

HAVE YOUR SAY



Wyre Local Plan Issues and Options 2024

The purpose of a local plan is to guide how the borough physically develops over the next 15 years.

It will establish a vision for Wyre, and the strategy for delivering that vision. It will identify the overall amount of different types of development needed to sustain the borough and where that development should, and should not, take place. It will also identify land that should be protected for its environmental or social use and encourage high quality design and a regard for our valued heritage and landscape.

Issues and Options Public Consultation

We are holding a public consultation from **29 July to 10 September 2024** on the first stage in developing a new Wyre Local Plan. This is called Issues and Options.

Today's exhibition gives you the opportunity to learn more about the key issues faced by Wyre and the options for addressing them. Your input into this early stage of local plan preparation is important and we would value your comments on how Wyre plans for the future.

Staffed exhibitions will take place at

Thornton YMCA Mon 5 August, 2.30pm to 7pm

Garstang Library Thurs 8 August, 1.30pm to 6.30pm

Forton Village Hall Mon 12 August, 2.30pm to 7pm

Great Eccleston Village Centre Tues 13 August, 2.30pm to 7pm

Stalmine Village Hall Wed 14 August, 2.30pm to 7pm

Fleetwood Marine Hall Thurs 15 August, 2.30pm to 7pm

Poulton-le-Fylde Community Hall Sat 17 August, 10am to 2.30pm

The unstaffed exhibition will also be available to view at Wyre Civic Centre, Breck Road, Poulton-le-Fylde FY6 7PU from Wednesday 21 August to Tuesday 10 September during normal office hours.

The Wyre Local Plan Issues and Options 2024 was prepared prior to the new Government being elected in July 2024. Proposed planning reform has not been considered or factored into this consultation document.

What happens next?

The Council will consider all of the comments received and publish a summary with its response. We are also continuing to gather the evidence we need to support the Plan.

The next key stage will be the publication of a Draft Local Plan in early 2025 which will contain draft policies and draft site allocations and will be the subject of a further public consultation.

For more information and to give your feedback, visit

www.wyre.gov.uk/local-plan

For any further information email planning.policy@wyre.gov.uk or call us on **01253 887373**

Key characteristics of Wyre

Population



According to the 2021 Census Wyre's population is around 111,929. Official projections estimate that the population will grow to 121,660 by 2040 – an **increase of 9,731 people.**

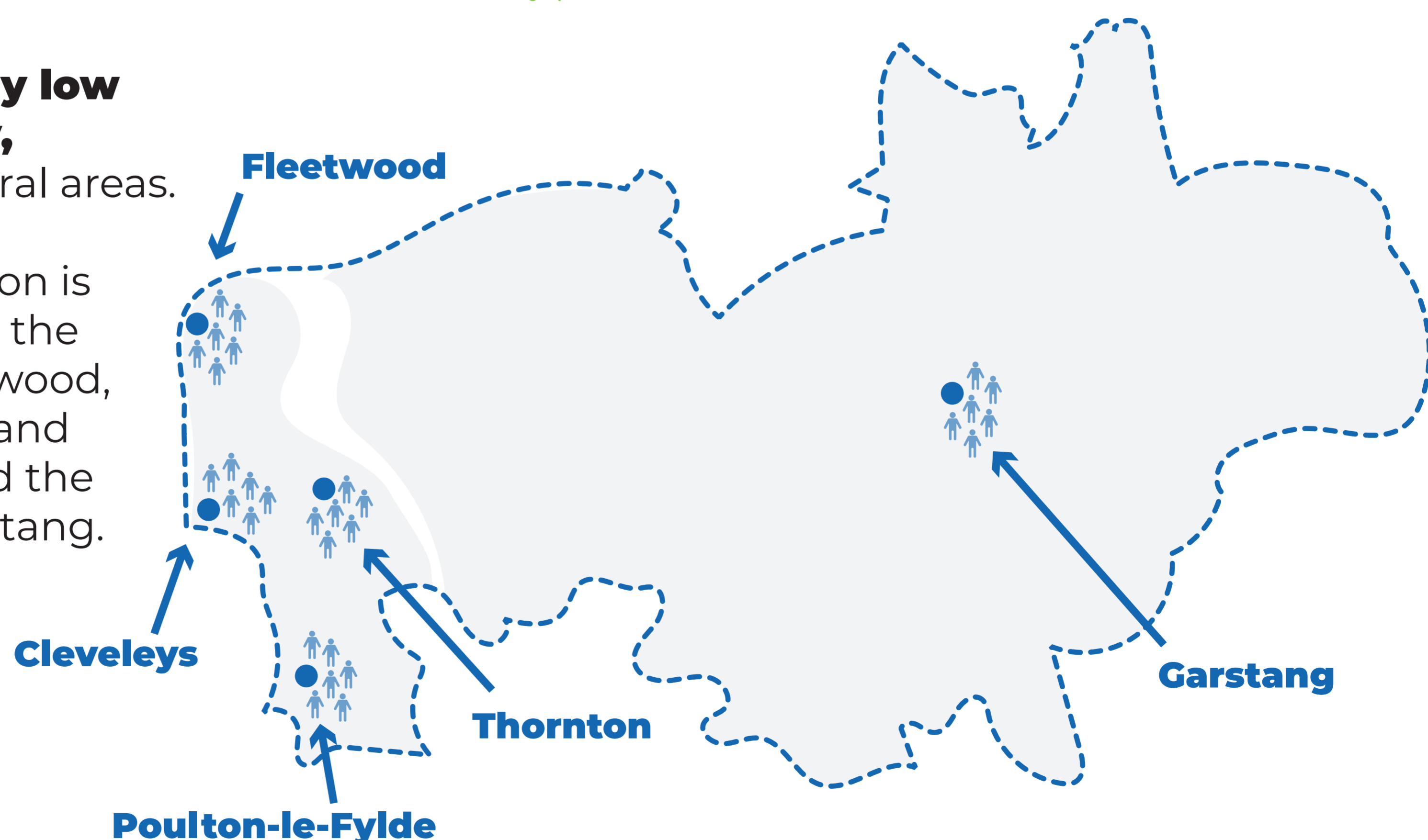
Wyre has a **notably aged and ageing population.** This has important implications for the borough's economy and housing stock over the next 15 years.

Compared to 2011, the borough has seen large decreases in age groups 15-19 and 40-49 and large increases in age groups 55-59 and 70-74.

Wyre's population is **projected to age considerably by the year 2040**, especially the 75+ age group which is projected to increase by 59% and the 65-74 age group which is expected to increase by 25%.

Wyre has a **relatively low population density**, particularly in the rural areas.

Most of the population is concentrated within the urban areas of Fleetwood, Cleveleys, Thornton and Poulton-le-Fylde and the market town of Garstang.



Wyre 2021 Census National average

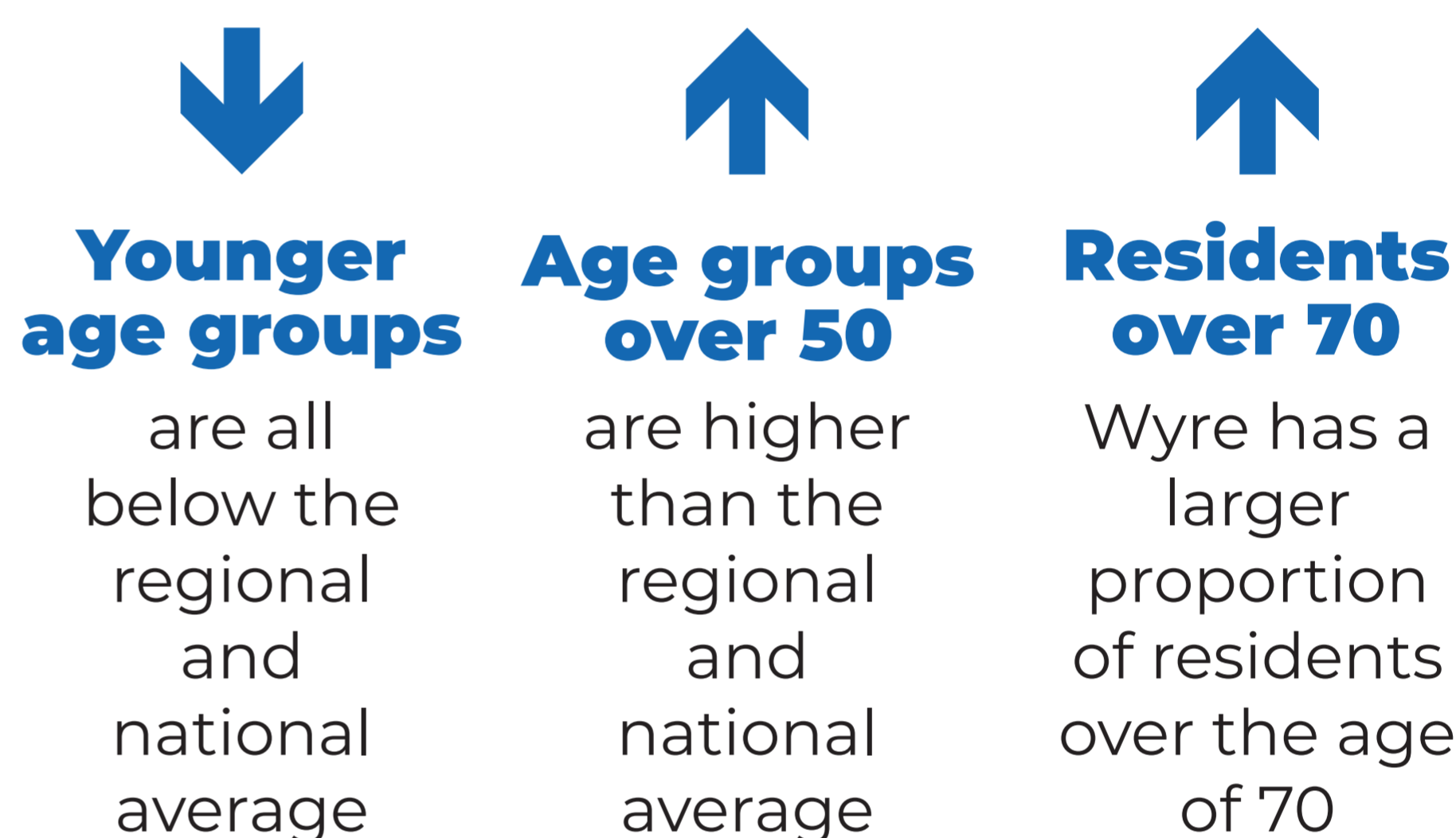
0-24 **Lower than average**

25-44 **Lower than average**

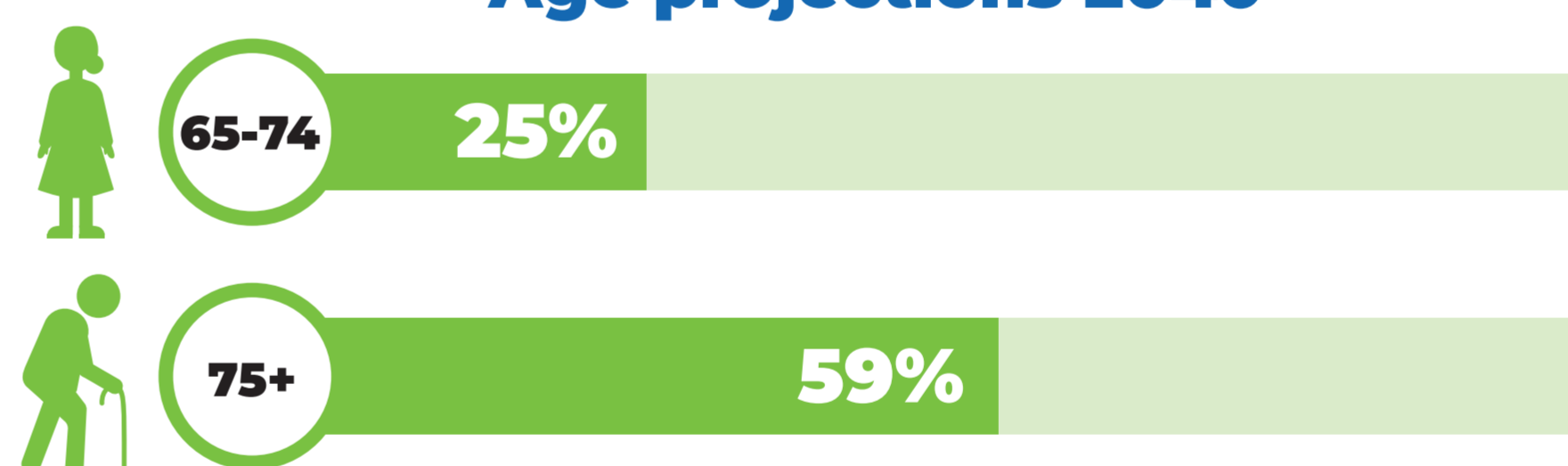
45-54 **Lower than average**

55+ **Higher than average**

Representative image, not exact



Age projections 2040

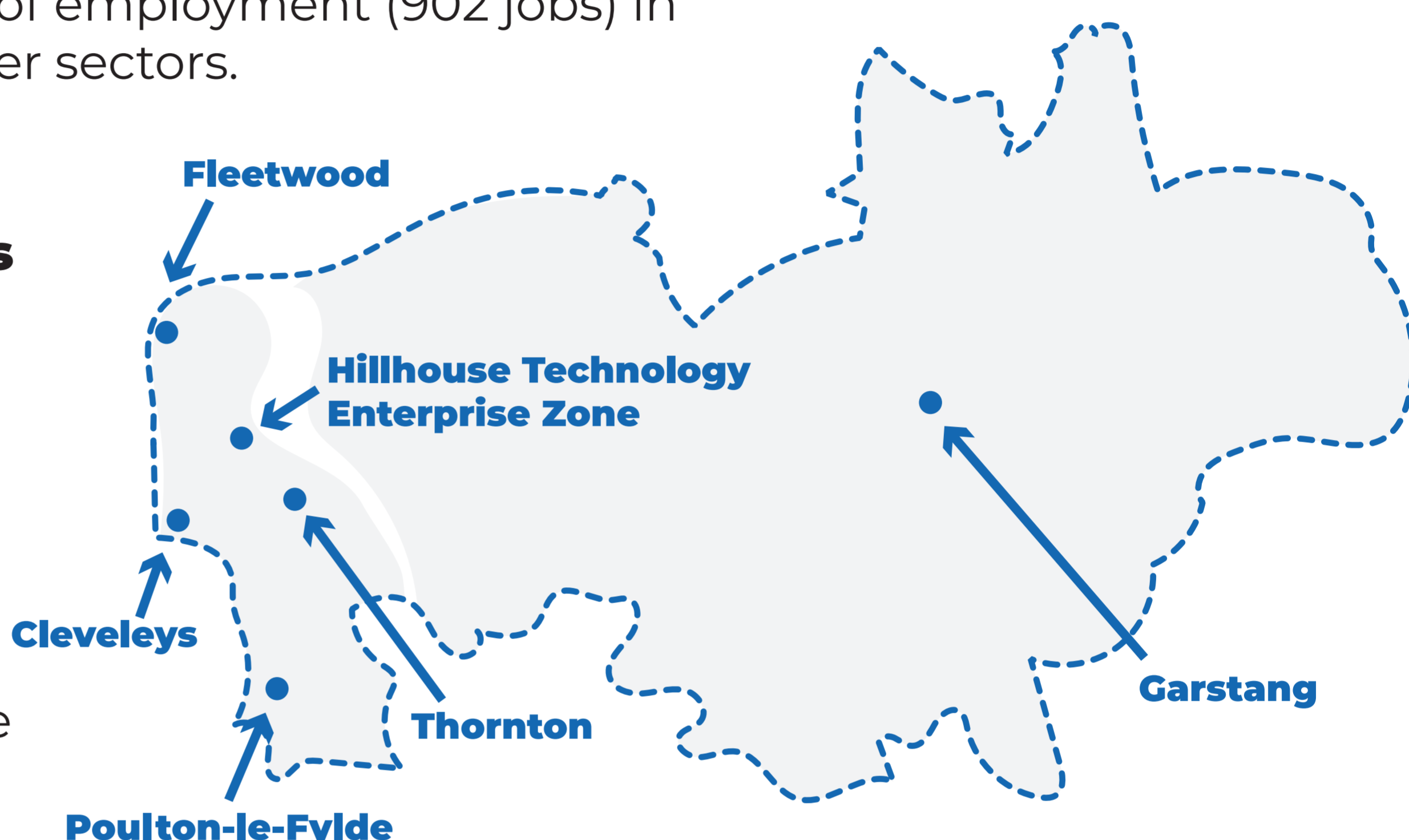


Key characteristics of Wyre

Economy

Wyre's economy **primarily consists of micro/small businesses** that demand smaller units. Although the borough has a strong representation in the Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing sector which is significantly higher than the regional average, the sector accounts for relatively low levels of employment (902 jobs) in absolute terms compared to other sectors.

Fleetwood, Thornton and Poulton-le-Fylde are key areas of employment. There are also established industrial and employment areas distributed throughout the borough. Rural businesses, including farming businesses, are important to the sustainability of rural communities and valuable to the local economy.



The Hillhouse Technology Enterprise Zone and town and district centres are and will remain important areas of current and future employment opportunities.

With the exception of Hillhouse Technology Enterprise Zone, we know that our **existing employment areas are typically well occupied** with limited opportunity for further expansion. It is likely that viability is a key constraint preventing new industrial units being developed speculatively.

Unemployment rates in Wyre, whilst much reduced from their 2011 levels, are still above regional and national averages, with pockets of higher unemployment and higher youth unemployment.

Consistent with an ageing population, **the retired population is increasing** and remains significantly higher than regional and national averages. On the other hand, there is a declining percentage of people aged 16 years and over (excluding full time students) who are employed.

Economically inactive: Retired Census 2021

Wyre **32.7%** 

North West **22.2%** 

England **21.5%** 

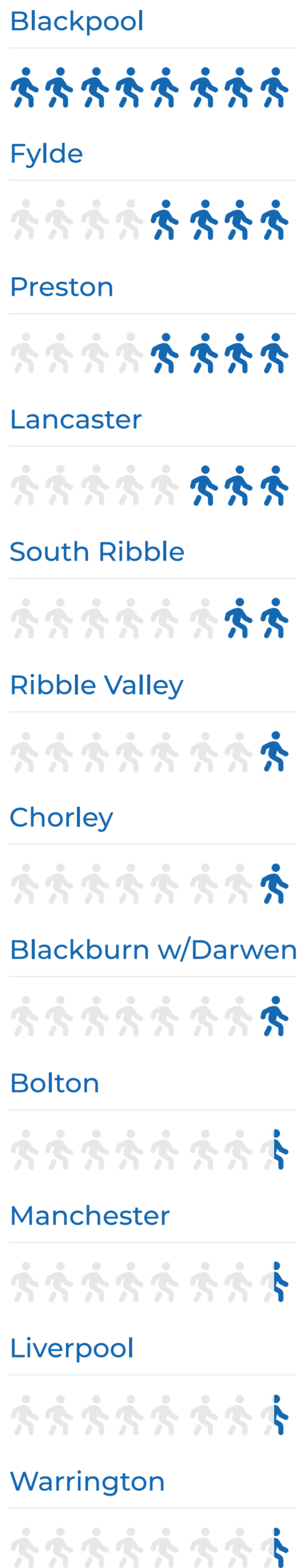
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Key characteristics of Wyre

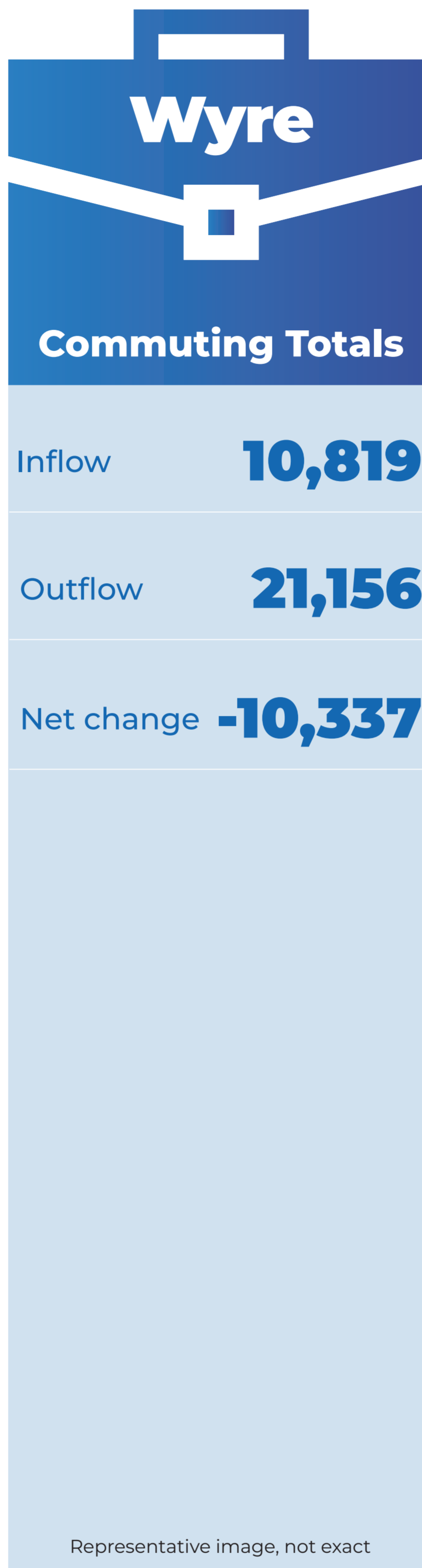
Economy

Wyre remains a **net exporter of labour** – mostly to neighbouring authorities – with more people commuting out than in.

Top inflows



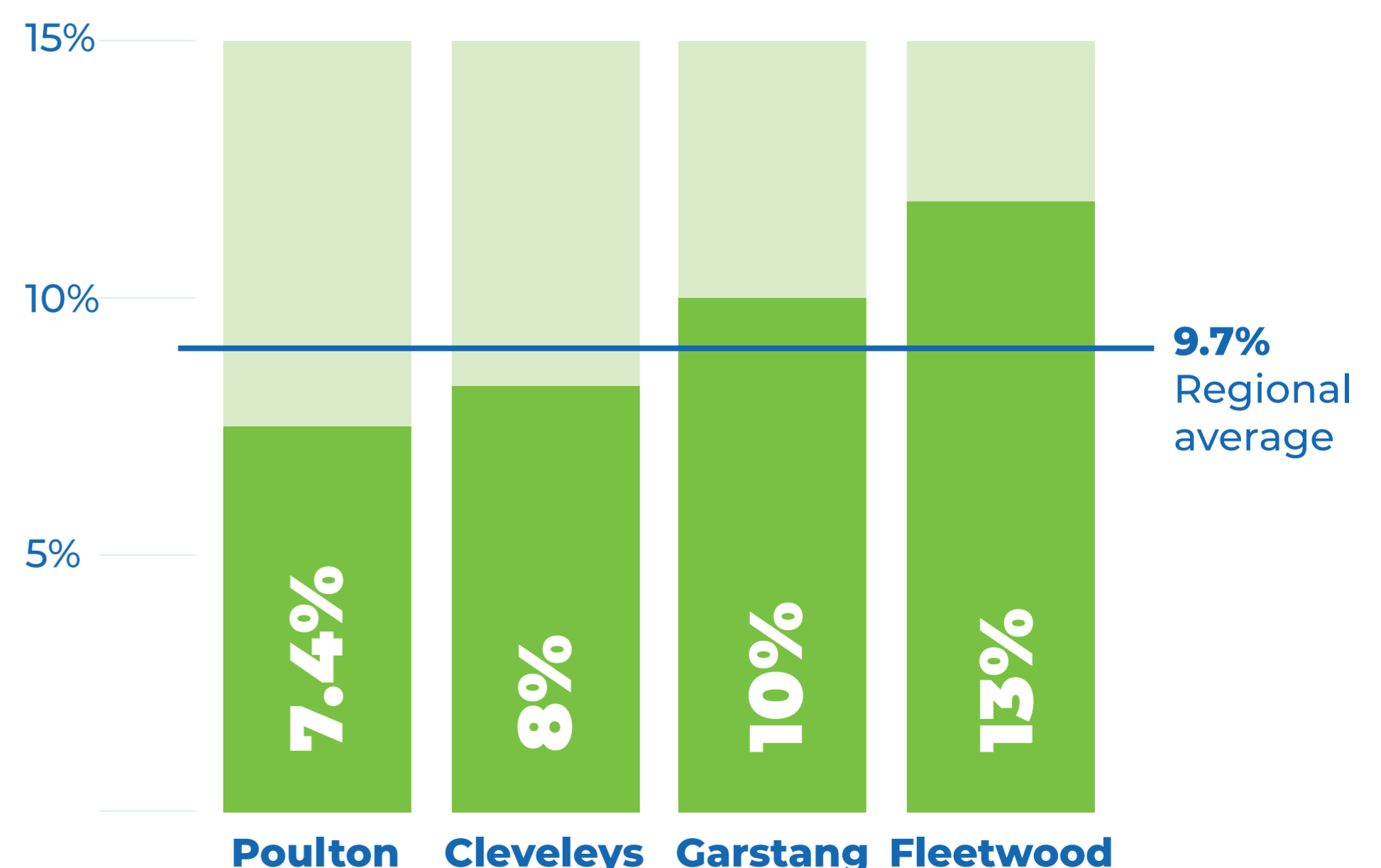
Top outflows



Town and district centres are important in providing space for retail, leisure and culture.

A healthy, vibrant town centre raises the confidence of local residents and businesses. However, the effects of COVID-19, the impact of online shopping and national planning changes that allow greater flexibility in the type of uses allowed in centres means Wyre, in common with other areas, faces a challenge to maintain viable centres.

Vacancy rates in January 2023

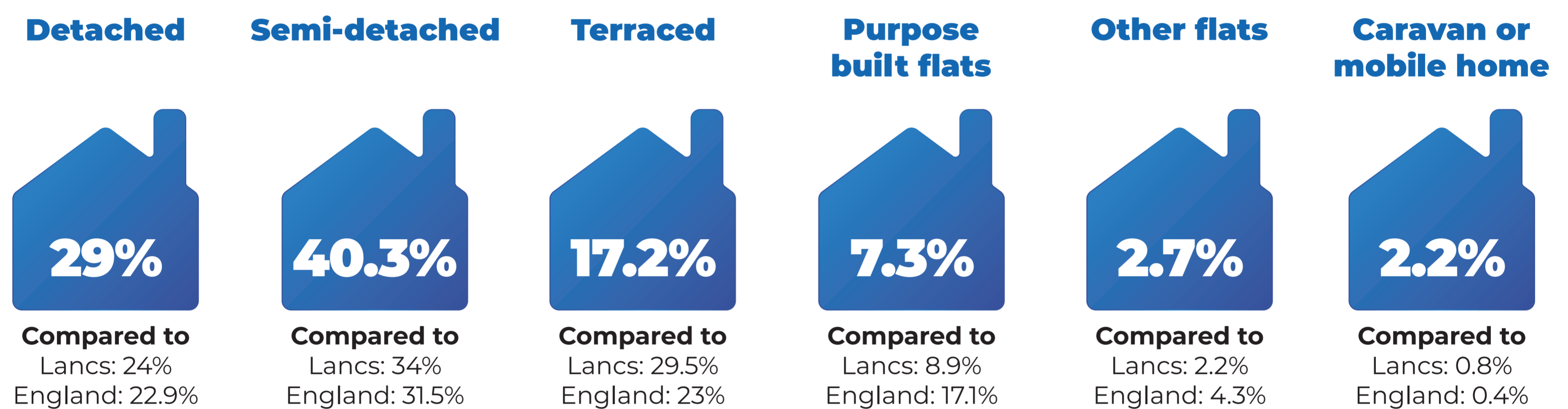


Key characteristics of Wyre

Housing

Housing forms the dominant land use in the towns and villages of Wyre. New housing is needed to meet the needs of the economy and population, particularly young and older people.

A characteristic of the borough is that the **housing stock tends to be owner occupied and of medium to larger house types** compared to national and Lancashire averages.

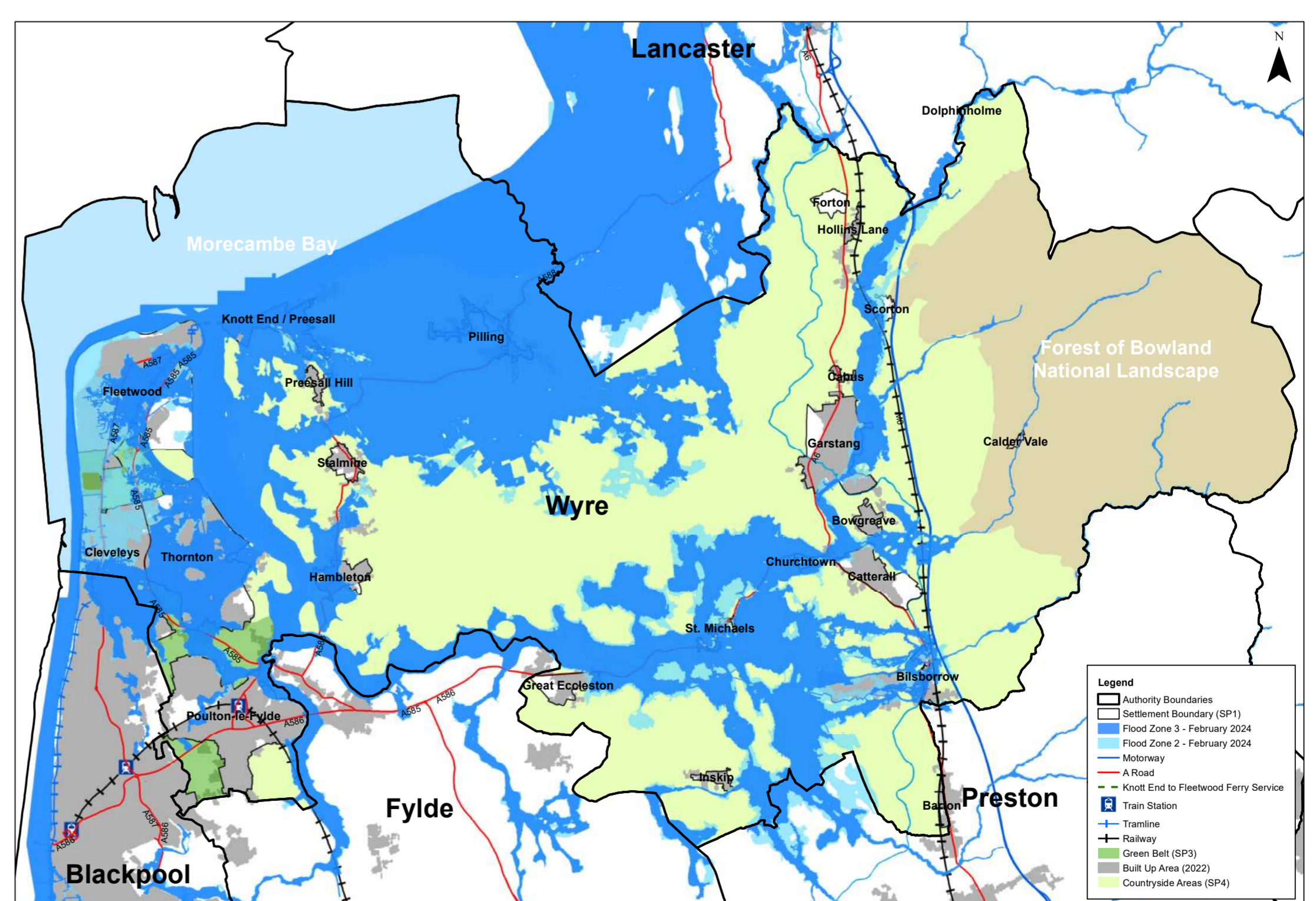


Wyre environment

One of the borough's assets is its attractive natural environment, which includes numerous sites designated for their ecological and landscape importance, including Morecambe Bay and the Forest of Bowland.

With much of Wyre relatively low-lying, **the risk of coastal and river flooding is significant in certain locations**, with much of the coastal area to the north of the borough and land around the River Wyre classified as Flood Zone 2 (medium risk) and/or Flood Zone 3 (high risk) by the Environment Agency. Some settlements are fully covered by a Flood Zone 2 or 3 designation. The extent of the Flood Zone is a key influence on where development can and cannot take place.

Flood risk map (rivers and sea)



Key characteristics of Wyre

Climate change

Climate change refers to a pattern of change affecting global or regional climate, as measured by things such as average temperature and rainfall, or an alteration in the frequency of extreme weather conditions.

Global warming is one aspect of climate change, which refers to the steady rise in global average temperature in recent decades, caused by greenhouse gas emissions. This long-term trend continues upwards.

How does climate change affect me?

Climate change impacts will vary over time and location. People who are least able to adapt to changes are likely to be the most affected. This is important in a borough with an aged and ageing population.

The following impacts may be felt in Wyre:



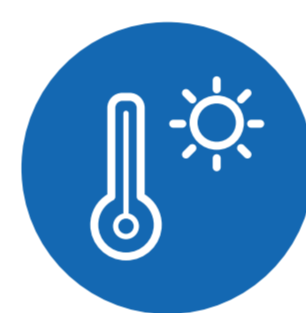
Rainfall and flooding

A warmer atmosphere can hold more water, meaning we will experience heavier downpours and more flooding. Some communities close to the River Wyre are already frequently affected by flooding, which is likely to worsen with climate change. Other low-lying areas and those with paved impermeable surfaces and fewer trees or vegetation to intercept rainfall, will also be affected by surface water flooding.



Sea level rise

Melting ice caps and thermal expansion cause sea levels to rise. This is a particular worry for Wyre, as a coastal borough with low-lying flood plains, a large river estuary and communities living all along the coastline. Wyre is identified as one of ten UK local authorities with the most properties at risk of sea level rise.



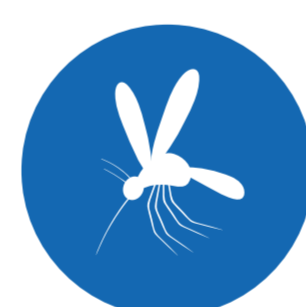
Extreme heat

Dangerous heatwaves will become more common, affecting our food and water supplies. Our oldest and youngest residents, who struggle to regulate their own temperature, are most at risk.



Drought and water scarcity

Rising temperatures will lead to more regular and prolonged droughts and water scarcity. This increases the risk of crop failures within our local farming community.



Diseases

Global temperature rises will allow invasive species such as mosquitoes to travel further from their native habitat. This increases the risk of more tropical diseases and pandemics among the UK population.

What is Wyre Council doing about it?

The Council aims to reduce its emissions by at least 78% by 2035, before achieving net zero by 2050, as well as committing to support and work with relevant agencies to achieve the same target for the wider borough.

The Council's Climate Emergency declaration (July 2019) **includes a commitment to ensure that planning decisions are in line with the aim of achieving net zero**, and to use local planning powers to deliver zero-carbon developments and communities.

Key characteristics of Wyre

What can the Wyre Local Plan do about climate change

Delivering against national and local climate change objectives does not mean stopping development, but it does mean thinking about where development takes places and how.

Some examples of what the Local Plan may do include:

Mitigation

Contributing to net zero

Policies and actions typically associated with mitigation include:

- Locating development in sustainable places.
- Reducing the need to travel by the most carbon-emitting modes of transport.
- Promoting low-carbon modes of transport and movement including walking, cycling and electric vehicles.
- Avoiding development on peat deposits, which naturally store carbon.
- Switching to low-carbon energy sources such as wind power and solar.
- Sustainable construction techniques.
- Energy efficient buildings and low-carbon heating.
- Increasing tree cover.
- Protecting carbon “sinks” such as woodlands.
- Minimising waste - primarily by producing less, but also recycling more, treating waste in a way that is less harmful to the environment or even using it as a sustainable energy fuel source.

Adaptation and resilience

Building in ways that recognise and manage the risks inherent in climate change.

Policies and actions typically associated with adaptation and resilience are:

- Locating development away from areas at risk of flooding.
- Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS - drainage systems that try to mimic natural processes and can include ponds and wetlands) and efficient use of water.
- Providing and protecting green infrastructure.
- Tree planting, landscaping and habitat creation.
- Building design and site layout, including orientation to avoid overheating during heatwaves.

Key issues 2024-2040



We need to take local action to tackle a global issue. We need to consider how we plan for development that is low carbon and is able to adapt to changing climate conditions. This will have implications for the location of development and proximity to services and facilities including active travel opportunities. One approach would be to be more supportive of conversions and changes of use from retail to residential use in town and district centres. We also need to consider matters such as flood risk and peat deposits when allocating sites for development.



The growing population imbalance between older and younger age groups has implications for the achievement of sustainable communities and the local economy. The overall ageing of the population also has implications for healthcare and access to services for older people, especially in rural areas.



We need to continue to protect the natural and built environment and the borough's green infrastructure, whilst accepting that growth will inevitably require additional greenfield development. Balancing development and protection will continue to be a key challenge for the borough. The need for good design that respects local character and heritage is a key part of creating sustainable development. The council will also need to consider how it can support healthy living and active environments, for example through access to good quality green space.



The adopted Local Plan target for additional employment land has not been met. Where employment land has come forward, nearly half of the land developed since 2011 has been delivered outside of existing allocated employment sites or existing employment areas. A key issue is therefore to support economic development at our key sites whilst supporting a sustainable rural economy. There is also a need to support our town and district centres, including through regeneration frameworks in Cleveleys, Fleetwood, Poulton-le-Fylde and Garstang.



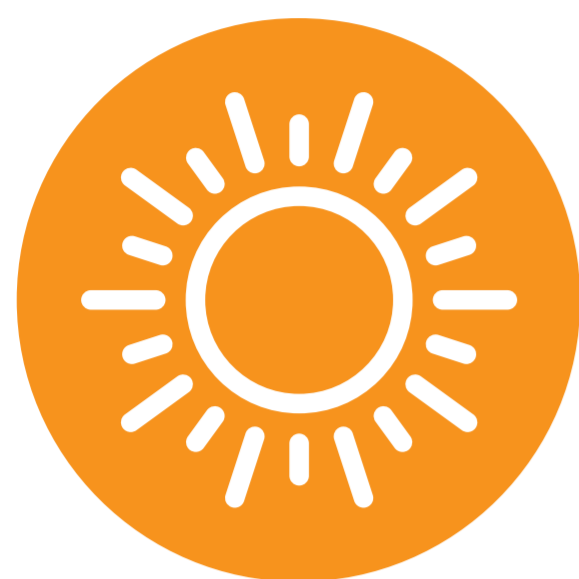
Retaining and attracting young people and families requires the right mix of new housing – with more smaller and affordable properties. The aged and ageing population means we need housing that is adaptable and can meet the needs of those with mobility and disability needs. To meet housing needs between now and 2040 it is estimated that land for some 1,400 new homes will need to be allocated over and above those sites already identified in the current Local Plan. This may be subject to change depending upon the outcome of the new Government's planning reforms.



Sustainable development means planning for growth than can be accommodated within existing constraints such as flood risk and the highway network. Of particular concern is the need to ensure that people that live and work in the borough have sufficient services and facilities to meet their needs. Although in most cases these services are outside of local authority control, the council will need to engage with infrastructure providers to discuss the emerging plan and infrastructure requirements.

Objectives of the Local Plan

The Local Plan aims to achieve these 10 key objectives.



Tackle the climate emergency

To ensure all new development contributes to the borough achieving net zero by 2050 and that we mitigate, adapt and improve our resilience to climate change, including flood risk and coastal change.



Natural environment

To protect, enhance and promote the borough's varied and outstanding natural environment, landscapes, habitats and biodiversity, and our network of green infrastructure and open space.



Promote sustainable transport

To promote sustainable modes of travel by locating development sustainably, enhancing travel networks for walking, cycling and public transport to provide a range of transport choices.



Design healthy environments

To ensure new buildings and open spaces encourage active and healthy lifestyles to support the health and well-being of our communities and reduce inequalities.



Infrastructure

Collaborative working with partners and stakeholders to secure necessary infrastructure needed at an appropriate time to support new development.



Meet future housing needs

To provide housing to meet people's needs, including affordable housing, which meets a range of needs over people's lifetime.



Supporting jobs and the economy

To support business investment and job creation opportunities to support a resilient economy to deliver prosperity for the whole community.



Design beautiful communities

To protect, enhance and promote the borough's varied and high-quality environment, including its rich heritage, local character and identity.



Promote vibrant town and retail centres

To encourage investment and ensure vitality to meet the needs of our communities and visitors.



Minimise environmental impact

Including flood risk and pollution and where necessary ensure appropriate mitigation, compensation and enhancement measures.

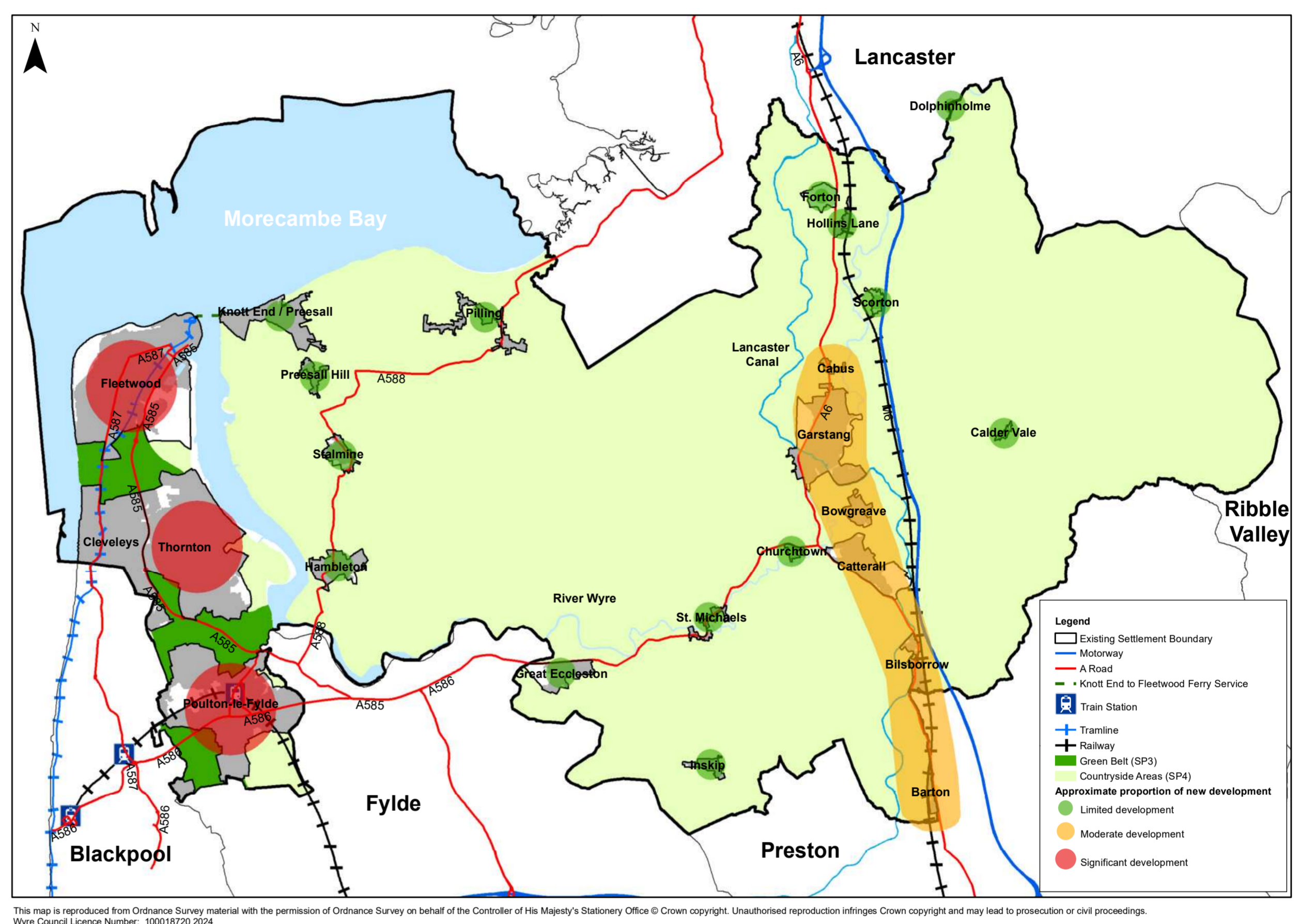
Spatial options

A key part of writing the new Local Plan is to decide where development will be directed in order to deliver the vision and objectives. A key challenge is how to accommodate this growth in a way which makes the most of the borough's resources and minimises harm to the natural and built environment and existing communities. The Council has identified four basic options for accommodating housing and employment development in the period up to 2040. Suggestions for alternative spatial options are welcome.

Option 1

Focus on the Fylde Coast Peninsula main urban area

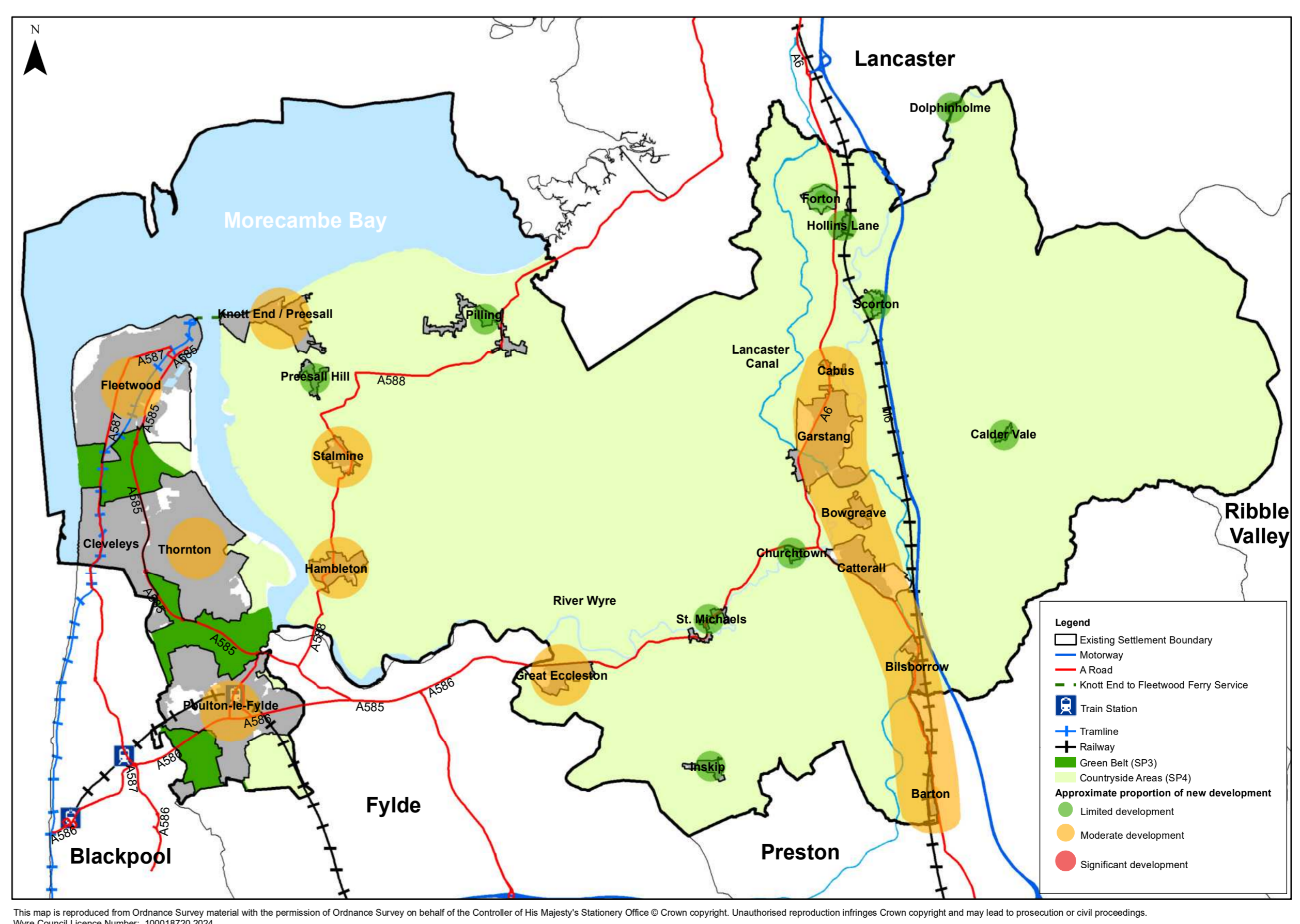
This option would focus the majority of new development on the main urban towns on the Fylde Coast Peninsula – particularly Thornton and Poulton-le-Fylde where there is good access to services and facilities and access to a rail station. The use of previously developed land in the Fylde Coast Peninsula main urban towns would be prioritised. Furthermore, land located within existing settlements would also be prioritised where appropriate. The remainder of new development would be directed to settlements on the A6 Corridor, particularly Garstang.



Option 3

Sustainable borough dispersal

Option 3 would result in development being dispersed more evenly across the borough. A moderate level of development would still be directed to the peninsula main urban areas, but would result in less development taking place in this part of the borough than under Spatial Option 1. Option 3 would result in a similar amount of development being directed to the A6 Corridor as under Option 1 and therefore less than under Option 2. A significantly greater amount of development would be directed to rural settlements. In particular, the settlements of Great Eccleston, Hambleton, Knott End/Preesall and Stalmine, which have a relatively wider range of services and facilities and could accommodate a greater level of development. Development would be distributed amongst the remaining rural settlements taking into account the existing provision of services and facilities and the potential for settlements to grow sustainably.

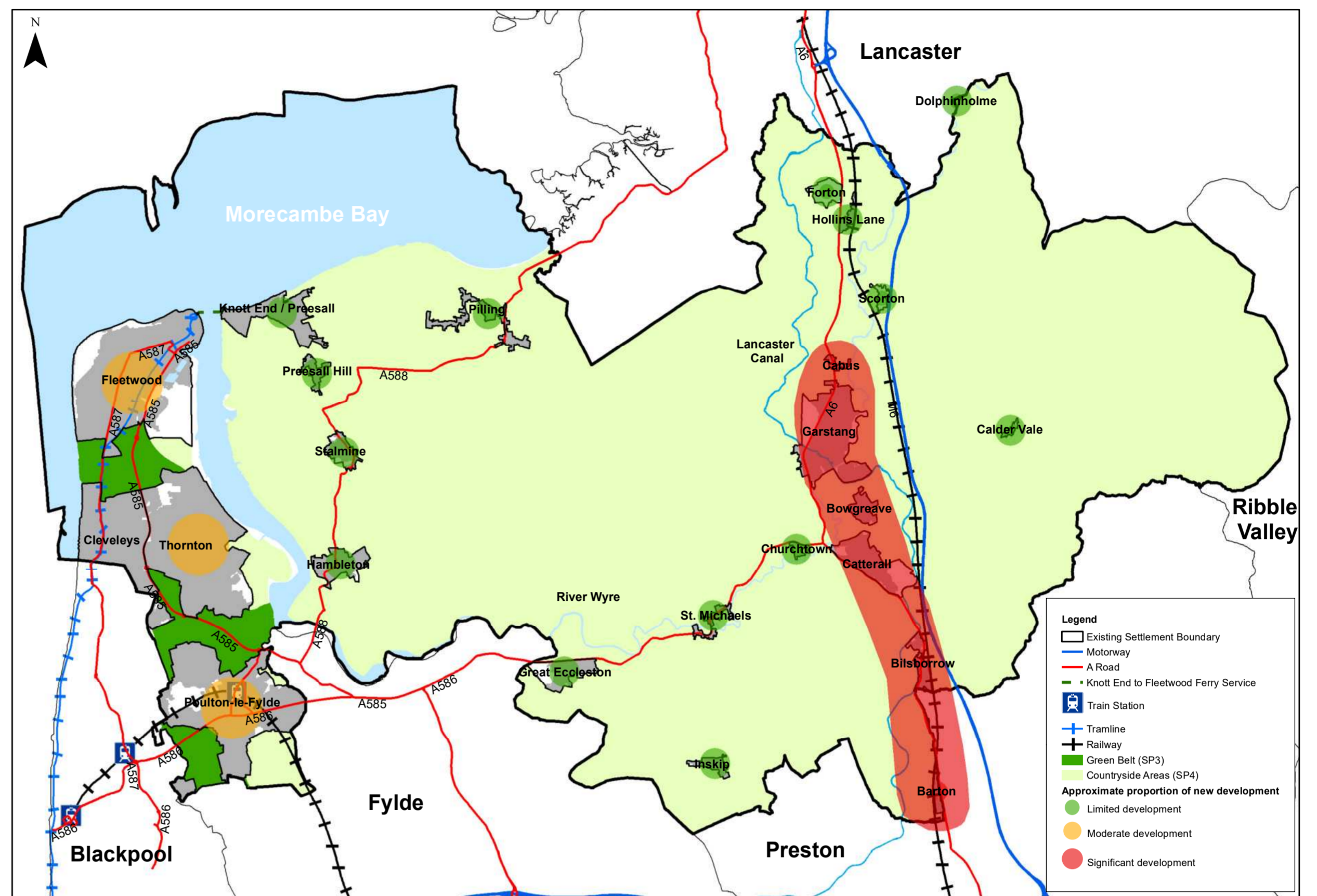


Spatial options

Option 2

Focus on the A6 corridor

Option 2 would direct a greater proportion of new development to settlements along the A6 corridor, principally Garstang. This would concentrate development in a part of the borough with existing services and facilities and with good access to the motorway network. The use of previously developed land and land located within existing settlements would also be prioritised. However, given the limited amount of unconstrained land available for development, the delivery of this option would require development of greenfield land located on the edge of existing settlements. Individual settlements would remain separate.

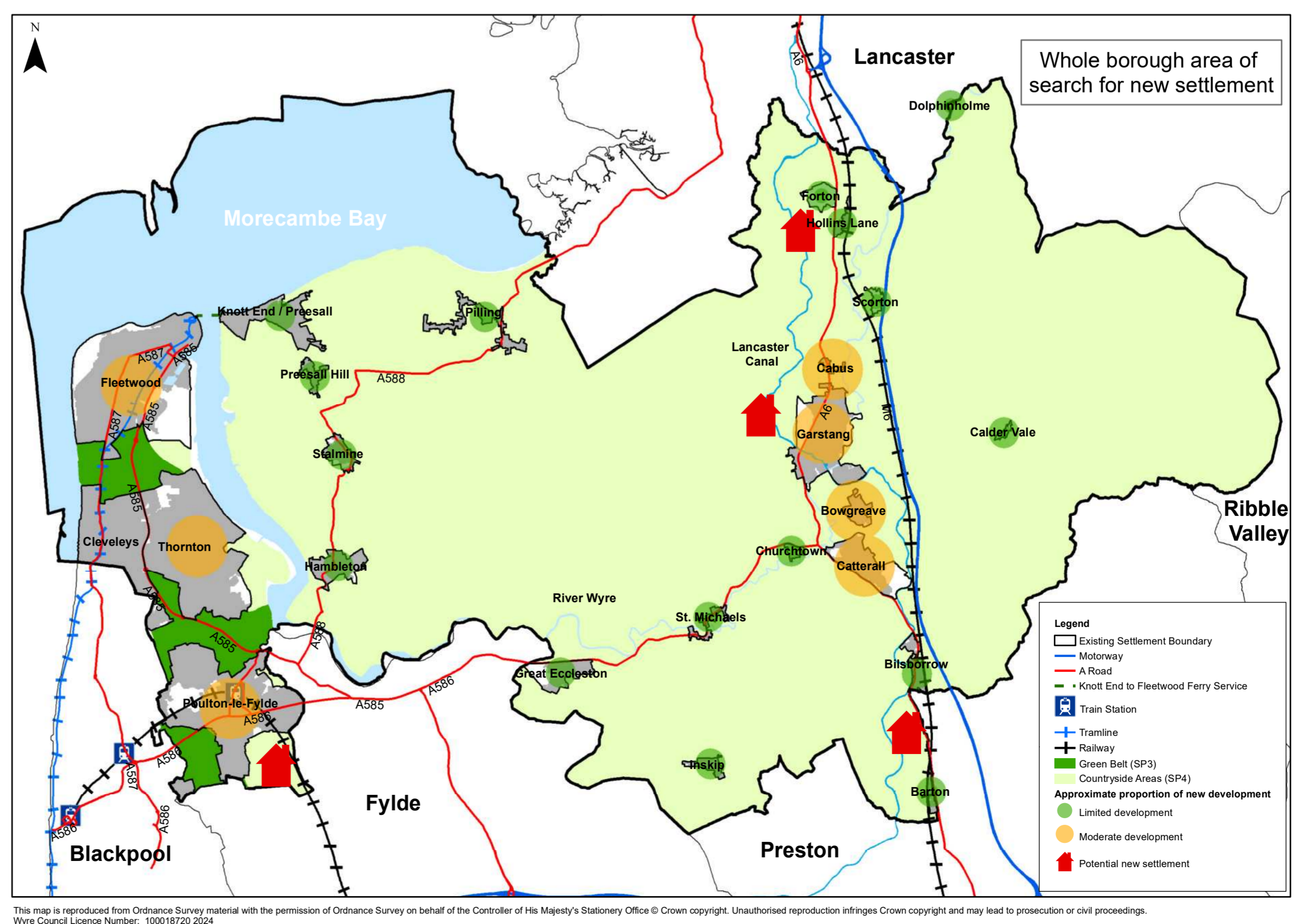


Option 4

New settlement / urban extension

This option proposes the creation of a new settlement or urban extension in the borough, which would be the focus for the majority of new development. The whole borough would be an area of search and it is likely that the location would be influenced by opportunities to co-locate near to existing communities where existing services and transport provision could be further enhanced. The availability of land and ability for it to be brought forward as part of a comprehensive development would be a key consideration.

To be cost effective and overcome constraints that make such projects difficult to fund the new settlement would need a significant level of development (circa 3,000-6,000 new homes), that significantly exceeds the housing need for the whole of the borough over the plan period 2022-2040. This would be in addition to development needed to support existing communities in the borough to remain sustainable. Option 4 would require significant development of greenfield land. Unlike other options, this is likely to need considerable greenfield and agricultural land in the open countryside.



Potential sites for development



An important note!

The maps shown as part of this exhibition show the current long list of potential sites from which development opportunities will be selected. It is important to note that **no decision has been made on which of the identified sites will be taken forward as allocations in the Local Plan.**

It is estimated that around 1400 additional homes may be needed — most sites will not ultimately be proposed for allocation, potentially only 15% of homes identified are needed. **This may be subject to change depending upon the outcome of the new Government's planning reforms.**

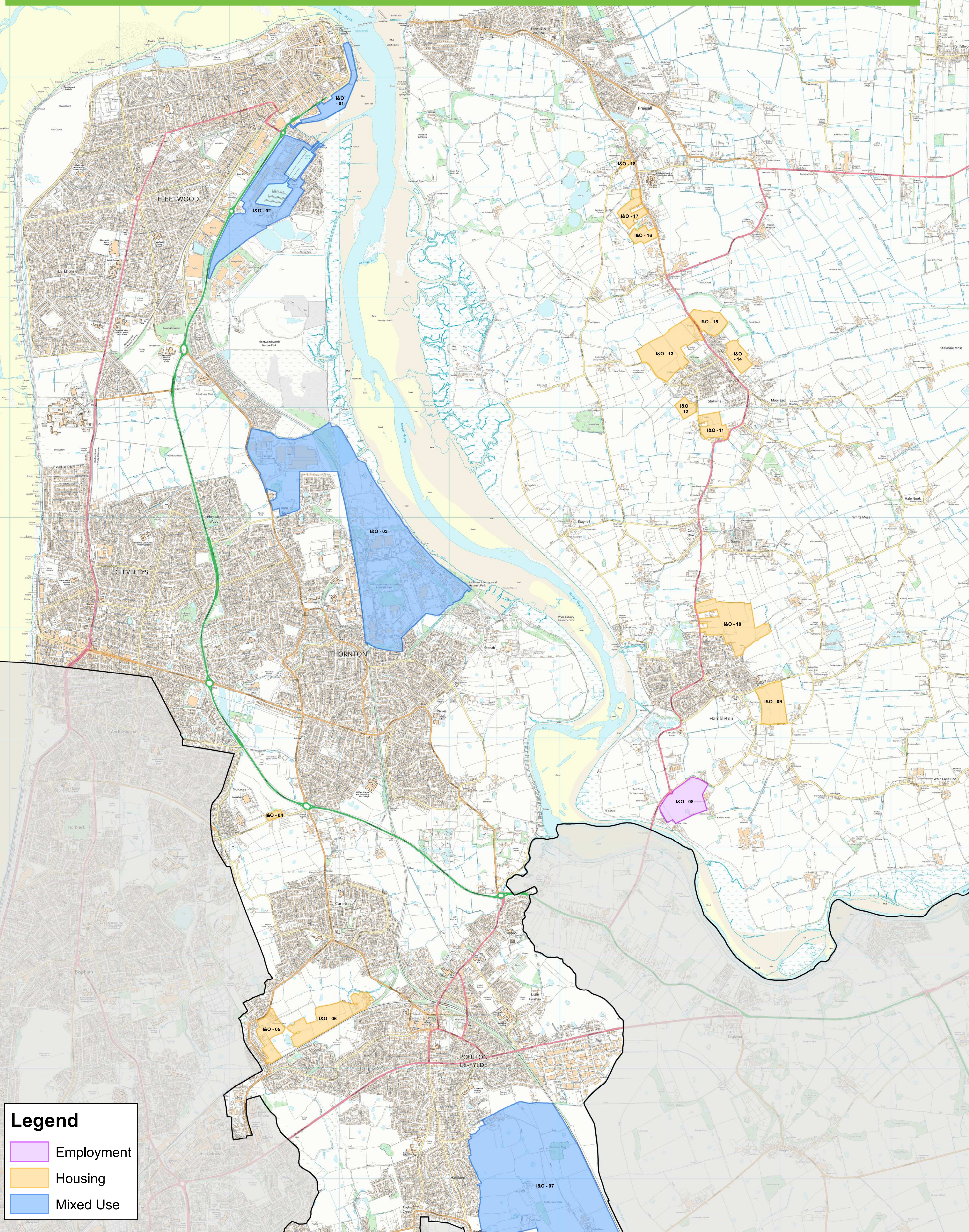
The decision over which sites should be allocated will be influenced by on-going evidence gathering by the Planning Policy team in relation to the amount of development required, the ability of the borough to accommodate growth and the response to this consultation. The choice of Spatial Strategy set out in the four Spatial Options will influence the distribution of development and therefore the number of sites that need to be identified in each part of the borough.

The sites are therefore being presented at this early stage to generate discussion and debate and to prompt comments on site-specific constraints that may inhibit development or on matters that will need to be taken into account and addressed before a site can be allocated.



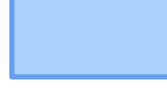
These sites have been identified from a range of sources, including submissions by owners and other interested parties. It should also be noted that the final Local Plan may allocate different sites than shown here and that the boundaries of individual sites may be amended.

At the next stage of the Local Plan process a draft plan will be produced that will identify those sites it is intended to allocate. This document, and therefore the proposed allocations within it, will be the subject of further public consultation in early 2025.

Peninsula and rural west



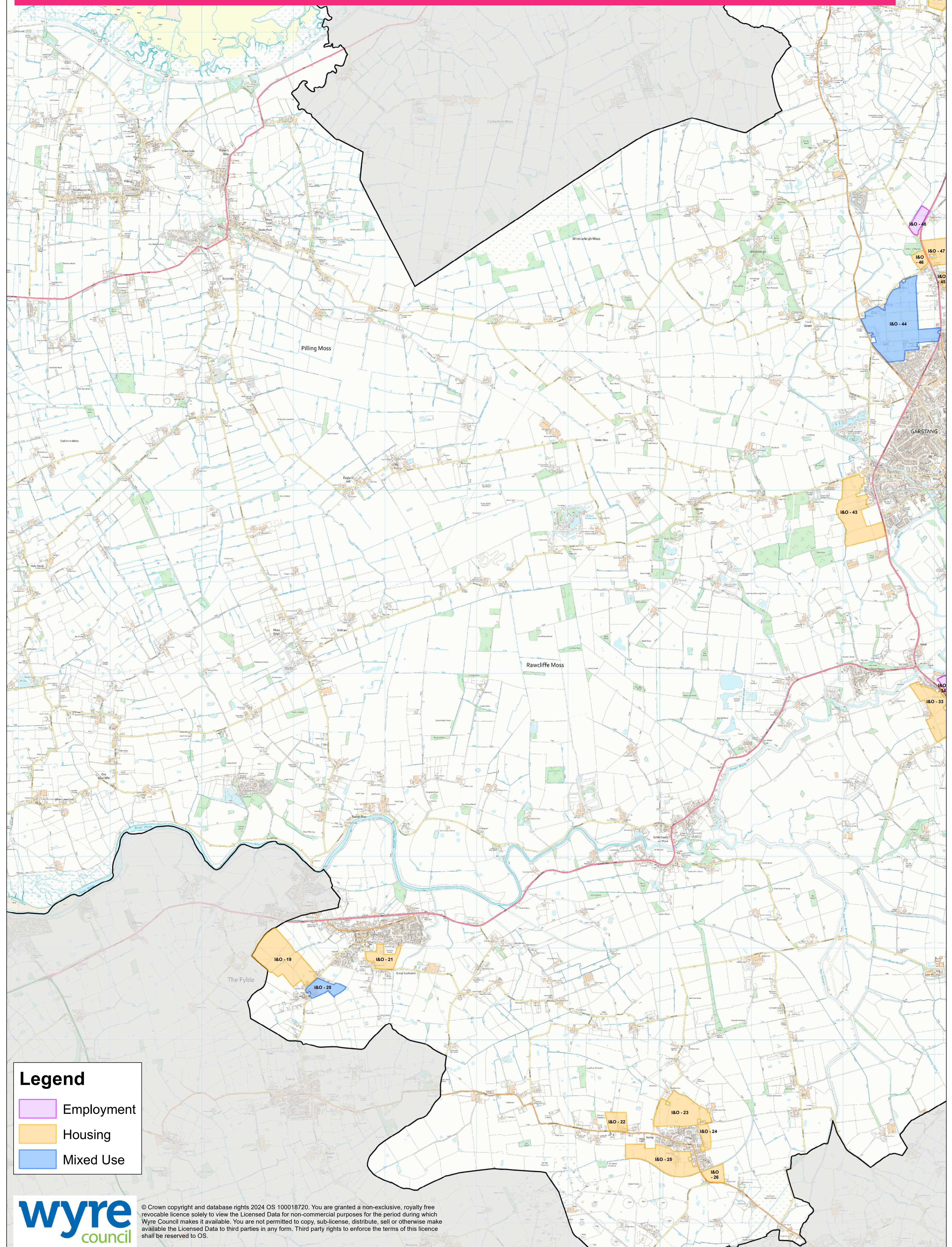
Legend

-  Employment
-  Housing
-  Mixed Use



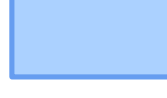


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Central Wyre

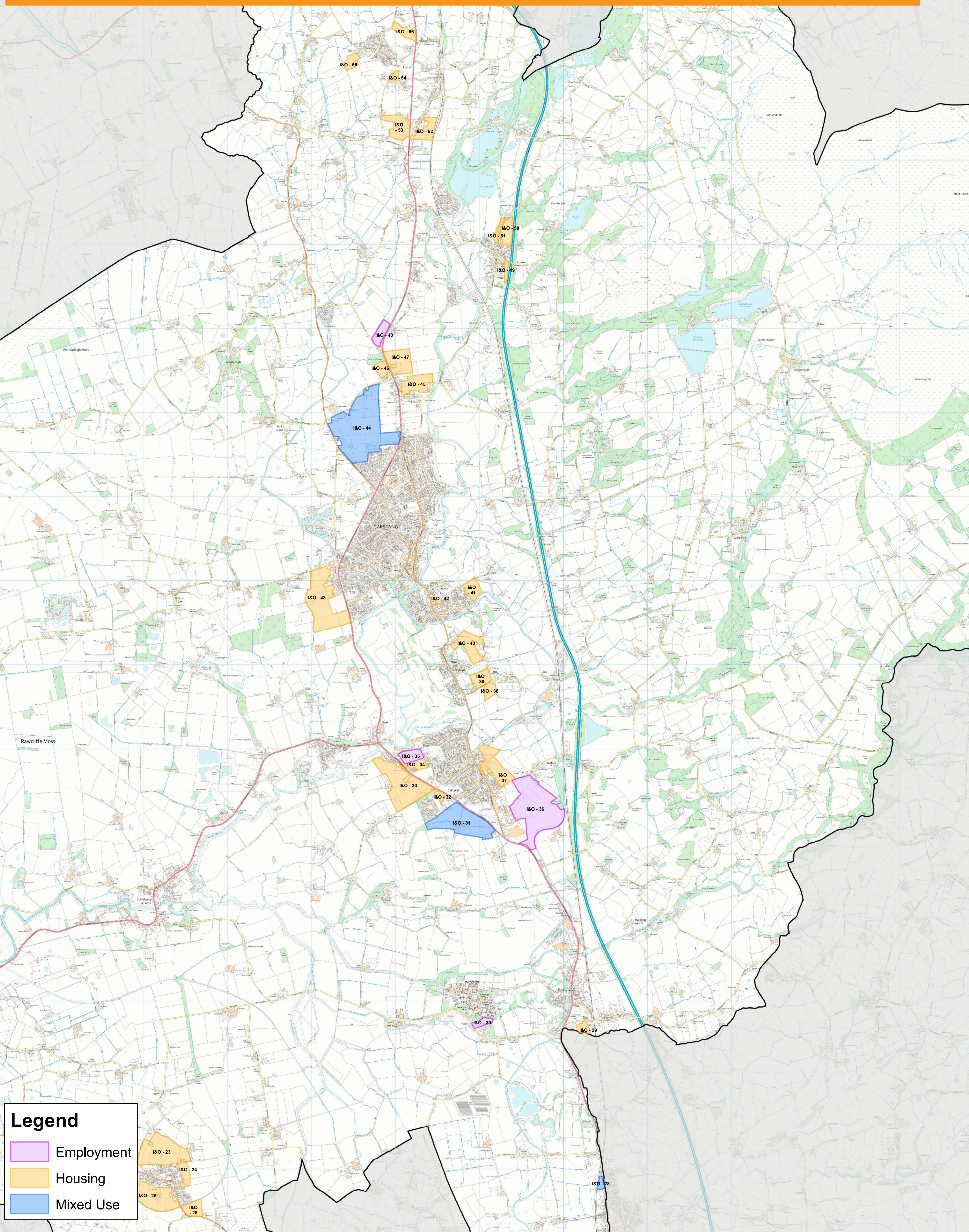


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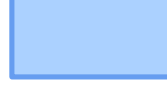
-  Employment
-  Housing
-  Mixed Use

A6 Corridor

N



Legend

-  Employment
-  Housing
-  Mixed Use



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