

Fylde Green Infrastructure Strategy

Final Report



May 2011

**For Fylde
Borough
Council
&
The University
of Manchester**

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> Bibliography

Related Documents

The below documents which are related to and inform this Final Report of the Green Infrastructure Strategy are available as separate documents:

- Project Appendices (Contains Literature Review and Background Information on Lytham Hall)
- Fylde Green Infrastructure Strategy: Report of Progress, Survey and Issues
- Fylde Green Infrastructure Strategy: Technical Appendix – Fylde Borough GI Baseline Overview

1. INTRODUCTION

Fylde Borough boasts a diverse wealth of environmental assets ranging from varied coastal landscapes, fertile farmland, historic parklands, wildlife reserves, top class outdoor sport and recreation facilities, scattered woodland belts and exemplar areas of leafy settlements. Green Infrastructure (GI) presents an opportunity to recognise, strengthen and sensitively expand such environmental assets in light of the various opportunities and constraints present in the Borough so as to make a real contribution to the social, cultural and economic well-being of residents. To enable this, the University of Manchester have been commissioned to assess and analyse how GI intensification and utilisation can benefit the community in one of the least treed areas within the North-West.

Fylde Borough Council has commenced work on its Local Development Framework (LDF), and early in 2011 held a number of community engagement events to help inform the Vision, Issues and Objectives for the Core Strategy. The LDF will provide a policy framework to shape the future of the Borough. This GI Strategy will provide supporting evidence for Fylde's LDF and has the opportunity to influence the criteria and standards against which proposed future development will be assessed and delivered. As such it will help foster partnership working towards sustainability and deliver Fylde's ambitions to achieve economic prosperity. A policy of growth is key to Fylde Borough's future, but ensuring that any growth is sustainable and supports/enhances the natural environment rather than degrade it is also paramount. Moreover it is also important to help minimise Fylde's contribution and vulnerability to climate change.

1.1 What is Green Infrastructure & Why is it Important?

Green Infrastructure has been defined by the UK Government as:

"A network of multi-functional green space, both new and existing, both rural and urban, which supports the natural and ecological processes and is integral to the health and quality of life of sustainable communities"

DCLG (2008), *Planning Policy Statement 12*

The concept of Green Infrastructure provides a joined-up approach to environmental management. It focuses on the relationships between habitats, green spaces and the wildlife/communities they serve, rather than on the needs of individual sites or species. This interconnected network of green and blue open spaces ranges from rivers and their floodplains to agricultural land and civic areas. The range of GI components has expanded from discrete spatial entities such as woodland, parkland, playing field, nature reserves and green belt to encompass brownfield land and the public-realm; climate-change linked adaptations such as

Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SUDs) and Green Roofs; and macro-level infrastructure such as street trees and private gardens. Moreover GI provides multiple environmental, economic and social benefits by providing a vital mix of often overlapping functions – for example by providing wildlife, recreational and cultural experience, as well as delivering ecological benefits, flood protection and microclimate control. As such, GI is strongly correlated to people’s quality of life and the quality of place.

GI thus presents a powerful, inclusive and valuable conceptual tool to:

- Comprehend complex multi-functionality and maximize the use and benefits of Green Space
- Connect and enhance fragmented spaces and link together different protection designations
- Help identify “critical infrastructure” and ecological services
- Facilitate spatial planning and intervention by identifying and prioritising key areas, routes/corridors and sites for the expansion of green cover.

Amongst the extensive list of benefits of GI set out by the Urban Regeneration & Greenspace Partnership (Forest Research, 2010), the following four tenets are considered to be of key relevance, presenting significant opportunities that could benefit Fylde: Habitat expansion; Linking of green space; Enhancing accessibility to and amenity of green space; and Climate change mitigation

Fylde Borough Council is committed to:

- growing the visitor economy
- establishing a clear sense and quality of place
- improving, connecting and enhancing its environmental assets so as to create opportunities for economic uplift, and
- adapting to climate change

GI is clearly an essential component underlying each of these objectives. Consequently, restructuring and expanding the Borough’s GI resource has the potential to enable Fylde to move closer towards these aims.

1.2 Project Objective, Scope, Methodology & Aims

This report aims to explore the issues and opportunities associated with GI in Fylde across multiple spatial scales in order to aid the Borough achieve these objectives. At the borough-wide scale this took the form of a strategic desktop-based analysis looking at the existing GI assets of the Borough as a whole. Interlinked with this was a detailed examination of 3 Priority Action Areas at a more site specific grain. These assessments build upon the recommendations and procedures set-out in the *North West Green Infrastructure Guide* (GRITT, 2008), the *Lancashire Green Infrastructure Strategy* (Ecotec, 2007) and from emerging best practice. These surveys of GI within Fylde have served to highlight a number of potential synergies whereby the potential GI benefits across the Borough can be translated into practical objectives. Moreover, each Priority Action Area has been selected so as to represent a different scenario in which GI can be deployed to the benefit of the Borough. Consequently a vision and series of key GI actions which could take place on the ground so as to enhance and create new GI assets have been recommended for each area.

Consequently the study seeks to:

- **To highlight the value of GI in meeting the Borough's social, economic and environmental objectives.**
- **To provide a Strategic Overview of GI within Fylde Borough Council.**
- **To Evaluate the Borough's existing GI assets** and any potential constraints.
- **To Identify, Assess and Produce Recommendations for 3 Priority Action Areas.**
 - *Clifton Drive - the issue highlighted being urban trees*
 - *Lytham Hall - the scenario being GI and heritage sites*
 - *BAE Systems future site - the issue explored being brownfield sites.*

2. Borough Wide Overview

2.1 Borough Wide Overview: Strategically Assessing Fylde’s GI Resource

In order to best provide an accurate understanding of the possibilities for GI within Fylde Borough it has been necessary to survey and analyse its existing qualities and emerging trends. With a view to this a Desk-Based baseline overview of the Borough was undertaken. This can be found as a separate technical appendix (*n.b. Figures referenced with Txx are to be found in the Technical Appendix*). Some of the core context, assets and emerging issues highlighted by this are set out below. These are followed by a summary of key findings as regards problems and opportunities revealed by a more thematic analysis that seeks to evaluate the current resource by grouping key aspects together into broad categories of functionality. The “family tree” below (*Figure 2.1.1*) illustrates the broad schematic, methodology and sequencing of analysis and maps that have taken place for this strategic borough wide assessment.

CONTEXT – <i>GI Components</i> <i>SEE Technical Appendix</i>	ANALYSIS – <i>Assessing GI Assets</i> <i>SEE Survey Report</i>	GI MAPS – <i>Key Resource Maps</i> <i>Final Report: Section2</i>	PRIORITY GI NETWORK – <i>Areas to be Targeted</i> <i>Final Report: Section6</i>
Geology	Recreation, Health, Travel & Economy	Socio-Cultural	Opportunities/Areas for GI Expansion
Landscape Character	Culture, Tourism & Heritage	Environmental	
Social Geography	Biodiversity & Landscape		
Accessibility	Climate Change & Food Scarcity		
Biodiversity			
Designations			
Cultural Heritage			
Open Spaces			

Figure 2.1.1: “Family Tree” sequence of maps/analysis for the GI Strategy

2.2 Local Context: Key Assets, Issues & Emerging Trends

Landscape Character & Geology

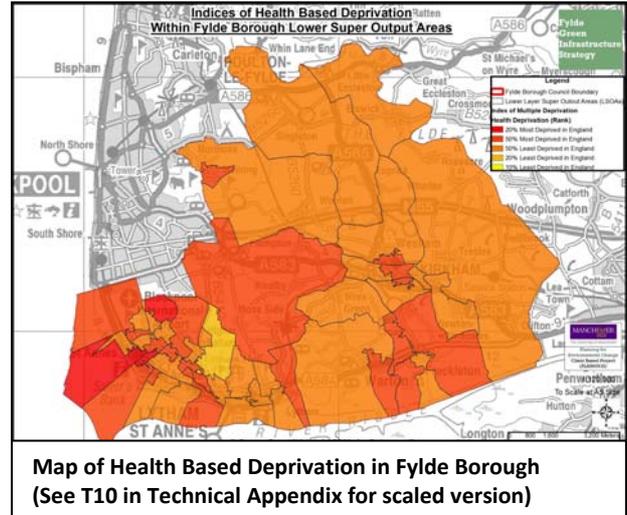
- Lowland topography underlain by a sedimentary lithology resulting in a high proportion of high grade and in demand agricultural land (*see Figures T3 & T26*)
- Key Landscape features are: the mosslands on the fringes of Lytham, the coastal marshes of the Ribble Estuary; and long open views of the flat agricultural plains of the Fylde which possess a high density of field ponds, extensive drainage systems of raised ditches and sparsely scattered blocks of wind sculptured mixed woodland (*see Figure T4*).



Lytham Moss

Social Geography (Demographics)

- The population is principally concentrated in settlements running along the course of the River Ribble and its estuary (see *Figures T6 & T7*)
- Elderly people comprise approximately a quarter of the Borough's population and are principally concentrated in the settlements along the south-west coastline. This high proportion of over 65s creates a pressure to ensure accessibility to and the provision and maintenance green space so as to contribute to providing a high quality of life and environment for all elderly residents in the Borough (see *Figure T8*)
- Whilst the Borough is generally an affluent area, there are still small pockets of significant deprivation (for example within certain pockets of St Annes) (see *Figures T10 & T15*).



Accessibility

- Varying levels of provision, quality and access in relation to green spaces within each settlement. Opportunity to use leafier settlements such as Lytham and Clifton as a platform from which to expand provision out into neighbouring urban settlements in which hard edges of the built environment predominate (see *Figures T25 & T26*)
- Residents are generally active and consider themselves in good health but there are strong spatial variations in health levels and obesity (see *Figures T10 & T12*).
- Limited public rights of way network and cycleway provision (see *Figures T18 & T19*).
- Benefits from a wide range of outdoor sports facilities (but limited access to some privately owned resources – e.g. golf courses, and some qualitative deficiencies) (see *Figure T13*).



Designations

- Virtually all of Fylde Borough's coastal and estuarine edges are covered by an environmental or landscape designation (See *Figures T22 & T24*).
- Tree Preservation Orders [TPOs] cover approximately 170ha of treed land in the Borough

Biodiversity

- The Ribble Estuary's designation as a SSSI, SPA and RAMSAR site and position as a centre for nature reserves reinforces its importance as a habitat for migratory birds as it supports one of the biggest wintering and passage populations of wading birds in



Britain.

- Fylde Borough contains 1 Local Nature Reserve, 12 special roadside verges (which act as important wildlife corridors) and 33 Sites of Biological Heritage
- Lytham's dunes are a scarce habitat that has high biodiversity value and should be actively conserved and enhanced



Lytham Sand Dunes

Cultural Heritage

- The Borough possesses an extensive and fine network of heritage with 9 Recognised Historic Designed Landscapes and 3 Registered Historic Parks and Gardens (See Figure T20). This is reinforced by ten high quality Conservation Areas.
- A intermittent belt/corridor of protected trees runs north-easterly from Lytham to Kirkham echoing the Pre-Medieval Woodland that once stood there (See Figure T24).



Wrea Green Conservation Area

Open Spaces

- Relatively strong network of recreational green spaces serving key urban centres and villages (See Figure T25)
- *Fylde Borough Council Open Space, Sport and Recreation Study: Strategy and Action Plan [OSSRS]* reveals the predominance of natural and semi-natural urban greenspaces (which includes woodlands, urban forestry, scrub, grasslands, wetlands, open and running water, wastelands and derelict open land) as a principle open space resource within the Borough (See Figure T25).



Cricket Pitch and Surrounding Woodland in Lytham at Twilight

2.3 Key Findings: Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Challenges

Figure 2.1.2: Borough Wide GI SWOC (Strength, Weakness, Opportunities and Challenge) Analysis

STRENGTHS	WEAKNESSES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>Wide range of high quality existing GI Assets including historic parks and gardens, estuarine habitat, outdoor sports and recreational facilities and protected open spaces.</i> ▪ <i>Biodiverse Coastline is a key environmental asset and habitat.</i> ▪ <i>Importance of the Ribble Coast and Wetlands Regional Park is Internationally and Nationally Recognised.</i> ▪ <i>Productive and versatile agricultural land resource primarily of a very good to good/moderate grade.</i> ▪ <i>Wide range of organisations and expertise willing to work in partnership e.g. RSPB, Lancashire Wildlife Trust, & Lancashire Gardens Trust.</i> ▪ <i>Many major assets owned and managed by Lancashire County Council or Fylde Borough.</i> ▪ <i>Existing environmental education resources (e.g. RSPB Discovery Centre at Fairhaven Lake).</i> ▪ <i>Good Partnerships in place such as Fylde Local Strategic Partnership, Fylde Together (partnership of voluntary, community, faith sector and social enterprise groups), Shaping the Place project group, etc...</i> ▪ <i>Existing Community Engagement – e.g. community supported agriculture and food production projects such as that by Fylde FoodCo.</i> ▪ <i>Institutional willingness backed up by a wealth of research and guidance across the County and North-West Region in support of GI initiatives. Provides a strong support network.</i> ▪ <i>Promotion of St Annes as a “Classic Resort” naturally correlates with a high environmental quality and can be used to draw investment to help maintain and green the public realm.</i> ▪ <i>Strong protection measure for the green belt and ‘green pockets’ (TPOs and Open Spaces).</i> ▪ <i>Strong green heritage – historic parks and conservation areas.</i> ▪ <i>Large parks improvement programme facilitated by the “Fylde formula” (i.e. establishing supporters’ groups for parks to design masterplans in conjunction with FBC and LCC) to lever in large amounts of grant money from external sources.</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>Lack of political awareness – need ‘champions’ to drive forward GI thinking across sectoral divisions.</i> ▪ <i>Wider lack of understanding, knowledge or commitment within the Borough Council or community with reference to green infrastructure and its benefits.</i> ▪ <i>Negative attitude of developers towards GI/green space as a cosmetic afterthought. Open and Green Space should be the first aspect planned for.</i> ▪ <i>Existing green space is fragmented and in some cases is either overused or underused. Recreational greenspace needs to be central and accessible to a wide range of people rather than leftover and remote land parcels.</i> ▪ <i>Connections – cycle ways and footpaths fragmented.</i> ▪ <i>Not enough street trees and woodland – variable spatial distribution. Lower levels in more deprived LSOAs.</i> ▪ <i>Low awareness of local food schemes.</i> ▪ <i>Long Waiting Lists for Allotment Plots.</i> ▪ <i>High flood risk in some areas.</i> ▪ <i>Poor Promotion of rural diversification.</i> ▪ <i>High demand for agricultural land for arable and horticultural use – provides a limited range of habitat.</i> ▪ <i>Out of date planning policy framework in place.</i> ▪ <i>Section 106 system not linked up with GI and Public realm improvements and Community Infrastructure Levy measures not currently being developed.</i> ▪ <i>No open space or specific landscaping requirements for developers.</i> ▪ <i>Focused more towards climate mitigation over adaptation.</i> ▪ <i>Use of pesticides etc... on intensely managed greenspaces such as golf courses and football pitches negatively impact upon vulnerable species.</i>

OPPORTUNITIES	CHALLENGES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>Integrate GI into the start of all planning and design projects at the strategic level from inception stage by setting base requirements through pre-apps/site allocations.</i> ▪ <i>Embed GI delivery and maintenance into the Planning System through DC or DM policies so that windfall sites meet an appropriate standard.</i> ▪ <i>Protect, enhance and sympathetically diversify existing GI.</i> ▪ <i>Better manage existing GI along key nature corridors (e.g. special cutting programme for special roadside verges) and around key habitats to deliver biodiversity.</i> ▪ <i>Connect and link isolated patches of GI and multiply their functionality. For example, by extending strategic green links from valued existing environmental assets (such as Historic Parks & Gardens) into the wider built environment.</i> ▪ <i>Educate developers and planners to value green solutions and to think more holistically so as to connect up green space with land outside the red-line development boundary.</i> ▪ <i>Educate everyone about the importance and benefits of green space to society, the economy and the environment.</i> ▪ <i>Target Deprived or Deficient Areas for GI delivery so as to improve access to health and environmental quality.</i> ▪ <i>Tourism Economy and Business ‘hooks’ for adaptation due to multifunctional nature of green/blue space, e.g. attractiveness for tourism/economic competitiveness.</i> ▪ <i>Improving tourism attractions aesthetically and ethically through appropriate green niche markets. This includes routes. Sense of arrival is all important.</i> ▪ <i>To sensitively utilise the status and biodiversity of the Ribble Coast and Wetlands Regional Park for wider educational, community and tourist uses.</i> ▪ <i>EU Directives as levers e.g. EA/Floods/Habitats Directives to promote well thought-out environmental interventions e.g. utilising United Utilities improvement works to Unsatisfactory Intermittent Discharges (UIDs) to improve existing spaces.</i> ▪ <i>Align and pool budgets to collectively deliver and get better value. Allocate more Section106/CIL money to SUDs and public green space works (e.g. park improvement and expansion).</i> ▪ <i>Adapting to Climate Change and ensuring sustainable development.</i> ▪ <i>Expand opportunities for people of all ages and abilities to enjoy the Borough’s countryside, heritage and wildlife</i> ▪ <i>Create green open air classroom spaces for local school children to learn about the environment, climate change and healthy lifestyles.</i> ▪ <i>Promote sustainable land management to provide local food, wood fuel and biomass.</i> ▪ <i>Improving woodland management and delivering new woodland planting opportunities.</i> ▪ <i>Extending opportunities for local schools, businesses, volunteers and residents to get involved in managing GI and develop landscape management and food growing skills.</i> ▪ <i>Better information for tourists and visitors on Fylde Boroughs wildlife and landscape.</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>Lack of funding and resources in the current economic climate.</i> ▪ <i>Perceptions of GI as nice to have rather than a necessity.</i> ▪ <i>Ensuring GI documents and policies are actively picked-up and employed rather than becoming dusty tomes.</i> ▪ <i>Finding an acceptable yet meaningful set of thresholds for incorporating GI into future development. Particularly key to future proofing the Core Strategy bearing in mind its 20year time horizon.</i> ▪ <i>Understanding the significant international biodiversity interest of the Fylde Estuary and developing proposals that sympathetically enhance habitat.</i> ▪ <i>New approaches to agricultural land management needed – encourage use of set-aside for nature.</i> ▪ <i>Need for new GI skills in Planners and developers.</i> ▪ <i>Limited access to private sector investment.</i> ▪ <i>Ensuring strategic coordination/cooperation.</i> ▪ <i>Existing greenspace threatened by loss, damage, misuse and inappropriate management practices.</i> ▪ <i>Impact of leapfrog development and peri-urbanisation processes.</i> ▪ <i>Adapting the urban environment to impacts of climate change i.e. increased flash flooding due to greater frequency of high intensity rainfall events and the affect of the urban heat island which could affect the health/quality of life of elderly residents.</i> ▪ <i>Future proofing planting of species in light of anticipated shift in climate.</i> ▪ <i>Global market impacting upon food production in rural areas which will impact on the landscape character and local food industry (i.e. similar scenarios to projected impact of the expansion of energy crops in late 2000s).</i> ▪ <i>Developing political support for GI as an essential component of development.</i> ▪ <i>Resource drain of managing and maintaining a burgeoning GI resource.</i> ▪ <i>Ensuring local planning authorities employ the full range of skills necessary to cover the process of green infrastructure planning effectively and finding the funds to buy in such skills when missing.</i>

Recreation, Health, Travel & The Economy

Opportunities:

- The British Aerospace Complex at Warton and BNFL Springfield nuclear processing plants at Clifton are regionally significant employment sites and could potentially provide finance/land to improve and expand GI resource in neighbouring communities.
- Ensure agri-environmental practices and greenspace management in parks, football pitches and golf-courses only use natural/organic fertilisers and pesticides – as nitrogen leaching and pesticides can have a wider negative impact on biodiversity. Establish a protocol agreement to do this? Lead with an argument of being a step ahead of future regulatory practices.
- Make cycle routes more attractive by providing green cover to shelter cyclists from prevailing winds and simultaneously establish new wildlife corridors.
- Any investment to improve north-south road linkages must incorporate GI thinking in route selection and implementation so as to minimise its impact on existing GI assets (e.g. habitat) and provide multifunctional spaces with planting and landscaping which can act as enhanced replacement habitat and provide Sustainable Drainage.
- Investigate increasing recreational trails and accessible greenspace so as to encourage people to live healthier, more active lifestyles and provide space for outdoor natural play for children and families.

Culture, Tourism & Heritage

- Hall Park, Ashton Gardens and Promenade Gardens in St Annes are important high quality heritage assets that should be promoted and used as platforms for greening the surrounding environment. They also represent an opportunity to expand the diversity of flora - e.g. through historically accurate gardens and trialling future/alternative plant species akin to a botanical garden.
- Programme of Park improvements and expansion should ensure a holistic approach to GI is incorporated into the masterplanning process.
- Ongoing projects to promote and enhance Lytham St Annes as a vibrant yet traditional Victorian resort and the Ribble Estuary Park as a major wildlife site attraction provide vital opportunities to secure funding to expand and reinforce GI.
- Green routes and key tourist destinations alongside urban gateways to visually enhance their aesthetic appearance, add vitality and create a lasting impression, as has been successfully implemented in the Lytham St Annes public realm works.

Biodiversity & Landscape

- Strategic gaps in GI provision e.g. between Lytham and Clifton along the A584 (See Figure T28) should be addressed.
- Potential to accommodate and sustain woodland planting is greatest within the Fylde Coastal Plain (See Figure T29). Historic areas of semi-natural ancient deciduous woodlands should be the priority for habitat conservation management and extension. Broad hedgerow restoration and woodland planting projects should be concentrated adjacent to existing ancient woodland, creating corridors of woodland habitat that link to adjacent hedgerows, copses and woodlands.

Climate Change & Food Scarcity

- Flood risk is an issue, including areas of risk along the Rivers Ribble and Wyre and areas of mossland to the north-east of Lytham (See Figure T31). Protection, preservation and, where necessary, restoration of sand dunes as natural coastal flooding defence/attenuation.
- Promote better, and expand, local food initiatives. Explore converting unused land in the urban footprint to allotments where development has stalled/ or permission is extant.
- Examine existing tree and vegetation cover in key public spaces (e.g. high-street) and built-up areas (focusing on areas of highest density first) to assess whether there is sufficient natural shade already available that can counter urban heat vulnerability.

The three priority action areas provide a more detailed examination of the opportunities and key themes associated with GI in the context of three sites within the Borough.

2.4 Delineating the GI Resource

In order to recognise GI opportunities and best exploit them appropriately, it is necessary to clearly map the existing GI resource. For this purpose two themed maps have been produced.

Socio-Cultural

The socio-cultural focuses on the anthropocentric aspects of GI, i.e. – elements of GI with economic and cultural value in terms of aesthetics, recreation and psychology of living environment. This includes heritage features, parks and open spaces.

Environmental

The environmental map focuses more upon the nature conservation, biodiversity and environmental systems (e.g. Hydrological System). To this extent it shows all green spaces within the Borough alongside more formally recognised assets (items subject to conservation designations) in order to highlight habitats and ecological networks.

These maps (overleaf) provide the evidence base for decisions about where there should be new public open spaces (to plug gaps in the existing network of green spaces) and where there should be new green grid routes to enhance connectivity between key destinations. The maps alongside the baseline data and analysis contained within the survey report, combined with the principles embedded in the opportunities and recommendations highlighted by this report, provide a sound basis for policy decisions and provide the evidence base for future environmental projects, development briefs and funding bids.

The image (right) provides a helpful delineation of generic GI assets at the various spatial scales at which they occur.

Image Source:
Green Infrastructure Feasibility Study For Greater Manchester – Summary Report (TEP, 2008)

Neighbourhood Scale		Town / City Scale	
<p>A network of local green spaces addresses many user needs especially in light of urban densification, demographic changes, social inclusion; and helps to move towards a low carbon economy</p>		<p>District scale green infrastructure contributes to an area's distinctiveness and biodiversity, allowing a wide range of user groups to share the same space.</p>	
			
Street Trees / Home Zones	Local Rights of Way	City Parks	Country Parks / Estates
Roof Gardens & Green Roofs	Dedicated Gardens / Cemeteries	Urban Canals & Waterways	Continuous waterfront
Pocket Parks	Institutional Open Spaces	Green Networks	Municipal / Cathedral Plazas
Gardens	Ponds & Small Woodlands	Multi-user routes	Lakes
Urban Plazas	Play Areas	Urban Commons	Major recreational spaces
Village Greens	Local Nature Reserves	Forest Parks	Landmarks & Vistas & Gateways

Fylde Green Infrastructure Strategy

Key Socio-Cultural Green Infrastructure Resource

- Legend**
- Fylde Borough Council Boundary
 - Allotments (K7)
 - Conservation Area
 - Country Parks - Wyre Estuary
 - Doorstep Green - Wesham Jubilee
 - Greenbelt (K4)
 - Historic Designed Landscapes
 - Historic Parks & Gardens (K3)
 - Protected Open Space (K26)
 - Public Open Space (K48)

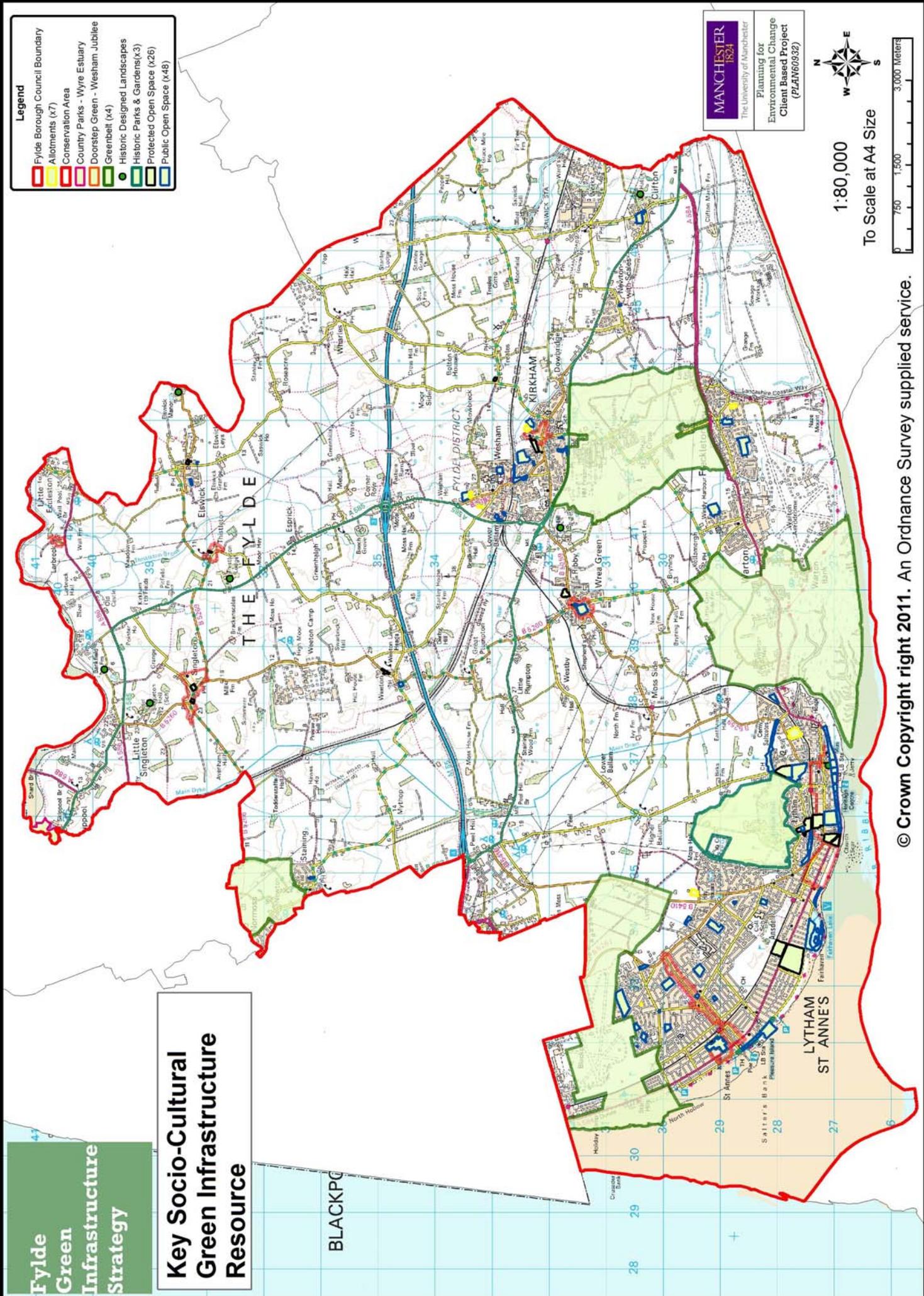
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Planning for
Environmental Change
Client Based Project
(PLAN60932)



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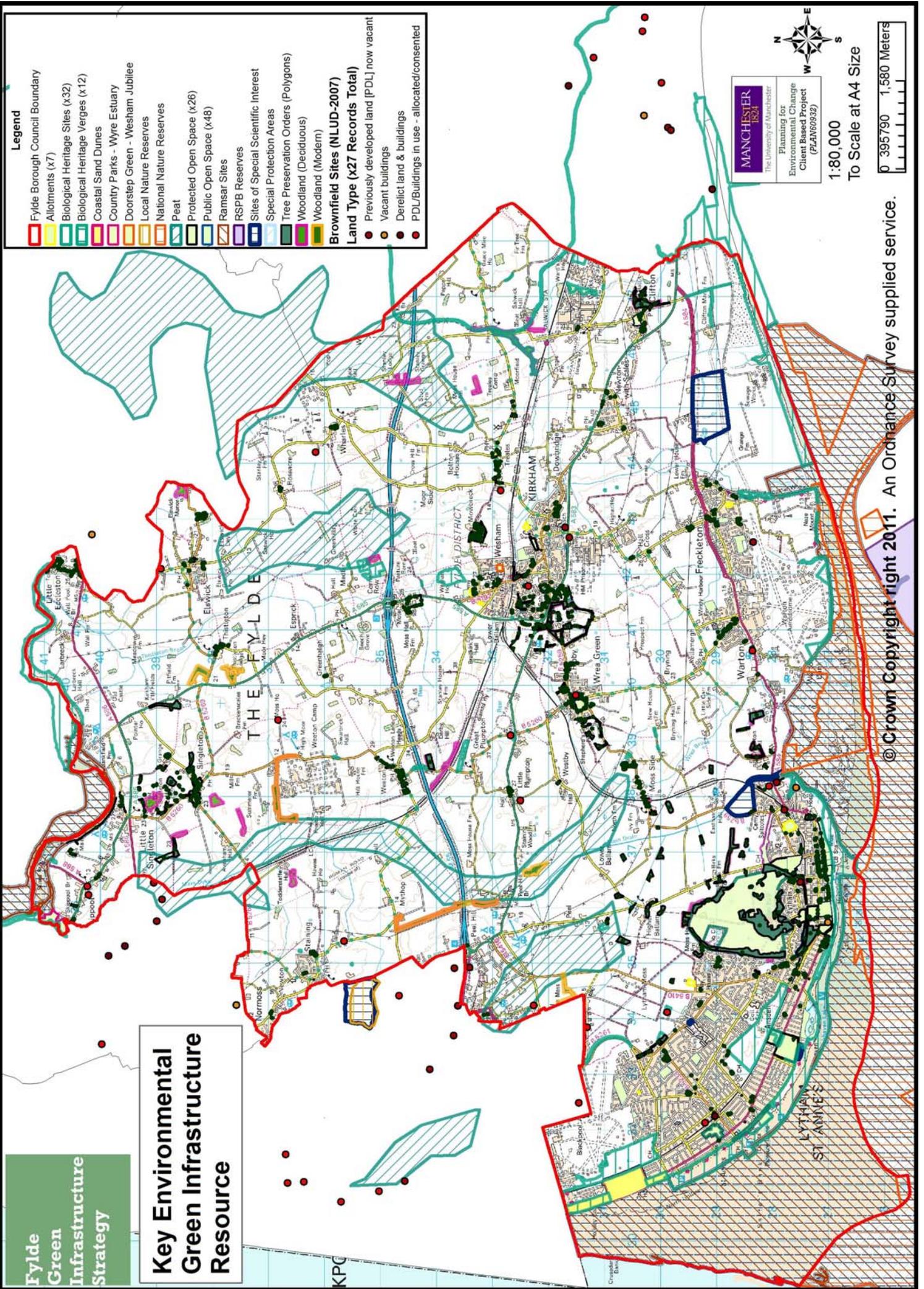
To Scale at A4 Size



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Fylde Green Infrastructure Strategy

Key Environmental Green Infrastructure Resource



- Legend**
- Fylde Borough Council Boundary
 - Allotments (x7)
 - Biological Heritage Sites (x32)
 - Biological Heritage Verges (x12)
 - Coastal Sand Dunes
 - Country Parks - Wyre Estuary
 - Doorstep Green - Wesham Jubilee
 - Local Nature Reserves
 - National Nature Reserves
 - Peat
 - Protected Open Space (x26)
 - Public Open Space (x48)
 - Ramsar Sites
 - RSPB Reserves
 - Sites of Special Scientific Interest
 - Special Protection Areas
 - Tree Preservation Orders (Polygons)
 - Woodland (Deciduous)
 - Woodland (Modern)
- Brownfield Sites (NLUJ-2007)**
- Land Type (x27 Records Total)**
- Previously developed land (PDL) now vacant
 - Vacant buildings
 - Derelict land & buildings
 - PDL/Buildings in use - allocated/consented

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3. Priority Action Area 1: Clifton Drive

3.1 Contextual Overview

Clifton Drive is a section of the A584 (Figure 3.1.1), a major A-Road that stretches 4.5 miles and serves a densely populated area of Fylde Borough. The road acts as a pivotal link between Lytham and St Annes incorporating key areas such as Blackpool airport, the Square, the Promenade and golfing facilities.



The key aspects of Clifton Drive have been taken into account in completion of a SWOC analysis. The following section will summarise the key aspects that were brought to light in the analysis of the area that will help inform a preferred course of action and inform the subsequent recommendations.



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(Figure 3.1.1, Source: EDINA Digimap OS Strategic Overlay)

3.2. Key Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Challenges

3.2.1. Key Strengths/Opportunities:

Accessibility

The road is heavily used by vehicles due to the reasons identified within the contextual analysis. The visibility and accessibility of a GI project within this location is an influencing factor to whether development is feasible because the benefits are more justifiable if they're shared out to a wider community. Moreover it is also a key transport corridor for visitors to Lytham St Annes and as such has an important role in conveying a good impression high environmental quality within the Borough. The St Annes on Sea Resort Action Plan also identifies Clifton Drive as a key for the provision for the east-west connection, stating that it's used frequently by travellers.

Deliverability

Planting new street trees upon highway verges means that there are no complications with land ownership. In light of this, and the recent successful implementation of public realm works in the regeneration of St Annes Square through an effective public-private partnership, such a project would seem eminently deliverable in terms of resources.

Gardened housing

Most of the housing stock is set back; boasting driveways and gardens meaning implementation of street trees would be less constrained in terms of canopy space and provides opportunity for private plantation.

Social, Economic & Health Benefits

Being a key route to the golf courses and the airport, and with important links to the beach, greening Clifton Drive provides an opportunity to improve the urban environment and visibly showcase the Borough's green credentials. GI can have an influencing role for both first-time and repeat visits and may provide economic opportunities to expand from the Promenade. The health benefits of GI have also been at the forefront of many studies and improving GI coverage would hopefully provide benefits in well-being and health.

3.2.2. Key Weaknesses/Challenges:

Management

The coverage of GI along a highway may be restricted through the space required for the trees to mature. Constraints such as visibility of signs, spacing between trees, lighting and the use of buses along the highway may restrict the areas ability to accommodate GI. Any new GI would require a maintenance regime to ensure that the planting becomes established, is properly cared for and does not create any liabilities. Root/branch management and vandalism are examples of issues that may require further expenditure to manage the stock.

Inequality of GI distribution

The distribution of street plantation is relatively uneven as displayed in the Clifton Drive analysis map that can be located in the overleaf. This consequently means that large stretches of road aren't benefiting from existing GI.



(Image 4.2.2.1 – Clifton Drive North)

Please see the 'Clifton Drive – Area Analysis' map, which is can be downloaded from the Council's website at www.fylde.gov.uk, on the Green Infrastructure page.

Funding

Funding would most likely need to come from the local council as would the maintenance of any street trees implemented. The cost in relation to other potential GI projects however is very minimal, but a proactive management plan will be required to ensure that the trees are maintained. If private plantation is to be encouraged, the methods of encouraging plantation could be done through voluntary action.

3.3 Potential Policy and Planning Implications

Symbiosis with Existing Policies

The North West Green Infrastructure Guide indicates the importance that street trees can have to urban green infrastructure (GRITT, 2008). Plantation of street trees would be along the highway, which is the responsibility of the Fylde planning authority under Section 96 of the 1980 Highways Act (HMSO, 1980).

The St Annes Lytham Vision 2020 (Fylde Borough Council, 2009) identifies Clifton Drive as a key area for GI action and suggests a 'Green Boulevard' for the golf open, which complements the analysis that has been undertaken. The St Annes on Sea Regeneration Programme similarly suggests more GI development to create a 'Garden Town by the Sea'.

Guidance of street tree plantation will have to be incorporated through Fylde Borough Council's Tree Officer and be in compliance with best practice as set out in *Trees in Towns II* (Britt & Johnston, 2008).

Tree Preservation Orders (TPOs) may need to be later incorporated with any plantation that is undertaken to ensure effective protection and management.

3.4. Options Appraisal

The options for the renovation of Clifton Drive are fairly limited as it is principally an urban highway and therefore only limited GI is compatible without causing damage or disruption to the free flow of traffic and/or pedestrians. Moreover major restructuring of the urban fabric isn't financially viable and consequently means that any action will need to be on a small scale.

The following options have been suggested:

Option 1 – Do nothing

There have been ambitious plans to develop Clifton Drive previously as can be seen in the Lytham St Annes Vision 2020 (Fylde Borough Council, 2009). That action hasn't been forthcoming, suggests that the greening of Clifton Drive may not be a current priority due to funding constraints and the projected costs of management at a time when public funds are scarce and under increasing scrutiny. The difficulty in valuating GI in monetary terms also makes it difficult to prioritise as other projects may appear to yield more concrete results and faster returns.

However, the positive affects that GI can have on the area could prove more beneficial to Fylde in the long-term. GI has strong links to commercial and economic success and improved public health and well-being (CABE, 2009). Moreover street trees can help reduce air pollution caused by vehicle emissions as roadside trees can trap up to 90% of traffic related air borne dust particles (*ibid*, 2009). GI also indirectly increases outdoor activity and improves health as it softens hard unwelcoming urban edges, increasing the likelihood of residents and visitors opting to walk as GI combined with street furniture can create an enjoyable and safe environment.

Option 2 – Promote Private GI

It has been identified that there are a large number of semi-detached and large detached residential properties with large gardens along Clifton Drive North to Clifton Drive South and right through to West Beach. These private garden spaces provide a key opportunity to increase and improve the GI coverage and its functionality in terms of habitat and water storage with minimal costs and management implications.

The current GI coverage on private gardens is of a high calibre indicating that residents recognise its amenity value and the important functions it has and are consequently willing to incorporate it on private land. Further educating the residents of Clifton Drive could significantly improve and diversify the GI coverage in the area, creating more greenery and urban habitat, and perhaps even forming the first steps in an urban nature trail.

Educating the community through neighbourhood workshop events advertised through posters, flyers and use of the web could prove an efficient way of improving community involvement in GI actions. Ensuring the community understands the need for GI in line with both the social and environmental considerations is important. Giving the community a way to help contribute may be the intrinsic motivator needed for results.

Influencing factors could be:

- Shade from the sun and sand
- Fruit
- Natural beauty/aesthetics
- Mammals
- Insects
- Gift/remembrance for family/friend
- Self-satisfaction
- Health and well-being

The opportunity to educate the community in Tree Preservation Orders (TPO) and management of GI should also be addressed. Many residents may not incorporate GI in their gardens due to lack of knowledge and choice of suitability so guidance on making choices around plantation should be included and could even go as far as leaflets that are delivered to the dwellings. The guidance provided would empower residents with the confidence and knowledge to improve the GI within their land and possibly have a trickle down effect to other areas.

Guidance ↔ Confidence

The Council could also provide initiatives to encourage private plantation. An example would be to provide suitable young trees to residents that are willing to allocate their land for tree planting.

Option 3 – Create a Green Corridor

The favoured option that compliments the strengths and opportunities of Clifton Drive is the creation of a 'Green Corridor'.

There is a strong social and economic case for creating a green corridor and such measures are supported by planning policy. The prominence of Clifton Drive as a key arterial route lends GI intervention at this location with high visibility. Planting a corridor of trees along the highway will leave people with a strong positive impression of Fylde and be symbolic of the Council's commitment to promoting and expanding GI in the urban environment.

The lack of debate over land ownership along with previous effective public/private relations for St Annes Square proves that the project would be feasible but careful management would be required to ensure that tree plantation doesn't have a negative affect on the urban environment by causing issues such as pavement damage and hindering vehicular visibility.

The creation of the GI corridor could provide opportunity to involve street furniture and create a 'green boulevard' for future sporting events, such as the Open Golf Tournament.

3.5 Recommendation

3.5.1 Identification of Preferred Option

Option	Strengths	Weaknesses	Reason for Discounting
Do Nothing	Doesn't require any funding, time or added management.	Would waste potential opportunities.	The area was identified for improvement due to its opportunities.
Private Plantation	Would incorporate and improve community involvement in planning issues. Cheap and easy to implement.	Uptake and results can not be guaranteed. Therefore it could potentially waste scarce time and resources.	Plantation in gardens along Clifton Drive is already well established.
Green Corridor	Guaranteed to improve GI coverage within the area. May have indirect benefits such as tourism, well-being and social cohesion.	Requires the most public funds and management.	Preferred option.

Table 3.5.1.1 Preferred Option

After the analysis of Clifton Drive and its potential project options it appears that the creation of a green corridor is the most logical choice. Investment of GI in this area is perfectly justifiable based on its prominence and connectivity of the major A-road. Distributing street tree plantation evenly along the road on both sides would be the key objective of the proposal (Image 3.5.1) but further additions of street furniture such as planter boxes could compliment the project.

The creation of a green corridor can provide an area with many benefits that have been discussed throughout the project analysis and give a strong notable impression on all that access it. An example of strong green corridors that have yielded internationally recognised results is the La Rambla in Barcelona.



The corridor that could be created along Clifton Drive will evidently never measure up to such a prolific project but similar benefits such as increased tourism and a strong sense of place can be achieved.

If Clifton Drive can identify itself further as a 'Garden Town by the Sea' as suggested in St Annes on the Sea Regeneration Programme by incorporating existing GI with the corridor of trees it could prove an attractive sea-side resort and attract private investors into the area.

(Image 3.5.1. Further Street Tree Plantation on Clifton Drive)

3.5.2. Adjoining land and streets

The recommendation above doesn't exclude external elements and ideas of other options. Involving communities can have a positive impact on planning within Fylde and help the Council stay in line with new localism objectives. The process of incorporating more GI along Clifton Drive may provide an opportunity to educate the community and influence private plantation.

There has been a couple of streets identified that adjoin Clifton Drive to the Promenade that have existing street trees that would help create a network that could influence more people to walk along.

3.5.3. Wider Policy Recommendations

The Core Strategy that is currently being developed should consider including policies to ensure that urbanised land has sufficient GI coverage to prove the Council's commitment to become a greener and more sustainable Borough. It should identify that GI should not only be incorporated in new development projects but all land including highways should be assessed to identify areas that can accommodate and promote GI coverage.

4. Priority Action Area 2: Lytham Hall

4.1 Contextual Overview

Within the Borough of Fylde, there are 191 entries on the List of Buildings of Special Architectural or Historic Interest and they play an important part in contributing to the sense of place, time and community within the area. For this reason it is important to consider manners in which a mutually beneficial relationship between the conservation of the historic environment and biodiversity conservation can be created and what additional benefits may be accrued through the delivery of a GI strategy. Lytham Hall was selected as a study site in order to further explore this topic.



Figure 4.1.1: Lytham Hall

The Hall is a Grade I listed building (i.e. a building of “exceptional interest”) and is sited within a 75 acre estate comprising of parkland, woodland, ponds, gardens and historic designed landscape features (Fig. 4.1.2). Lytham Park features on the English Heritage Register of Parks and Gardens of Special Historic Interest in England (Grade 2, Ref: GD1947) and the woodland is classed as ancient and post medieval woodland and protected by a Tree Preservation Order (1951 No.7). The woodland has also been designated a Biological Heritage Site due to its importance for birdlife (FBC, 2009).

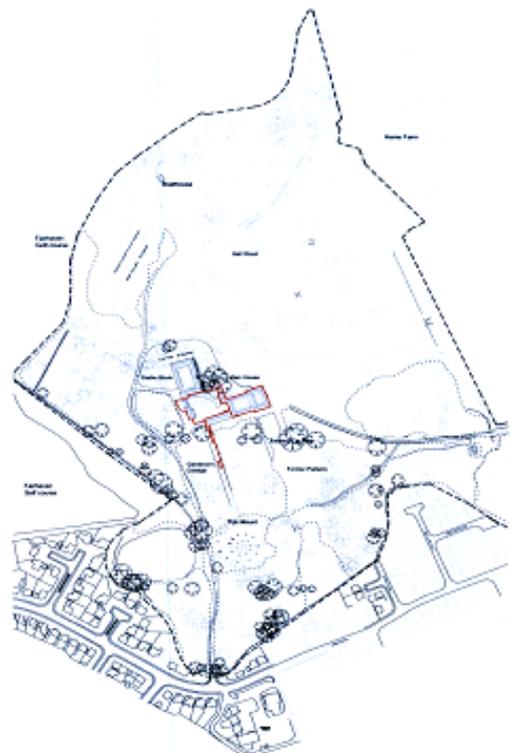


Figure 4.1.2: Lytham Hall and Park (buildings affected by proposed restoration outlined in red) (Source: Purcell Miller Tritton, 2010)

4.2. Key Strengths, Problems and Opportunities

4.2.1. Key Strengths:

Natural Asset

Lytham Park is a rich local asset capable of supporting a range of habitats (refer to figures 4.2.1 and 4.2.2) and valuable public amenity functions.



Figure 4.2.1: The extent of the woodland. (Produced using GGP. ©Crown copyright. All rights reserved. 078018)



Figure 4.2.2 : Lytham Hall "Fishing Lake", one of the two ponds on the estate.

Public Backing & Support Structures

Specialist advice and support structures are available at the County and Borough levels regarding heritage and environmental concerns. There is also significant public interest in the estate and the project manager for the Lytham Hall restoration project, Paul Hodgkiss, has stated that they have been “overwhelmed by the public enthusiasm” for the project. The high proportion of retired people in Fylde has already contributed to voluntary activities at Lytham Hall and this represents a valuable resource for future projects.

Heritage Driven Economic Uplift

The recently secured Heritage Lottery funding supports the potential for Lytham Hall to drive heritage-led uplift. The tourism sector in Fylde is strong and is set to grow with the arrival of the 2012 British Golf Open. The success of this important sector also depends upon the maintenance of high quality public environments and this ensures the continued prioritisation of well maintained natural space within the Borough. As such GI assets such as Lytham Park can support economic uplift aspirations while also providing environmental and social benefits.

Accessibility

Lytham Park is highly accessible being close to residential areas, schools and only approximately 1.5km from Lytham town centre (see Fig. 4.2.3). Under a new management agreement the Park is open to the public free of charge (with the exception of special events) for a minimum of 200 days per annum (LCC, 2011b) and a Ranger has been appointed on site to facilitate this. The proposed refurbishment of the Hall also includes educational facilities and a planned “Forest School” offering.

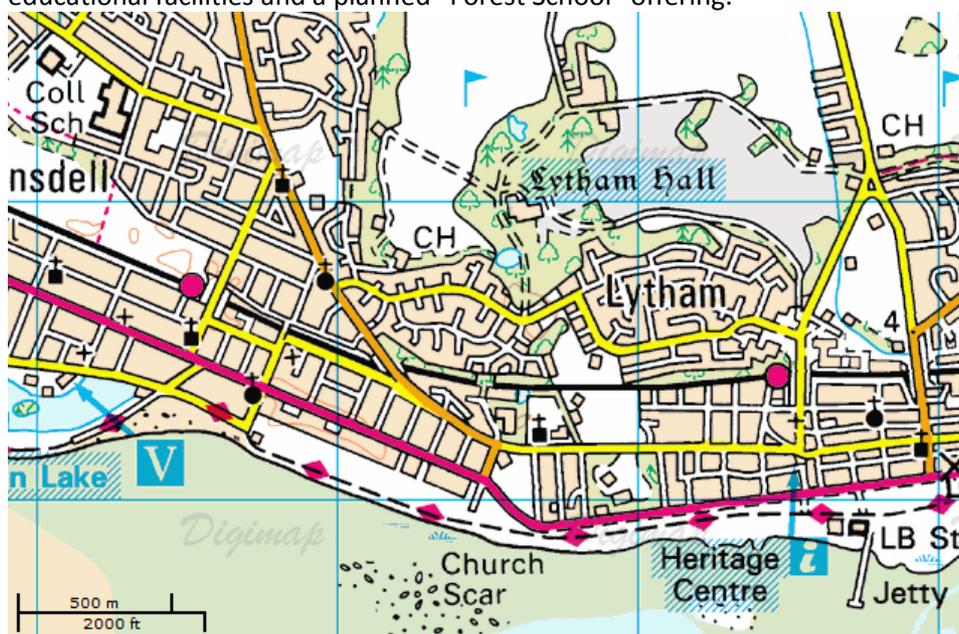


Figure 4.2.3: Lytham Hall shown to the north of Lytham (Credit: Crown copyright, Ordnance Survey/EDINA supplied service, 2011)

4.2.2. Key Problems:

Lack of Information

Scant information regarding the value of the site as a habitat and environmental asset hinders the identification of both advantages and potential problems. A relatively low cost starting point would be the maintenance of a wildlife log-book as a means of recording the presence of particular native wildlife. It has already been recommended that an arboricultural survey be carried out for the estate (Purcell Miller Tritton, 2010) and the devising of appropriate enhancement, management and maintenance projects and the identification of opportunities will rely upon obtaining such information.

Degradation

According to Lytham Town Trust and the Heritage Trust for the North West (HTNW), the Lytham estate experienced “100 years of neglect” and only recently became publicly accessible. It is often assumed that the absence of disturbance should benefit onsite biodiversity but this relies on the absence of invasive species.

In 2008, a woodland management plan identified that a large proportion of the woodland at Lytham Park was adversely affected by invasive rhododendron, which could effectively sterilise large areas by preventing the establishment of seedlings and killing new trees. Apart from damage incurred by neglect, increased tourism activity and public access can degrade the environmental quality of the grounds. Thus estate management and maintenance planning will be required to safeguard and enhance the environmental value of the estate while maintaining access for the public.

Climate Change

English Heritage recommends that all conservation management plans for historic parks and gardens should now address climate change, even if initially this is only a strategy to monitor changes and scope future needs. Such changes could include temperature increases, species migration, greater soil nutrient leaching and increased pest populations and incidences of disease.

Funding

Support services and activities could be negatively impacted by further public sector cuts. In addition to curtailing implementation, financial pressures may necessitate the preclusion of specialist input concerning the appraisal of environmental assets and restoration options.

4.2.3. Key Opportunities:

Enhanced Educational Benefits

Lytham Hall and Park can be used to implement wider environmental and social policy aims by enhancing the range of education programmes and activities on offer, for instance allotment management/ grow your own food classes, courses on gardening for climate change, information on the importance of green infrastructure in Fylde and how locals can play their part, etc. These programs can also be linked with heritage by, for instance, showing how the provision of resources such as food or energy has changed for Fylde or Lytham Hall over time. Some programs could involve local schools, some have the potential to be joint projects undertaken in association with Fylde Borough Council and others could be independently commercially viable. Particular information, such as on-site climate change mitigation measures, habitat creation efforts, waste management programs, etc., can also be disseminated in an informal way during site tours in order to add a dimension of environmental interpretation to the experience.



**Figure 4.2.4: Outdoor classroom at St. Catherines Primary School, Lowton
(Source: Groundwork UK)**

Sustainability Related Commercial Opportunities

Designing, planning and managing for a more sustainable heritage site are not only socially and environmentally responsible actions, but when the experience and knowledge garnered is shared with visitors it is capable of attracting tourists and locals who have an interest in the environment and sustainable development. Thus in addition to heritage led regeneration, adopting and sharing stronger sustainability proposals could open up a new target market for Lytham Hall.

4.3 Potential Policy and Planning Implications

Symbiosis with Existing Local Policies

The opportunities identified and recommendations for Lytham Park complement existing regeneration projects, such as project 9 of the “Lytham St Annes Vision 2020”. Such projects also have the potential to assume greater GI functionality and contribute to the creation of a more connected network of sites and links, which in turn encourages visitors to further explore the area. The potential positive health impacts of green and open space have been extensively documented and the opening up of Lytham Park to the public corresponds with objectives identified in the Council’s Open Space, Sport and Recreational Study (Knight et al, 2008). They also support sustainable community strategy and tourism policy aims within the locality.

Supporting Wider Policy Objectives

The protection of woodland and landscape character are important County level policy aims and these are supported by the recommendations for the Lytham estate and other heritage sites. They also incorporate the visions outlined in the LCC Climate Change Strategy (2009) and the LCC Draft Green Infrastructure Strategy. The combining of heritage, environmental protection, social inclusion and education objectives has significant potential to encourage more sustainable behaviours and aid the delivery of a range of parallel policy aims. Some examples of these aims include encouraging the planting of trees on private land, the uptake of measures to mitigate and adapt to climate change, etc.

4.4. Options Appraisal

Considering the variation in functionality, characteristics and ownership amongst heritage sites across the Borough, devising and appraising options for the incorporation of these sites into a GI network are site specific exercises. Partnerships between government bodies, landowners, community organisations, local businesses, charities and trusts are needed to facilitate such a process and ensure the delivery of a fuller range of benefits. For Lytham Park, which is owned by Lytham Town Trust and managed by the Heritage Trust North West, a partnership approach is paramount. The “Parkland Group”, which is an informal working group comprising of both specialists and local stakeholders with interests in heritage and the environment, can form the basis for a steering group capable of identifying and appraising options based on additional site information and stakeholder consultation.

4.5. Recommendations

- Consider opportunities for GI to contribute to the protection, enhancement, management and interpretation of the historic dimension of the present landscape and to enhance access to heritage sites and their surroundings.
- Identify opportunities and allocate resources for the restoration and management of historic landscapes, parks, gardens and woodlands, particularly where they support the restoration, creation or extension of wildlife habitats.
- Identify heritage sites with particular importance as GI assets and explore the possibility of affording them appropriate protection measures. Additionally, their potential as landmark projects should be assessed with a view to promoting them as important hubs within the GI network.
- Develop urban GI networks to complement historic urban character and explore opportunities for enhancing wildlife within this environment. Where appropriate, this may include new tree planting, the incorporation of nest boxes onto buildings or the provision of innovative nest sites or roosts within some built structures.
- Require management and maintenance plans to balance increased accessibility and use of natural and cultural assets with the conservation and enhancement of the environment. Such plans should also be required to address climate change.

- Utilise, where available, or provide strategically located educational or visitor centre facilities with a view to providing environmental interpretation and education for tourists and local communities.
- Adopt a partnership approach and provide guidance, for instance a GI checklist aimed at heritage sites, to aid visioning processes, option appraisals and decision-making.
- Provide specialist support where possible to provide information, reframe the perceived value of heritage parkland, woodland and gardens and promote their value as GI assets.

5. Priority Action Area 3: BAE Warton

5.1 Contextual Overview

The BAE site at Warton comprises approximately 243 hectares including advanced manufacturing facilities, aerodrome facilities and 3 runways. Due to the sheer scale of the site, and its location on the boundary of the Ribble Estuary SAC, it was seen as an ideal opportunity to identify opportunities to increase the provision of green space and diversify and improve habitats for wildlife, as well as identifying possible opportunities to increase public access to nature sites.



The map below demonstrates not only the scale of the site, but also its proximity to both the Ribble Estuary and its strategic location between Frackleton and Lytham along the gateway route to the coast from the east.

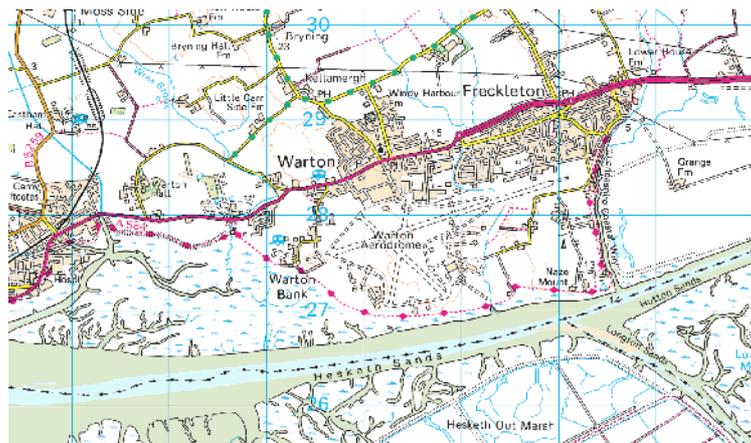


Figure 5.1.1 Location Map at 1 :50,000 Scale (Source: Edina)



Figure 5.1.2 Aerial Photograph of BAE Warton Site (Source: www.webaviation.co.uk)

5.2 Key Strengths, Problems, Opportunities and Challenges

In the previous scoping report, we identified a number of strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and constraints associated with the site, and its potential for ecological enhancement and improved public access. These are summarised in table 5.2.1 below.

STRENGTHS	
Secure Ownership	The future of the site is not in question and therefore any long term improvement plans can be implemented without worry over ownership
Site Area	The vast area covered by the site means there is ample opportunity to create a mosaic of habitat types of sufficient patch size to create stable meta-populations
Planning History	The previous history of development on site, particularly the recent business park application, have clearly considered the need to improve green infrastructure. This suggests that the site operators are open to the idea of further enhancement
Pool Stream Ribble SAC	This provides a valuable resource, and a clear priority area for ecological enhancement Any future enhancement of the site has the potential to positively impact upon the SAC. Furthermore, the SAC may provide opportunities for species to colonise newly created habitats on site
Limited Access	Without regular disturbance from the public, populations can establish and thrive and natural succession can occur without interference
Variety of Habitat	There are already a number of different habitat types on site, from estuarine, river and open grassland to more industrial areas, each supporting unique assemblages
WEAKNESSES	
Nature of Site	Due to the nature of activities on site, it may be difficult to integrate nature conservation into some areas
Economic Climate	With the current reduction in defence funding, capital to redevelop the site is likely to be difficult to obtain. However some limited redevelopment may still be possible
Political Sensitivity	The site is a major local employer, and any plans to redevelop any part of the site may be seen as threatening to the local economy
Transport Policy	Due to access problems at the north of the site, planning permission for one redevelopment proposal has already been refused, and that refusal upheld by the Planning Inspectorate
OPPORTUNITIES	
Flood Risk	Some areas of the site near Pool Stream are unsuitable for formal development. Creating SuDS in these areas may benefit both wildlife and the site operators, by reducing the risk of surface water flooding to other areas of the site
Public Relations	The 'greening' of such a major site as this, would no doubt have a positive effect on the image of the company, both locally and nationally
Localism	With the increase in neighbourhood consultation, and local planning, there may be more opportunity to influence development on the site
CHALLENGES	
Access	Whilst limiting access to the site may benefit wildlife, it does not allow the general public to enjoy these spaces, and therefore some social benefits of the work would be lost
Operational Requirements	It may be difficult to enhance and extend certain habitat types due to the fact that the site is an operational aerodrome, and there are issues of safety
Funding	In the short term, funding for major works may be difficult to obtain. Due to council spending cuts it may be impossible to locate public money to be used to enhance the environmental quality of the site

Table 5.1 SWOC analysis of BAe Warton

5.3 Potential Policy & Planning Implications

This analysis showed that one of the key constraints of the site was the limit of public access determined by the nature of operations on site. There may be some potential for enhanced access in the vicinity of the existing coastal path, allowing the public to enjoy more green space, but opportunities for wholesale site access are limited. Furthermore, due to current economic considerations, and the political sensitivity surrounding any large scale re organisation of the site, the potential for further work in these areas is limited.

5.4 Options Appraisal

Following the SWOC analysis, 4 possible options for the site have been identified. From these a preferred option has been selected which forms the basis for our recommendations for this action area, for policy, and for other brownfield sites within the Borough.

Option 1 – Do nothing

Due to the difficulties already highlighted surrounding site access, and the constraints imposed by the operational nature of the site, this exists as a realistic option. However, this would fail to maximise the opportunities the site has to offer, as set out in the SWOC analysis, and judged against other potential options, whilst the easiest to implement, it would not provide the greatest benefit to the community or for that matter the ecology of the local area. As such, this option must be discounted.

Option 2 – Enhance existing assets

There are already a number of distinct habitat types present on the site. This would lend the area to designation as UKBAP priority habitat under the recently created Open Mosaic Habitat on Previously Developed Land. This would lend further support to the identification of the site as an area of high conservation value. Working pro-actively with the site operators to ensure that habitats on site are managed most effectively to create the optimum areas for important species to thrive, could be implemented with the minimum of expense to the site operators, and could yield significant benefits. This is one step up from the 'do nothing' approach, but whilst it is relatively low input from the perspective of the site operators, and the Borough Council, it may provide greater and more sustainable outcomes than other options. Maximising existing assets such as Pool Stream as a green corridor would have knock on effects for areas off site, possibly leading to the spread of increased species richness and abundance in surrounding areas. Whilst this option would not see the opportunity for the public to enjoy nature on site, the impacts off site would allow local communities to see the impacts of the work on their doorstep.

Option 3 – Increase public access

This option would seek to increase public access throughout the site, to enable local people to use and enjoy the green space on the site, enhancing the usefulness of green infrastructure to local communities. However, due to the nature of some operations on site, increasing access may not be possible due to commercial sensitivity/ health & safety. There are possibilities to increase access along some coastal areas, already served by the coastal path, however, securing this access would most likely incur significant costs on the part of the site operators, and a reorganisation of site security and boundaries would be required.

Option 4 – Create additional green space on site

As has been stated on numerous occasions throughout this and previous reports, there are large expanses of open space on the site. As such there will always exist the opportunity to create additional habitats on site. However, this would incur a financial cost for the site operators, and due to the problems surrounding access already highlighted, any such work would have a negligible impact on access to green space for the local community. One of the site constraints identified in our earlier analysis was the safety concerns regarding bird strikes at the airfield. Creating large expanses of new habitats may increase bird flocking on the site and cause a danger to pilots. If any habitats were to be created, they would have to serve other animal and plant groups, at lower trophic levels, perhaps to increase the biodiversity of invertebrate fauna on site, which would have benefits along green corridors out of the site, without increasing flocking bird presence on site. However, this is probably best achieved by improving existing habitats on site.

Option	Strengths	Weaknesses	Reason for Discounting
Do Nothing	Cheap and easy to implement. Would incur no extra burden for site operators or the Council.	Would not maximise the value of the site	More effective options exist
Enhance Existing Assets	Would improve the biodiversity potential of the site, leading to likely off site enhancements. Cost effective and would not prejudice further re organisation of the site.	Would fail to increase public access to green spaces on site	Preferred option
Improve Site Access	Would give local communities access to more green space and increase opportunities to interact with nature	Not conducive to the operational requirements of the site operators	Very difficult to implement and would not be cost effective
Create Additional Green Space	Would further improve the biodiversity potential of the site	Takes up operational space and may impact site safety	Health and safety and financial considerations

Table 5.2 Identification of Preferred Option

It appears that of all the options available, enhancing the existing assets of the site would be the most reasonable option, taking account of the various constraints of the site identified above.

5.5 Recommendations

BAe Warton

Enhancing the existing assets of the site could yield off-site improvements to biodiversity. There already exists a number of distinct habitat types on site. The first recommendation would be to have an ecological consultant catalogue the diversity of habitats and species present on the site, especially those which do not feature in habitats off site. From this, more targeted strategies to enhance biodiversity on and off site can be generated. The starting point for these must be to analyse how best to connect the site to the wider countryside and suburban areas through a network of green corridors. Pool Stream comprises the most obvious artery in the existing green infrastructure network. Any enhancement to this should focus on increasing the undisturbed areas along the banks, to enable safe travel along this corridor for wildlife. By enhancing green corridors, on site benefits such as habitat improvements, can be shared with the wider communities, for as communities grow on site, inter and intraspecific competition will naturally force individuals along green infrastructure corridors, to areas off site, which will then in turn increase the biodiversity value of these areas, many of which will be easily accessed by the public who in turn can enjoy the indirect benefits of enhancements to the BAe site.

Furthermore, with regards to site access, whilst it is acknowledged that wholesale access to some areas of the site would not be feasible, we would strongly suggest that BAe are engaged in discussions regarding special access arrangements, for school groups etc., who may benefit from visiting areas of nature conservation on site.

Other Brownfield Sites

The recommendations above do not apply solely to BAe at Warton. Although this is a special case due to the nature of operations and the associated constraints which come with it, many of the recommendations apply equally to other large and small scale redevelopments within the Borough. Developers should be encouraged to pay full regard to green infrastructure through redevelopment. Theoretical concepts such as metapopulations theory, as discussed in the scoping report, have real life implications for the Borough. By creating space for nature through redevelopment, there exists to opportunity to create an interconnected mosaic of green spaces within the Borough. The argument by developers that they do not have space for green infrastructure is not valid. This land can be included within existing public open space requirements, and however small the space allocated for wildlife, if this forms part of an interconnected network of green

spaces, it will assist in the enhancement of the green infrastructure network across the Borough, with all the environmental and social benefits that are associated. Developers should be strongly encouraged to create or enhance green infrastructure through redevelopment.

Wider Policy Recommendations

This follows on neatly from the previous recommendations. As part of the emerging Core Strategy, a proactive policy should be included which demands the provision of green infrastructure as a requirement of all new development, except where this is explicitly shown to be unfeasible. The development industry may be the best community to develop cost effective measures to enhance green infrastructure. By placing developers in a position where they must consider green infrastructure as a key component of any development, there is greater potential to see flagship 'green' developments within the Borough, and the inception of new ideas and ways of working which could be disseminated as good practice to other districts. This would identify Fylde as a forward thinking Borough which prides itself on the creation of environmentally sustainable developments to benefit the local community.

6. Delivering Green Infrastructure Across the Borough

6.1 Options Assessment

This Borough-wide options assessment asks what course should Fylde Borough Council take in order to deliver GI across the Borough. The implications of the research and analysis already undertaken have been used to generate and assess a range of courses of action//potential routes forward to a greener future.

The below options set out scenarios which each contain varying intensity of GI provision, action and intervention and differing levels of priority attached to delivering/providing for GI with in the planning process. The likely outcome of each of these is then assessed.

Option 1: Do Nothing

This report is considered enough to highlight the case for GI to Council Workers and Members, the public and developers. GI is not actively sought/pursued or integrated into the Borough's philosophy or approach to future development. Without GI being actively promoted or being present within policy it inevitably slips down the agenda, being considered (if at all) as something that is nice to have rather than essential. Unless the onus for initiating and undertaking GI is vested in a system with continuing statutory responsibility, GI will depend from time to time and from place to place on the enthusiasm of particular participants. There is overwhelming evidence that such reliance rarely results in widespread or sustained commitment. Consequently it is projected that in the long-term the existing areas of GI will qualitatively and quantitatively decline and this will in-turn impact negatively upon biodiversity and environmental living quality.

Option 2: Low intervention / Low Priority > Protectionist Scenario

GI approach is not thoroughly embedded and GI is paid token lip service in planning policy only and is primarily covered from a protectionist approach. Enhancing the quality and expanding the functionality of existing GI assets remains low on the corporate agenda. Consequently the Borough fails to adopt to patterns of climate change and will ultimately lead to a net-loss of biodiversity.

Option 3: Medium intervention / Medium Priority > Public Sector Lead

GI approach is reasonably embedded corporately. Resultantly, more often than not, Borough and County level developments/initiatives/interventions take GI as a core consideration and integrate it into masterplanning from an early stage. Some recommendations from the report are taken forward and successfully implemented. The net result is an expanded and more resilient GI resource that maintains and increases biodiversity and enhances existing assets. However it is given insufficient weight within external facing policy frameworks and has no impact/bearing on future private development proposals.

Option 4: High Intervention / High Priority > Public & Private Partnership & Community Involvement

GI approach is strongly embedded corporately, its benefits are actively promoted to the public and developers and is given heavy weight within planning policy. This promotes holistic GI interventions throughout the urban and rural fabric, spreading the benefits of GI across the Borough to all demographic profiles and contributes to transforming the image of Fylde to an idyllic green haven – boasting a superb living environment and wildlife. This active management of GI enables it to adapt to the challenges of climate change. However the perceived added burden of providing GI may have economic implications that could stifle/deter private sector development in the short-term.

It is clear that there is a need to embed GI in the planning system, corporately, in the wider public eye and in the economic rationality of developers.

It should be noted that these assessments and following recommendations should be subject to a Sustainability Appraisal and Strategic Environmental Assessment, which may be taken in conjunction with specialist staff at Lancashire County Council.

6.2 Recommendations

Actions & Principles for Managing and Developing GI Assets

Create a Network of Green Routes

- **Cycle Network:** Ensure GI is sewn throughout expansions (e.g. NCN Route 62) and improvements to the existing cycling network so as to provide shelter and improve the amenity of routes/paths so as to improve the cycling offer in Fylde for both residents and holiday makers.
- **New Road Infrastructure:** Ensure that investment to improve north-south road linkages incorporates GI thinking into route selection and implementation so as to minimise its impact on existing GI assets (e.g. habitat) and provide multifunctional spaces with planting and landscaping which can act as enhanced replacement habitat and provide Sustainable Drainage.
- **Promote, improve and expand the footpath network** along the coastline and between Fylde and Lytham St Annes. The former is particularly important as the Borough's coastline is an important open space asset for both the local community and holiday makers.
- **Create Greener Gateways and Corridors:** Utilise public realm enhancements and planting to improve the environmental quality and character of the main road and rail gateways and corridors to Fylde Borough's main service centres so as to provide a distinctive character and positive image for the Borough. High quality transport corridors will create environmental quality for local neighbourhoods, major employment sites, recreational destinations and the town centre. To this extent Fylde Borough should seek to establish an exemplar 'green gateway'. A prime candidate for this is the western-end of the M55 corridor and emanating outwards along the A5230 and A584 from their intersection create distinctive gateway spaces into Lytham St Annes. Similarly, a signature tree planting and hedgerow laying programme should be encouraged along prominent corridors such as A-Roads (e.g. A584 and A583), railway lines and the M55 so as to screen these and provide parallel wildlife corridors that also serve a drainage function. A landscape plan should be elaborated in conjunction with the County Highways department and Network Rail to facilitate this. Such a plan could also look at providing seasonal colour and mix to provide interest for commuters and all year round resource for species.

Improve Quality, Quantity & Accessibility of Green Spaces

- **Establish Greenspace Focus Areas** where there is a clear need to improve accessible greenspace. This is particularly pertinent in neighbourhoods with high proportions of elderly residents and high levels of deprivation. The Natural England Accessible Natural Greenspace standard recommends that people living in towns and cities should have an accessible natural greenspace of at least 2 hectares in size, no more than 300 metres (5 minutes walk) from home.
- Existing spaces for **natural play** (e.g. local wild space and formal play facilities) should be catalogued and their distribution assessed in order to reveal where there is a need for improving access to the natural environment.
- Continue to invest in **restoring, improving and expanding parks** as these provide important accessible natural green space which offer a wide range of opportunities for recreation, health and education and improve the quality of life for local communities, as well as providing important habitats for wildlife. However GI thinking must be placed at the forefront of future masterplanning.
- **Use Historic Parks and Gardens, Parks and Historic Designed Landscapes as beacons around which to extend GI outward into the neighbouring urban fabric.**

Enhance and restore biodiversity in Key Wildlife Areas

- Work to **designate Key Wildlife Areas and Rural Wildlife Corridors** where new tree and woodland planting will be focused to create a mosaic of biodiversity rich habitats. Strategic gaps such as that between Lytham and Clifton along the A584 (See Figure T28) should be addressed.
- **Promote woodland planting** within areas of high potential as designated by Lancashire Woodland Vision. Target more specifically, where possible, to situate broad hedgerow restoration and woodland planting projects in close proximity to existing ancient woodland, creating corridors of woodland habitat that link to adjacent hedgerows, copses and woodlands.
- **Encourage reduction of pesticides and fertilisers** in land management practices on sports resources e.g. golf courses and football pitches which negatively impact on wildlife and bio-diversity. Educate and incentivise, through leaflets and discounts for organic fertilisers/compost and natural pesticides.
- **Protect, preserve, actively manage and, where necessary, restore sand dunes** as these offer a unique habitat and provide natural sea defences against fluvial flooding. Implement key recommendations from the Fylde Sand Dunes Management Action Plan such as rotation of autumn mowing in some areas to increase diversity of flora and creation of slacks (wet areas) as habitat for amphibians.
- **Examine the possibility of wetland.** Proposed wetland creation/enhancement will not only provide flood alleviation, bathing beach water quality improvements and defence against coastal erosion but will also provide places for people to enjoy the natural environment. These wetlands will also provide rich biodiversity habitats and act as stepping stones for birds between bigger areas of reed beds. With skilled engineering, they can also provide a flood defence.
- **Promote urban wildlife projects within schools**, supporting wildlife gardening and the management of public spaces to deliver biodiversity.

Promote GI with Social, Economic & Tourism Benefits (and vice versa)

- **Establish a strategic urban nature trail** linking key neighbourhoods and destinations as a resource for residents, school-children and tourists. Introduction of simple interpretation panels at key points explaining landscape features or local wildlife.
- Establish an initiative with local schools, healthcare providers and businesses to **promote green routes** and encourage their usage. This could also incorporate the development of distance marked green exercise routes e.g. along the promenade.
- **Roll-out a “greener streets programme”** for neighbourhoods to support community groups in small planting projects. Take advantage of the Big Plant initiative.
- **Establish “Green Surgeries”** in parish wards to provide community groups with access to relevant local authority officer’s expertise and resources.
- **Promote a network of differentiated “Living GI Neighbourhoods”** to place multi-functional green spaces at the heart of community life. A network could include public spaces, parks, school grounds, private gardens and employment sites. Each neighbourhood will be able to define a distinctive character based on the range of use of its green spaces (e.g. local food growing, accessible urban wildlife, outdoor classroom spaces, quiet relaxation and natural play), signature trees, heritage associations, seasonal colour and other features. Moreover, these will act as stepping stones to the countryside and landmark spaces along green routes.
- **Enhance existing and create new green spaces through development and regeneration projects according to community aspirations** (includes key corridors and gateways – e.g. Tree Lined Boulevard for Clifton Drive).

- **Look into intelligent play and recreation catchments**, which establish better routes to play, sports and recreation facilities and improved fixed and natural play assets to encourage active play and care for the natural environment.
- Establishing a **network of community green infrastructure volunteers** to help promote, develop and manage the Living Neighbourhood network.
- **Promote the economic value of Urban Trees** and greenery to local businesses image – especially those with outdoor spaces such as cafes, restaurants, hotels and pubs. Utilise recent intervention in Lytham as an example of the positive impact it can have and highlight that well planned improvements to public spaces in town centres can boost commercial trading by up to 40% (CABE, 2009). This should serve to encourage private planting (in accord with spatially established species themes) and contributions to Green Public Realm.
- **Green Key Tourist Destinations** to create a positive impression and encourage repeat visits.
- **Develop an “iconic” piece of public art/sculpture with a green habitat element** so as to place Green Infrastructure and wildlife assets firmly on the Tourist map.

Prepare for Climate Change, Food Security and a Sustainable Environment – Build/Plant in Resilience

- **Produce a Climate Change Asset Register:** Undertake an assessment of all community spaces and actions to maximise their contribution to sustainable urban drainage, surface water flood risk management and combating urban heat island effect. The latter aspect requires examining existing tree and vegetation cover in key public spaces (e.g. high-street) and built-up areas (focusing on areas of highest density first) to assess whether there is sufficient natural shade already available that can counter urban heat vulnerability and look into sympathetically future-proofing tree stock. This register will help highlight areas that require intervention. Please note the County Council’s new responsibility as Lead Local Flood Authority (LLFA) and duty to adopt and develop a register of drainage assets.
- **Build-in resilience to climate change in the built environment** by maximising opportunities for tree planting, green walls, green roofs, flood risk management and other GI to help conserve natural resources and address the impacts of climate change. Give such proposals a favourable bias in policy and planning system e.g. reduced planning fees (in event local fee setting is implemented).
- **Seek positive climate change adaptation orientated actions** in any proposed woodland (or parkland) management plans – e.g. type & mix of flora, extending shade, storing peak rainfall.
- **Protect and Restore** the Borough’s valuable **peat resource** (which is key in sequestering carbon) and promote composting as an alternative to peat products.
- **Establish Local Food Hubs** to act as focal points where the community can be involved with local food and can take part in community organised activities and events. The food hubs may be run through Community Supported Agriculture Schemes. All managed public spaces and facilities should be assessed to identify opportunities for fruit, vegetable and herb growing including community orchards, vertical gardens linked to new buildings and building refurbishment and the use of greener streets e.g. window boxes, highway verges and gardens. This should be accompanied by a local food growing initiative involving local schools, communities and businesses to promote healthy eating, use of local produce, co-operative and gardening skills. **Better promote and expand existing local food initiatives** such as that of the Fylde FoodCo to assist in this.
- **New areas for allotments** should be identified (proximity to older retired residents) and more should be sought alongside new development (e.g. especially residential/retirement homes). Also explore converting brownfield land & other unused land in the urban footprint to allotments where development has stalled/ or permission is extant. Allotments are key in facilitating social inclusion.

6.3 Policy Implications: Policy Response & Future Actions

There is a clear need to embed Green Infrastructure planning in the statutory planning process. The planning system provides a vital interface whereby GI can be visibly advocated from the offset and can be initiated and implemented through the development process and subsequently monitored. Moreover it provides a forum where other key stakeholders with an interest in GI matters such as local communities, interest groups, developers, other local authority departments can become involved in planning GI for the future.

Governance & Framework for Delivering GI

- **Establish GI as a core element of the planning policy framework** so as to require provision of GI within new development within certain threshold criteria and recognising key GI assets. This needs to be **established in the broad strategic principles of the Core Strategy** then followed-up and supported by other Development Plan Documents. These in turn would provide a clear context and steer for Neighbourhood Plans which could be used to detail "Living GI Neighbourhoods". The below diagram illustrates the value of GI as an integratory mechanism to better deliver on a vital range of thematic policies:

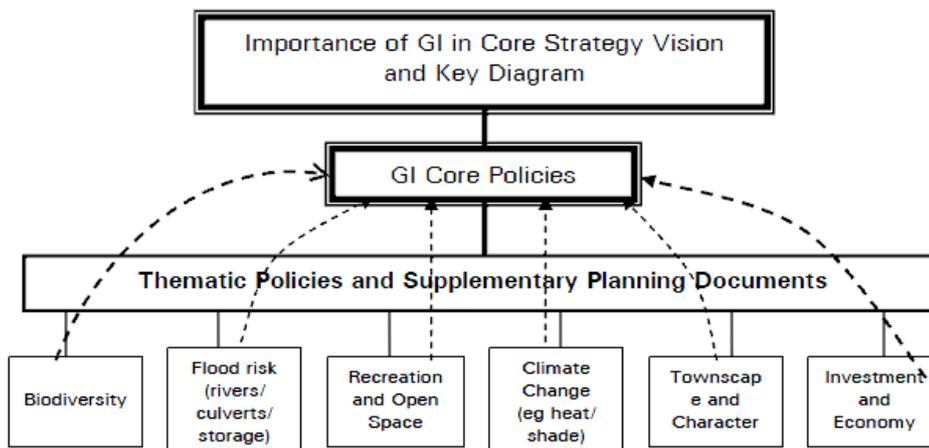


Diagram Source: Green Infrastructure Feasibility Study For Greater Manchester – Summary Report (TEP, 2008)

- Produce a **Supplementary Planning Document(s)** that provide overarching guidance, criteria and further examples of good GI practice could be developed for the whole local planning authority territory, focusing particularly of existing built up areas with less green cover.
- The **preparation of green transport policies**, as well as reflecting the emphasis in green infrastructure planning on access, linear movement and connectedness, potentially provide a source of funding for selected initiatives.
- Fylde Borough Council to **lead by example** by **incorporating GI into masterplanning of future schemes** (e.g. Park Renewal Programme, Public Realm Improvements, etc...)
- **Place GI at the heart of the wider corporate agenda** within Fylde Borough Council. As the Council, will have a key role in ensuring appropriate political and community support for projects to be delivered so that funding opportunities can be pursued with confidence and opportunities for delivery are maintained and strengthened through planning and its delivery structures.
- Assign a Cabinet member in Fylde Borough Council with a **portfolio commitment** to champion urban greening and green infrastructure so as to provide this issue/topic with strong high-level leadership

- **Training** sessions for staff, members, developers and public in key principles and Benefits of GI.
- Consider creating a new (or joint) post whereby a **technical specialist** (such as a Planner or Landscape Architect) with access to an existing budget can ensure that GI awareness and skills to deliver can be coordinated and provided across the whole authority. Or, alternatively, in light of budgetary restrictions, cluster together a number of projects and bring in a private sector professional to provide expertise GI input.
- **Ensure Community Involvement in Planning for GI** from an early stage of design and development so as to employ local experiential knowledge, ensure it meets the entire communities' needs (including hard to reach minority groups, such as disabled people or ethnic minorities), and creates a sense of ownership, pride and support for the project.
- **Partnership based Delivery is essential.** As such GI principles must be firmly established across all the sub-work groups of the Fylde Local Strategic Partnership.

6.4 Projected Timescales, Potential Key Partners, Funding Sources and Cost-Ranges

Figure 6.4.1 overleaf sets out key actions and connects these to potential key partners, suggests a lead organisation to establish ownership of the project and sets out the principle funding sources and probable cost-ranges.

An annual work programme in relation to the key actions this sets out should be established. This will need to set out confirmed details of actions that are to be taken forward, who will deliver them and by when. It should also include details of outputs, outcomes and key milestones against which progress and performance can be measured and corrective action taken where needed.

'Quick wins' will result from often small changes to how green space is managed or by identifying projects within the next one to three years which can be linked to a specific development, regeneration project or funding source.

In the medium term i.e. three to five years, projects will be developed in detail and their status or progress reviewed on an annual basis.

Projects which are proposed for more than five years into the future are currently aspirational but all are linked to potential enabling development, regeneration or opportunities which, although currently without a firm timescale, are likely to come forward through the life of the Action Plan. It is important to ensure these proposals are part of the long term vision and planning process so that they can be moved forward more quickly should circumstances allow.

Ongoing consultation will also be carried out for key projects as they move forward to ensure they meet the needs of the community and provide opportunities to get involved in planning, delivering and managing projects wherever possible.

The potential funding sources and mechanisms related to specific actions within Figure 6.4.1 are fleshed out in more detail in the next section.

Figure 6.4.1 Table of Projected Timescales for Possible Implementation Alongside Potential Key Partners, Funding Sources and Cost-Ranges

Cost Scale: Low (£10k and under); Medium (£10k-100k); High (£100k and over);
Timescale: Quick-Win (6months-1year); Short Term (1-2 years); Medium Term (3-5 years); Long Term (6 years plus)
Key Stakeholders: Environment Agency (EA); Fylde Borough Council (FBC); Fylde Local Strategic Partnership (Fylde LSP); Lancashire County Council (LCC); Lancashire Local Enterprise Partnership (Lancashire LEP); Lancashire Wildlife Trust (LWT); NE (Natural England);
Lead Stakeholder = in bold italic

Main Objectives	Key Actions	Stakeholders & Delivery Lead	Funding	Cost-Range	Timeframe
Create a network of green routes	Better link, improve and green the existing cycling network.	SUSTRANS, LCC, FBC, Local Cycling Businesses and Cycling Clubs like 'CTC Fylde Bicycle Belles' and 'Freckleton Chain Gang'.	SUSTRANS Connect2 Schemes; Highways Improvement Budget; Connect community groups & clubs to CTC Fundraising Officer for advice and tips; Grants such as BIG Lottery Fund; Developer Contributions.	Approx. £100k per km. Greening Existing Routes = Low	Improvements = <u>Short Term</u> . New Links = <u>Medium Term</u>
	Integrate GI into masterplanning of new road infrastructure	LCC, FBC, Landowners, Highways Agency.	Public Funding; Grants; Developer Contributions.	High	<u>Long Term</u>
	Greening Key Gateways & Corridors	LCC, FBC, Voluntary Sector, Local Businesses; Network Rail; Northern Rail.	Match-Funding Sponsorship of Schemes; Grants; Developer Contributions.	Medium	<u>Medium Term</u>
	Expand footpath network	LCC, FBC, Ramblers Association, BAE Systems.	Grants	Medium	Fylde-to-Lytham = <u>Short Term</u> ; Coast = <u>Long Term</u>
	Ongoing management of paths, particularly on coastal areas	LCC, FBC, Ramblers Association, RSPB, LWT.	Grants; Developer Contributions.	Unknown	<u>Ongoing</u>
Improve Quality, Quantity & Accessibility of Green Spaces	Map and assess then enhance and create accessible wild play space equipment throughout FBC.	FBC, Department Of Health, The Community, Voluntary Sector.	Grants (Lottery Funding & Children's Charitable Trusts); Department of Health; developer contributions.	Medium	<u>Medium Term</u>
	Protect, expand, green and sensitively maximise use of existing public and open spaces	FBC, The Community, Voluntary Sector.	Grants; Developer Contributions.	Range Varies	<u>Range</u>
	Improve links and signage between coast/promenade and inland recreational facilities	Fylde LSP; FBC, Local Businesses and Sports Clubs; Voluntary Sector.	Grants; Developer Contributions.	Range Varies	<u>Range</u> - Some Quick Wins
	Establish Greenspace Focus Areas and Green Surgeries	FBC; The Community; Voluntary Sector.	Grants, Community Fundraising; Developer Contributions.		<u>Short to Medium Term</u>

Main Objectives	Key Actions	Stakeholders & Delivery Lead	Funding	Cost-Range	Timeframe
Enhance and restore biodiversity in Key Wildlife Areas	Designate Key Wildlife Areas & Rural Wildlife Corridors for future investment	FBC, LCC, NE, EA, and LWT.	Grants, Developer Contributions.	Low	<u>Short Term</u>
	Promote woodland planting	LCC; FBC; Woodland Trust.	Grants, Developer Contributions.		<u>Medium Term</u>
	Protect, preserve, actively manage sand dunes	FBC; Students/Voluntary Sector; LCC.	Grants, Developer Contributions.		<u>Ongoing</u>
	Promote urban wildlife projects within schools	LCC, FBC, Students, Parents, Teachers and Local Communities.	Grants, Community Fundraising.	Low	<u>Quick Win</u>
Promote a Strategic Interconnected Green Infrastructure Network	Establish a strategic urban nature trail	FBC; LCC, Local community and Business groups; Schools; LWT; RSPB.	Public Sector and Business Groups.	Low - Medium	<u>Quick Win</u>
	Promote green routes and Roll-out a “greener streets programme”	FBC, Community Groups.	Grants, Developer Contributions.	Low - Medium	<u>Quick Win</u>
	Promote a network of differentiated “Living GI Neighbourhoods”	FBC; Community Groups.	Public Sector funds; Grants, Developer Contributions.	Medium	<u>Long Term</u>
	Incorporate GI into strategic regeneration projects	FBC, LCC, Lancashire LEP.	Public Sector funds; Grants, Developer Contributions.	High	<u>Ongoing</u>
Promote GI with explicit Social, Economic & Tourism Benefits	Establishing a network of community green infrastructure volunteers	FBC; Voluntary Sector, <i>Fylde LSP</i> .		Low	<u>Short Term</u>
	Promote the economic value of Urban Trees	FBC; Local community and Businesses.	Grants, Developer Contributions.	Low	<u>Quick Win</u>
	Green Key Tourist Destinations/ Visitor Attractions	FBC; Voluntary Sector, <i>Fylde LSP</i> , Local Businesses.	Public Sector funds; Grants, Developer Contributions.	Low-Medium	<u>Medium Term</u>
	Develop a “signature” piece of public art/sculpture with a green habitat element	FBC.	Grants (e.g. Arts Council).	Low-Medium	<u>Medium Term</u>
Prepare for Climate Change, Food Security and a Sustainable Environment – Build/Plant in Resilience	Produce a Climate Change Asset Register	FBC, LCC.	Grants.	Low-Medium	<u>Medium Term</u>
	Build-in resilience to climate change in the built environment and seek positive climate change adaptation orientated actions	FBC; LCC; NE, EA.	Grants, Developer Contributions.	Low	<u>Ongoing</u>
	Establish Local Food Hubs	FBC; Voluntary Sector, <i>Fylde LSP</i> , Local Businesses.	Grants, Developer Contributions.	Low-Medium	<u>Short Term</u>
	Identify New Areas for Allotments	FBC; Community Groups.	Grants, Developer Contributions.	Low-Medium	<u>Short Term</u>

6.5 Funding Opportunities

Overview

Funding of projects tends to be a major barrier for Councils, especially when it comes to GI. The general revenue budget for the Councils through Government allocation or any local taxation could be used to fund schemes but it can be very hard to justify spending money on GI as budgets are very tight and the idea of valuing GI and trees as economic assets is a relatively new idea. Therefore the ability to access grant funding will be instrumental in achieving investment in GI.

Fylde Borough Council will have a lead role in delivering and co-ordinating most funding opportunities, while the planning system's delivery structures will be key to sustaining a steady flow of investment.

Established delivery partnerships such as the Fylde Local Strategic Partnership [LSP] and other bodies will be central to ensuring that funding opportunities for GI projects are maximised and that key GI projects are developed and delivered effectively and with maximum value. Fylde LSP will be particularly key as it provides a broad based partnership for helping to achieve cross cutting delivery of GI actions.

The voluntary sector, such as Groundwork's Lancashire West & Wigan Group and the British Trust for Conservation Volunteers have an important role to play in ensuring that local communities are given opportunities to help shape and improve their environment. The voluntary sector can also access unique funding opportunities, such as the Big Tree Plant Scheme, and has particular expertise in working with volunteers and young people who are a major resource for delivering GI actions.

It is also important to ensure that Fylde's GI priorities gain strong support from key agencies and organisations who have a sub-regional or regional remit for supporting or investing in GI which supports sustainable low carbon growth and urban renewal, environmental regeneration, nature conservation, health services, environmental services such as climate change adaptation, surface water or flood risk management. These currently include:

- Lancashire County Council
- RSPB
- The Woodland Trust
- Forestry Commission
- Natural England
- Environment Agency
- North West Strategic Health Authority
- Homes and Communities Agency

Providing a strong evidence base to underpin funding bids is vital to their success. The GI Strategy's Survey Report provides such an evidence base, and alongside this recommendations report and subsequent actions, a necessary degree of preparation and co-ordination can be demonstrated. Thus the GI Strategy can be used as an overarching tool for grant applications.

The following organisations are key bodies that offer funding programmes that could be connected to GI projects:

- [Forestry Commission \(English Woodland Grant Scheme\)](#) – Provides a number of Tree planting and woodland restoration and maintenance schemes.
- [Natural England \(Various Schemes\)](#)
- [English Heritage](#) (Grants are administered through [Regional Offices](#)) – Mostly aimed at the improving the settings of listed building but also for restoring or maintaining historical landscape features such as veteran trees in sites on their Register of Historic Parklands.

- There are various UK Lottery funding distributors. Two particularly pertinent sources are the [Heritage Lottery Fund](#) and the [Big Lottery Fund](#) which cover community and heritage improvement projects. A current joint venture between these distributors is the [‘Parks for People’](#) scheme.
- [ENTRUST](#) (which co-ordinates the Landfill Communities Funds). There is one Landfill site within the South-Eastern corner of the Borough which is the Clifton Marsh Landfill Site – operated by SITA. The [SITA Trust](#) is accredited by Entrust to deal with applicants direct. They have various proximity based funding streams available to communities.
- [The Prince's Countryside Fund](#)
- [Sport England \(Various Programmes\)](#)
- Direct Government schemes such as [The Big Tree Plant](#) (n.b. Funding is only available for community and civic groups, or other non-profit organisations to establish community-led tree planting projects in areas that would benefit most).

The Royal Forestry Society’s [RFS] booklet [“Grants for Trees”](#) provides a detailed and relatively up-to-date overview of other sources.

At the local scale it is important that GI is central to and embedded in the delivery of sustainable growth, regeneration and quality of life as will be set out in Fylde Borough’s Local Development Framework in order that funding and delivery opportunities can be maximised linked to development, area based regeneration, community safety and health and well being strategies and initiatives.

Funding a Continuing Responsibility for Green Infrastructure

It is tempting to think of the funding of green infrastructure as a single event of capital expenditure at the outset of planning and development, possibly to be covered by the developer as part of initial development costs or as developer contributions through planning gain. This kind of expenditure is vital as a means of ‘kick-starting’ the implementation of green infrastructure planning, but it is just one element of funding, and possibly the easiest to achieve. Continuing the funding of GI beyond the initial stages of development, particularly in terms of management and maintenance costs into the future, is the most problematic element. Here, a wider – and possibly more innovative – range of funding arrangements is needed. Some potential arrangements that can be put into practice are discussed below:

- **Endowment Investments:** Whereby developer contributions are invested and yield funds for expenditure over a fixed period of time; the establishment of Trusts for the upkeep of green infrastructure, and private management agreements for land remaining in private ownership.
- **Community Infrastructure Levy [CIL]:** It is essential that a clear ring-fenced pot for GI maintenance and improvement be established as part of the CIL in Fylde Borough. Providing a sliding scale, whereby the less GI incorporated into a development is subject to a greater charge for public realm GI is one possible mechanism.
- Recognise and negotiate strongly for **GI contributions from** the outset in any **Section 106 agreements** entered into prior to the introduction of CIL.
- **Enhanced role for parish councils** for land in public ownership: Central government appears to be sympathetic to devolving more power to parishes, extending both their responsibilities and, to some extent, resources as part of its Localism Agenda. In this context, some parish councils might well be, enthusiastic about taking responsibility for managing and maintaining green infrastructure, an extension of the work that some parish councils already undertake for cemeteries and some other open spaces across the country. However, mindful of the overriding importance of GI connectivity, it

would be sensible for neighbouring parish councils to work together to secure mutual benefits from the proper management of GI.

- **Encourage sponsorship** from local businesses for planting and maintenance in the public realm.
- **Utilise Community Involvement** to cut certain overhead costs. An example of this is provided by Sefton Council who educated the community, saved money and reduced transport emissions by instigating dedicated workshops, which used timber from tree management activities to create needed products such as benches, bins and signposts.
- Discuss setting a percentage of highways works budgets and new road adoptions (Section 38 Agreements) to related GI/SUDs work.
- Ensuring that **appropriate management** in place can help free up funding by reducing costs, especially where street trees are concerned. Avoiding unnecessary costs by proactive management regimes can give 18.5% savings over authorities that don't have planned maintenance regimes (London Tree and Woodland Framework)
- To direct the securing of funds from the complex and evolving sources available and on the scale envisaged it is recommended that a '**Green Infrastructure Development Officer**' should be appointed. Their brief would be to keep abreast of all the changes in funding opportunities, co-ordinate the bids for the implementation of the strategy and motivate interest across the sub-region. This could particularly involve liaison with the business and developer community including residential, employment, transport and minerals waste organisations to get the best deal for the sub-region.

Funding streams are likely to change frequently in terms of their scope, criteria and availability over the next five years, and grant funding is currently at a 10-year low. Consequently, there must be co-ordinated efforts to obtain and maximise value from funding.

7. Conclusions: A Greener Future for Fylde?

This project has provided an overview of the Borough's GI resource and highlighted the value of GI in meeting the Borough's social, economic and environmental objectives. Moreover the three priority action areas have provided focused examples of the opportunities and potential benefits of GI within certain thematic scenarios. To facilitate the Borough in taking advantage of the opportunities presented by a GI approach, a series of specific and implementable recommendations have been made across multiple spatial scales.

Three key areas have been identified for special consideration, all of which have been evaluated and assessed against a wide variety of criteria. The discussion and ideas flowing from these provide key critical information that can be used to Fylde's advantage in helping sustain and develop the area's GI resource.

Within the discussion surrounding the priority action areas, key actions on the part of the Council and other organisations have been highlighted. Implementation of key action points is essential if the Council is to make a real contribution to strengthening its Green Infrastructure for the benefit of all. Strong emphasis has been placed on management and inter-organisational collaboration to enhance and manage green spaces and corridors. Projected timetables and funding streams required to catalyse a positive change in the environment need to be taken forward to ensure feasibility and deliverability of such projects.

Current policy and guidance at all levels has been referred to throughout to ensure that recommendations are both realistic and achievable. The draft Core Strategy has identified the significance of GI within the area and a proactive policy in reference to this strategy should be taken forward into the LDF. This commitment by Fylde Borough Council would be the first step in creating an environment that is appreciated by the community and is truly sustainable.

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