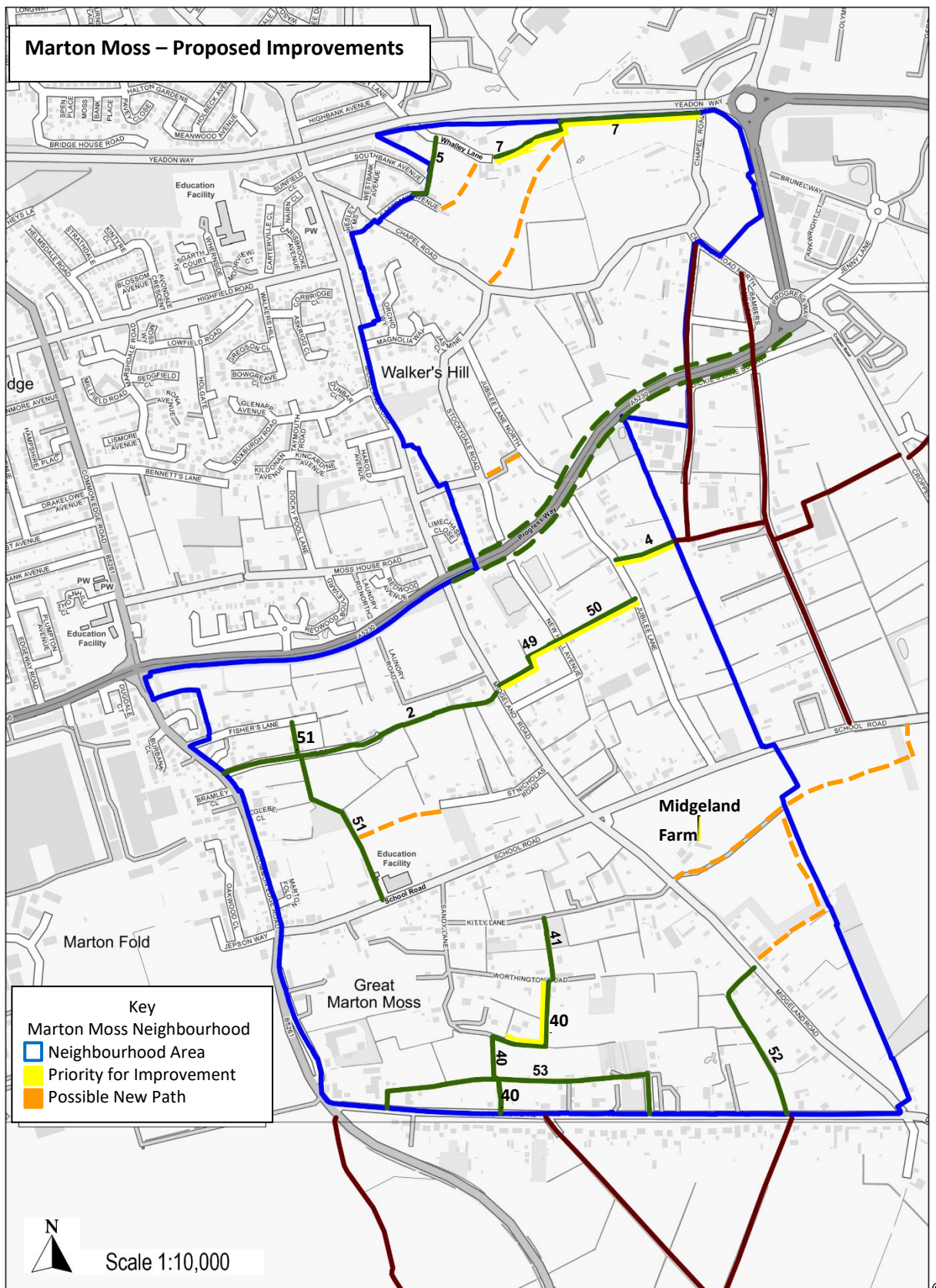
- Minimum annual local housing need figure = (adjustment factor) x projected household growth
- Minimum annual local housing need figure =  $1.039 \times 117$
- The resulting minimum local housing need figure is **122 dwellings per year**

### Step 3: Capping the level of any increase

A cap is then applied which limits the increases an individual local authority can face. How this is calculated depends on the current status of relevant strategic policies for housing. Where these policies were adopted within the last 5 years (at the point of making the calculation), the local housing need figure is capped at 40% above the average annual housing requirement figure.

Blackpool strategic policies were adopted within the last 5 years (January 2016), but the minimum local housing need figure (**122 dwellings per year**) is **below** the Core Strategy average annual housing requirement figure, so **therefore the cap is not applicable**.

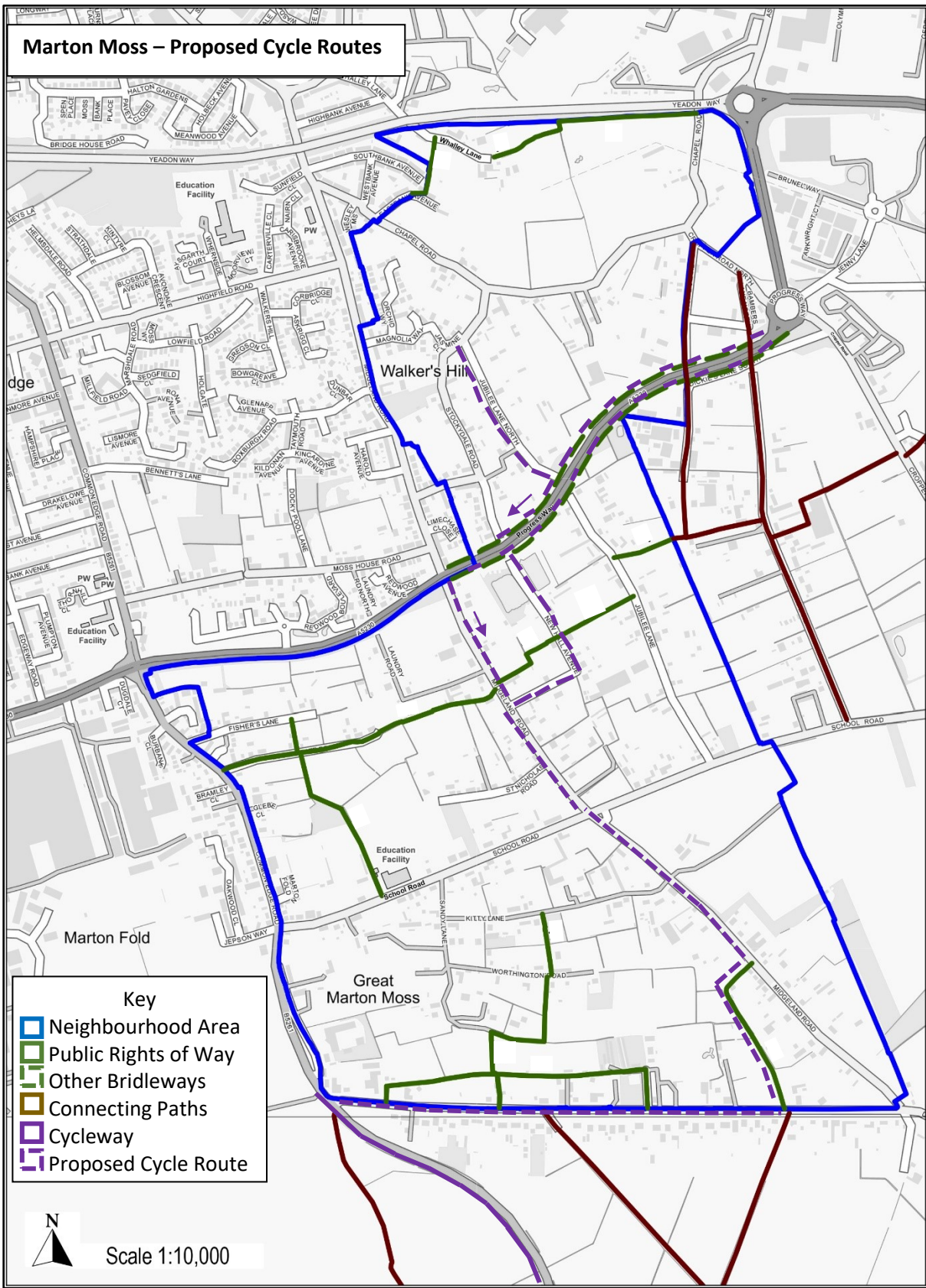
# Appendix I - Maps 3-4 of Footpaths, Bridleways and Cycle Routes Study Report



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Map 3: Public Rights of Way proposed improvements and possible new paths

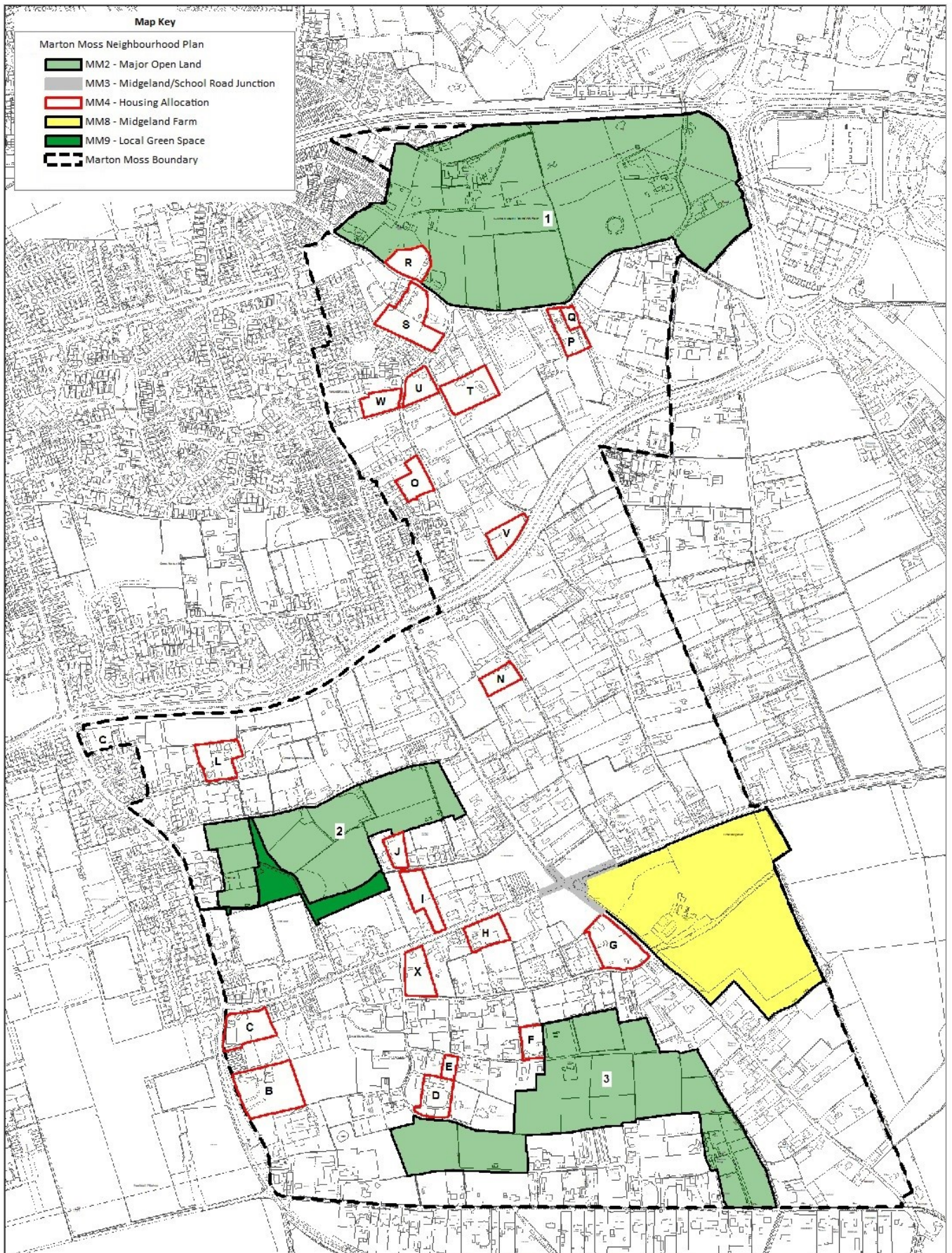




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Map 4: Proposed Cycle Routes





**Marton Moss**  
Neighbourhood Plan

**Policies Map**

Scale: 1:6500 @ A3

Date: 20/07/2022

Printed by: LDC

**Blackpool Council**

**Growth & Prosperity**

Team: Growth & Prosperity



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