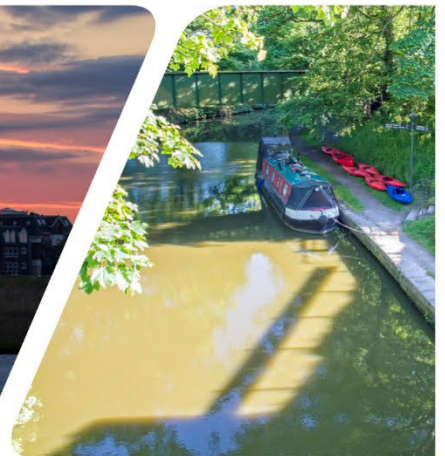




Local Green Spaces Background Paper

August 2026

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1. Executive Summary

Lytham Green

- 1.1 The Green provides a deep area of green grass that runs 'as far as the eye can see' from Seafield Road to Jubilee House at the east end. The Green provides a distinctive fringe between the building line of the buildings along the beach road and the estuary. The hard surfaced paths from the beach road to the promenade avenue are narrow and the historic buildings on The Green punctuate the green space but maintain the long views; the Green presents as a legible historic feature. It is believed that a particularly large open space Green between a town and an estuary with its urban views and natural views is a national rarity.
- 1.2 The Green is highly regarded by the local community and is used year-round. The annual themed events – including 1940s weekend and cars event - draw large crowds from the local community and from across the region and wider, and the annual music festival draws huge crowds from across the country which suggests that an unquantifiable number of people have engaged with the unique asset.

Lowther Gardens

- 1.3 The Gardens contain traditional shelters, planted beds, grassy areas, paths through wooded areas etc. like many municipal gardens in towns do. The cross-axial paths with circular pond in the centre gives a grand distinctiveness, and the cockling worker figure in the pond - which celebrates the cockling history of the town - gives a unique character to this principal feature. The edge of the Gardens are secluded areas that provide a serene character. The Park is distinctive and is appreciated by the local community.
- 1.4 The variety of facilities for static activity including padel, bowls, children's play area, picnic tables draw large numbers of people from the local community and from the wider sub region which suggests that an unquantifiable number of people have engaged with the unique asset.

Fairhaven Lake Park & Gardens

- 1.5 The asset has two parts: the lake and walkway around the circumference with meandering paths at the south, and, static activity features at the north side of the lake including tennis, bowls, children's play area, mini golf, picnic tables, events field.
- 1.6 The park at the south side with the choice of meandering paths, the large trees and bushes, historic Japanese garden etc. can accommodate large numbers of people without a crowded atmosphere. At this south side views of the lake and architecturally distinctive historic houses along the beach road behind are impressive.
- 1.7 The Lake Park & Gardens provides a distinctive fringe between the buildings along the beach road and the estuary coastline.
- 1.8 The Park is highly regarded by the local community and is used year-round. Annual events such as community open day, dog festival, food festival etc. draw large crowds from the local community and from across the sub region which suggests that an unquantifiable number of people have engaged with the unique asset.

Memorial Park at Kirkham

- 1.9 The historic tree lined avenue within the park is distinctive and the memorial garden designed by nationally/internationally renowned Mawson Landscape Architects built into the steep gradient is unique and highly distinctive.
- 1.10 The Park is highly regarded by the local community and is used year-round. The Town Council organise events at the Park which attract people from the local community and suggests that an unquantifiable number of people have engaged with the asset.

The Green at Wrea Green

- 1.11 The Green provides a large square of green grass that provides a focal point for the village and the conservation area in which it sits. The Green is the largest in Lancashire and the character of the conservation area stems in the main from the grouping of the buildings and trees around the Green.
- 1.12 The Green is highly regarded by the local community and is used for cricket, visiting the pond, and for annual events such as village day, car festival etc. which draw large crowds from the local community and from the sub region which suggests that an unquantifiable number of people have engaged with the asset.

2. Lowther Gardens

Introduction

- 2.1 Lowther Gardens is more than a popular and attractive park — it is a vital community asset that delivers environmental, social, and economic benefits. Designating it as a Strategic Local Green Space will ensure its long-term protection, enhance its role in supporting local wellbeing, and safeguard its recreational value for future generations.
- 2.2 The park has been appreciated by the community for over 150 years. The park has facilities for a wide range of recreation interests, it is a leisure time destination for small and large groups and therefore, it is likely that the park features in many people’s collective experience of place.

Park overview

- 2.3 The park were laid out in 1872 on poor quality grazing land by the squire to provide outdoor leisure and recreation facilities for local people, and also to attract Blackpool visitors. It remains the largest park in the town and is the oldest park in Lytham St Annes. The gardens are well-designed and little changed.
- 2.4 The park accommodate many leisure facilities. Well-attended events are held in the gardens. Lowther Gardens has held the Green Flag quality award for many years. The park is open 24 hours a day, throughout the year
- 2.5 The gardens are situated within Lytham Conservation Area. There are no listed buildings within the park, however, it is included on the council’s local list of heritage assets (NDHA)
- 2.6 The physical appearance of Lowther Gardens has a contained and sheltered character that is considered welcoming. A wide border of mature trees ‘lace’ the park’s boundary which draw the eye into the site and provide an attractive vista for people travelling along the adjacent road and promenade network.
- 2.7 The park is secured by an attractive and low-rise pebble clad wall, in keeping with the surrounding Conservation Area and adjacent Lytham Hall estate. The park has several entrances, which are marked by attractive, ornamental archways depicting the park’s name, affixed to metal piers. The most impressive being those situated at the main entrances on West Beach and Church Road, giving the park a sense of grandeur and arrival.
- 2.8 Upon entry of the park, the formal central lily pond - with cockler statue (water fountain) in the centre - serves as a focal vista, framed by mature trees and seasonal floral beds, inviting quiet reflection at the heart of the park, which then widens into a varied landscape of leisure and ornamental spaces which cater for a variety of park users.

Historic background

- 2.9 The park was laid out in 1872 with a formal layout that is little changed today. It was set out on poor grazing land once known as “Hungry Moor”. The park was given to the town in 1905. The gardens were provided by the Squire of the time in honour of his wife, Eleanor Cecily Clifton (of the Lowther family in Cumbria) and in memory of her father, who died in 1868. The

gardens were designed and laid out under the supervision of Mr Tomlinson who worked on the Clifton Estate for the benefit of the inhabitants and visitors to Lytham.

- 2.10 Features have been improved and replaced as demanded. The park has catered for a wide variety of visitors requirements throughout the decades since opening. In the later part of the 20th century when popular music tastes changed the Pavilion fell out of favour, however it adjusted and has reinvented itself.

Principal features

- 2.11 The park's primary feature is a circular pond with fountain and a modern cockler statue feature in the centre. There are bowling greens and a bowling pavilion. Wide pathways which suit promenading radiate from the pond to the north and south park entrances and from west to east.
- 2.12 The theatre complex at the south of the park which has two large theatres, café with a takeaway hatch, toilets. Also at this end is whimsical children's playground, padel courts & tennis courts, pavilion shelters, mini golf course, Bobby Ball comedian miniature garden with statue, picnic benches, car park, toilets. On high-use days the south end is busy with people using the amenities.
- 2.13 There are meandering paths starting at the north entrance - where there are fewer family focussed recreation facilities – that provide a more screened and intimate walking route. Also at this end is the distinctive large 'floral clock' pebbles sundial feature, willow statue, variety of planted 'pocket' areas, understorey shrubs. The character is expressly sylvan.

Interventions

- 2.14 The ownership of Lowther Gardens was transferred from Fylde Borough Council to the Lowther Trust in 2012. The Trust have managerial responsibility for the park and Pavilion Theatre. The Trust has a well-established board of Trustees made up of Fylde Borough Council and Lowther Trust staff as well as members of the local community. The Council and Lowther Trust meet on a quarterly basis to discuss park management matters, agree any actions required and share information.
- 2.15 In 2002 the rose garden was restored and new seating added. In 2022, a statue was unveiled, of late local comedian Bobby Ball. A new theatre & education centre opened in 2025. The herbaceous border planted in 1999 replaced the rose bed near to the pitch & putt course.
- 2.16 The Council uses legislation to ensure a quality experience including Clean Neighbourhoods and Environment Act 2005 which provides local authorities with powers to tackle poor environmental quality and anti-social behaviour. It covers various aspects of environmental protection, such as nuisance, abandoned vehicles, litter, graffiti, waste, noise and dogs. The park is inspected daily by grounds staff daily whilst performing operational maintenance tasks.
- 2.17 The children's play facilities meet both British and European Safety Standards. Playground and sport facility inspections are undertaken weekly. The results of the inspections are entered into a play software management system via a PDA, so that the safety of the equipment can be formally recorded, assessed and prioritised. The Council has invested £95,000 of capital

money into the design and installation of a 'whimsical' themed accessible and inclusive playground. Works included installing a 'wow factor' inclusive play unit, resurfacing including themed graphics and new seating.

- 2.18 There are significant horticultural features in addition to the seasonal flower borders within the park including the herbaceous border with floral clock, rose garden and the 'Wicker man' bed which is a re-creation of the Silver-Gilt winning entry at the Tatton Flower Show display. The herbaceous border and 'Wicker man' bed are maintained throughout the year by a group of volunteers.
- 2.19 A small nursery and growing facility has been established on site to grow and produce shrub and perennial plants for regenerating the woodland schemes around the park. Within the first year nearly 2,000 plants were produced and planted out on the park. There is an intention to grow more stock from seed for meadow creation on the far side of the park mainly using ox-eye daisy. The Lowther Trust Friends have used the growing area to produce some plants from seed to grow and sell at events held on the park which has helped their fundraising efforts. Future aims of the facility are to link in with the new education facility and have demonstrations for cuttings and seed growing.
- 2.20 Lowther Gardens is annually entered into the North West in Bloom Local Authority Park Category, where it has been awarded a Gold Medal Award and a National Certificate of Distinction for Parks by the RHS for several consecutive years.
- 2.21 The Council has spent £34,000 grant funding to implement a borough wide tree planting initiative over the last two years. We have used this funding to try to broaden the tree species diversity and age structure within the park.

Community Value

- 2.22 The Lowther Trust and Fylde Borough Council work collaboratively to promote the park's cultural and educational value. This includes the inclusion of site-based heritage signage to promote the parks history, the organisation of a wide variety of community and cultural events, environmental education with schools and online communications. The Council's Ranger Service deliver an annual guided walks and events programme as well as an Outdoor Schools Education Programme, which promote and encourages wider use of the park. Events adhere to the council's Events policy which provides a framework for the programming and operation of commercial and community events to enhance the Fylde tourism offer, profile and economic impact.
- 2.23 Events such as the ice cream festival, jazz & blues festival, theatre in the park, Nature Tots (butterfly spotting), orienteering, Easter Fair, Halloween Fair, Christmas Fair and outdoor shows draw a high level of visitors and bring enjoyment, and a sense of pride and community belonging.
- 2.24 The focus of the park is informal recreation, recreating how the park would have been used when it was originally conceived, strolling, taking in the views and vistas and decorative planting. It also tries to balance the needs of modern-day users and includes bowls, tennis, a children's playground and picnic areas.

Summary & Recommendation

Overview

- 2.25 Lowther Gardens is more than a popular and attractive park — it is a vital community asset that delivers environmental, social, and economic benefits. Designating it as a Strategic Local Green Space will ensure its long-term protection, enhance its role in supporting local wellbeing, and safeguard its recreational value for future generations.
- 2.26 The park has been appreciated by the community for over 150 years. The park has facilities for a wide range of recreation interests, it is a leisure time destination for small and large groups and therefore, it is likely that the park features in many people's collective experience of place.

Conservation principles

- **Evidential / historic value**

- 2.27 The park has not contracted over its lifetime, the space has been used in different ways as demand changes. There are historic photographs in the town's archive so people can see what leisure features were popular in different eras.

- **Aesthetic value**

- 2.28 The park layout is distinctive, it has zones that appeal to different users. It serves young and old, energetic and sitting uses. The events that attract large numbers of people are varied. Diverse groups can enjoy the collective group experience. People engage with the asset emotionally

- **Communal value**

- 2.29 The large size of the park allows numerous events throughout the year which draw a high level of visitors and bring enjoyment so the asset brings people together which can give a sense of community belonging.

Value as a strategic open space

- **Community Wellbeing and Social Value**

- 2.30 The park serves as a safe, inclusive, and accessible space for residents and visitors of all ages and a wide range of interests. It supports physical activity through walking paths, sports facilities, and play areas, while also providing a tranquil environment for relaxation and mental wellbeing. Frequent community events, volunteer activities, and informal gatherings foster social cohesion and a sense of belonging.

- **Environmental and Biodiversity Benefits**

- 2.31 Lowther Gardens contains mature trees, diverse plant life, and habitats that support local wildlife, including pollinators and bird species. Its green cover helps mitigate urban heat, improve air quality, and manage surface water runoff — all important in adapting to climate change. Protecting it as a Local Green Space will preserve these natural services.

- **Cultural and Heritage Significance**
- 2.32 The park holds historical features, memorials, or long-standing traditions that contribute to local identity. Its design, heritage trees, and community stories form part of the area’s cultural fabric, making it irreplaceable in character and meaning.
- **Accessibility and Strategic Location**
- 2.33 Situated within walking distance for a large proportion of the local population, the park is a key green link in the urban landscape. It connects to walking and cycling routes, enhancing sustainable travel and encouraging active lifestyles.
- **Alignment with Planning Policy**
- 2.34 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) supports the designation of Local Green Spaces that are demonstrably special to a local community and hold particular significance. Lowther Gardens meets these criteria through its beauty, recreational value, biodiversity, and cultural importance.

Conclusion

- 2.35 Designating Lowther Gardens as a strategic Local Green Space will protect a cherished community asset that has strong heritage interest.

3. Lytham Green

Introduction

- 3.1 Lytham Green is more than a popular recreation space — it is a vital community asset that delivers environmental, social, and economic benefits. Designating it as a Strategic Local Green Space will ensure its long-term protection, enhance its role in supporting local wellbeing, and safeguard its recreational value for future generations.
- 3.2 The Green has been appreciated by the community for over 150 years. The space is a leisure time destination for small and large groups and therefore, it is likely that the park features in many people's collective experience of place.

Historic background

- 3.3 "The Marsh" may once have been a salt marsh but by 1800 it had long since been covered by wind-blown sand formed into small sand dunes between the beach and Lytham village. When Lytham developed into a holiday resort in the middle of the 19th century the dunes were levelled and grassed over to form the present greensward. By the 1840s, Lytham was fast developing as a health resort and substantial properties were being erected on the seafront. The noise from the windmill and the smoke from the kiln furnace were considered a nuisance by the new residents; the kiln was taken down and rebuilt at the East End of Lytham.
- 3.4 Thousands of soldiers from Lancashire Regiments were billeted in Lytham & St Annes during 1915 & 1916. Many drilled in the shadow of the windmill on Lytham Green and dug trenches on the beach in readiness for The Front.
- 3.5 In 1921, probably due to the agitation by local residents, the Squire of Lytham, gave the mill to Lytham Council, which merged with St Annes Council in 1922. The newly created Lytham St Annes Borough Council restored the structure, fitting it with a new cap, sails and fantail.
- 3.6 In 1932 powerful white floodlights were installed to illuminate the windmill on summer nights. Between 1932 and 1938 it was the headquarters of the Lytham St. Annes Motor Boat Club who transformed the lower room into a ship's saloon. The reading room and the lookout over the Ribble was on the second floor. The windmill was used as a storehouse and electricity substation between 1938 and 1954. It then became the clubhouse for the northern section of the Ribble Cruising Club.
- 3.7 The structure suffered severely from dry rot and in the 1980s it took Fylde Borough Council about two years to resolve the problem. It was finally reopened on 20 March 1989. During a storm in November 2010 one of the sails was ripped off the windmill by 100mph winds. This was followed by storm damage in October 2011.

Principal features

- 3.8 The Green separates the roads of West Beach and East Beach from the marshy estuary and is bound by a wide promenade on the same level as the Green (elevated from the marsh). There are fixed seats and telescopes along the promenade that encourage users to engage with the natural beauty of the coastline.
- 3.9 There are small paths from the road to the promenade, two car park areas, public toilets, shelters, the former mussel tank, the sailing club building, historic flagstaff, lifeboat house,

the town's windmill (now a milling museum) and former lifeboat house (now a local marine history museum).

Interventions

- 3.10 There are annual events that attract large numbers of people: a music festival (normally 100,000 attendees over the 5 days), a 1940s weekend (with historic vehicles, music and dance, memorabilia, battle re-enactment, educational talks and demonstrations. vintage dancing, military vehicle displays, vintage trading stall, and a living history camp), and two annual car shows. The local shanty crew perform nautical songs at the mussel tank alternate weeks through the summer and there are occasional pop-up events at the mussel tank.
- 3.11 In 2022 the council agreed to the area of the Green where the slope had sports and recreation pitches built into the original gradient to be reprofiled to blend with the gradual slope contour of the Green to make activities easier and improve disability access.

Community value

- 3.12 The events on the Green draw a high level of visitors and bring enjoyment, and a sense of pride and community belonging. The Green's openness makes it a place to sunbathe and picnic etc. and to stroll taking in the views along the Green, the beach road with large and tall historic buildings, and across the estuary.
- 3.13 Every year, the Green comes alive with a music festival that pulls in thousands - from all over the country - who experience the unique character and charm of this iconic space.

Summary & Recommendation

Overview

- 3.14 Lytham Green is more than a popular open space — it is a vital community asset that delivers environmental, social, and economic benefits. Designating it as a Strategic Local Green Space will ensure its long-term protection, enhance its role in supporting local wellbeing, and safeguard its recreational value for future generations.
- 3.15 The Green has been appreciated by the community for over 150 years. The space is a leisure time destination for small and large groups and therefore, it is likely that the park features in many people's collective experience of place.

Conservation principles

- **Evidential / historic value**

- 3.16 The Green has not contracted over its lifetime, the space has been used in different ways as demand changes. There are historic photographs in the town's archive so people can see what leisure features were popular in different eras.

- **Aesthetic value**

- 3.17 The Green serves young and old, energetic and sitting uses. The events that attract large numbers of people are varied. Diverse groups can enjoy the collective group experience. It is expected that people engage with the asset emotionally

- **Communal value**

- 3.18 The large size of the Green allows numerous events throughout the year which draw a high level of visitors and bring enjoyment so the asset brings people together which can give a sense of community belonging.

Value as a strategic open space

- **Community Wellbeing and Social Value**

- 3.19 The Green serves as a safe, inclusive, and accessible space for residents and visitors of all ages and a wide range of interests. It supports physical activity through walking paths, while also providing an environment for relaxation and mental wellbeing. Community events and informal gatherings foster social cohesion and a sense of belonging.

- **Environmental and Biodiversity Benefits**

- 3.20 The ground cover helps mitigate urban heat and improve air quality which are important in adapting to climate change. Protecting it as a Local Green Space will preserve these natural services.

- **Cultural and Heritage Significance**

- 3.21 The Green holds historical features and presents as a legible historic feature; it holds long-standing traditions that contribute to local identity. Its community stories form part of the area's cultural fabric, making it irreplaceable in character and meaning. the Green presents as a legible historic feature

- **Accessibility and Strategic Location**

- 3.22 Situated within walking distance for a large proportion of the local population, the park is a key green link in the urban landscape. It connects to walking and cycling routes, enhancing sustainable travel and encouraging active lifestyles.

- **Alignment with Planning Policy**

- 3.23 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) supports the designation of Local Green Spaces that are demonstrably special to a local community and hold particular significance. Lowther Gardens meets these criteria through its beauty, recreational value, biodiversity, and cultural importance.

4. Fairhaven Lake marine gardens

Introduction

- 4.1 Fairhaven Lake is more than a popular and attractive park — it is a vital community asset that delivers environmental, social, and economic benefits. Designating it as a Strategic Local Green Space will ensure its long-term protection, enhance its role in supporting local wellbeing, and safeguard its recreational value for future generations.
- 4.2 The park has been appreciated by the community for over 100 years. The park has facilities for a wide range of recreation interests, it is a leisure time destination for small and large groups and therefore, it is likely that the park features in many people's collective experience of place.
- 4.3 There are no listed buildings at the park; the Isaac Dixon boathouse and the pagoda style boathouse (currently visitor centre) at the lake apron are both locally listed. There is a Monument – a row of anti-tank obstacles known as Pimples (or 'Dragon's Teeth'): a remnant of the coastal defences of WWII situated close to St Pauls Avenue

Historic Background

- 4.4 The initial idea for Fairhaven Lakes and Gardens was first conceived in 1890 by Thomas Riley. The idea was to establish a hotel and recreational provision which offered spaciousness, clean air and community facilities with extensive views of the sea over the estuary. In 1892, a lease agreement was established with Clifton Estate for 264 acres. The original intention was to extend the sea wall and the gardens as far as St Annes, however this was abandoned after heavy seas flooded the lake in 1896. The next twenty years were years of gradual progress.
- 4.5 After a temporary sea wall was constructed in 1893, the lake was formed and was filled by an existing pipe. The lake was officially declared open in August 1893 and in 1895 the Fairhaven Estate Company was established to take over Thomas Riley's role. In 1896, the Fairhaven Estate Company developed plans for a golf course to frame the lake and the area to the West. Therefore, the original golf clubhouse was constructed on site. In 1901 a landing stage and the Pagoda shaped boathouse were constructed. This was designed to contain living quarters for the Manager and an area where boats could be built.
- 4.6 Numerous works to the Lake and its surroundings were completed in the early 1900s to improve the landscape such as restoration of the promenade and installation of ornamental planting, diving boards and bridges. The most significant installations were 17 tennis courts, a bowling green, a croquet lawn and a small sports ground, which made Fairhaven Lake and Gardens a popular site for recreational activity.
- 4.7 During the war years, the Lake remained opened but suffered from a lack of resources which took its toll on the management and maintenance of the site. Around 1920, after the war, Fairhaven Lake and Gardens underwent its second phase of major developments, starting with four new tennis courts and an extension to the pavilion and in 1921, the construction of a second boathouse designed by Isaac Dixon & Co. In 1922, after Lytham and St. Annes Council joined, Fairhaven Lake and Gardens was sold to the council for £34,000. A well-known philanthropist in Lancashire, Lord Ashton, helped the council financially to acquire the park, hence the park was renamed to Ashton Marine Park.

- 4.8 The next major development came in 1924, when internationally-renowned Mawson and Son of Lancaster, produced a masterplan for the layout of Ashton Marine Park proposing a number of improvements, including Lake enlargement from 12 to 25 hectares to increase opportunities for water recreation, a new mini golf course, and an open-air swimming pool, and natural space on the south side of the lake for visitors to enjoy shorelines and plantations. Works were complete by 1926 and officially opened by Lord Derby. In the 1950s and 60s the regattas, water skiing and hydroplane racing attracted crowds of up to 15,000. In 2002 a new pleasure craft – Jubilee – was launched.

Principal Features

- 4.9 There are lakeside buildings on the north side of the lake: a visitor centre (locally listed), a water sports centre (locally listed), boathouse, café (former golf clubhouse). On the north side of the lake is tennis club, public tennis courts, adventure golf, crown green bowling green & pavilion, spitfire plane model, children's playground, skate & BMX Park.
- 4.10 South of the lake are trees and bushes, a meandering path, gardens, open grass for picnics etc. The park is on land lower than the seafront promenade which is a wide promenade with benches that borders the park.

Interventions

- 4.11 The Council was successful in securing an investment of £1.48M from the National Lottery Heritage Fund (NLHF) Parks for People Programme in 2018 which provided funding to deliver an overall £2.9M project. The project outcomes were to restore buildings, reintroduce historic landscaping, install new pathways, create new leisure facilities and introduce an annual volunteer programme and activity / event programme.
- 4.12 Local history walks, bat detecting, birding walks, survival skills, wreath making, children's activities etc. take place at the park as well as water sports sessions. In 2012 a full-size, exact replica Spitfire aeroplane on a high pole was installed adjacent the lake - "Lytham St Annes RAF Fighter, Bomber & Coastal Command Memorial". It includes commemorative plaques to RAF, Commonwealth and United States Army Air Forces.
- 4.13 In 2021 footpaths within TH Mawson's 1924 Japanese Garden which had been infilled in the 1960s-80s were exposed. The stone-built structure of the garden survives relatively intact, aided by the substantial size of the sandstone blocks used in the steps, paths and rockeries, and the use of concrete in the construction of the lagoon edge. Although elements of the former sandstone pathways have been lost and / or replaced with tarmac, this does not detract significantly from the survival of the remainder of the structure. Many historic photographs survive of the site in the early twentieth century, as do Mawson's planting plans. These will help to enhance subsequent consolidation, soft landscaping and gardening works.

Community value

- 4.14 The events at the park draw a high level of visitors and bring enjoyment, and a sense of pride and community belonging. The coastal openness makes it a place to picnic etc. and to stroll taking in the views.

Summary & Recommendation

Overview

- 4.15 Fairhaven Lake park is more than a popular open space — it is a vital community asset that delivers environmental, social, and economic benefits. Designating it as a Strategic Local Green Space will ensure its long-term protection, enhance its role in supporting local wellbeing, and safeguard its recreational value for future generations.
- 4.16 The park has been appreciated by the community for over 100 years. The space is a leisure time destination for small and large groups and therefore, it is likely that the park features in many people's collective experience of place.

Conservation principles

- **Evidential / historic value**

- 4.17 The park has not contracted over its lifetime, the space has been used in different ways as demand changes. There are historic photographs in the town's archive so people can see what leisure features were popular in different eras.

- **Aesthetic value**

- 4.18 The park serves young and old, energetic and sitting uses. The events that attract large numbers of people are varied. Diverse groups can enjoy the collective group experience. It is expected that people engage with the asset emotionally

- **Communal value**

- 4.19 The large size of the park allows numerous events throughout the year which draw a high level of visitors and bring enjoyment so the asset brings people together which can give a sense of community belonging.

Value as a strategic open space

- **Community Wellbeing and Social Value**

- 4.20 The park serves as a safe, inclusive, and accessible space for residents and visitors of all ages and a wide range of interests. It supports physical activity through walking paths, sports facilities, and play areas, while also providing a tranquil environment for relaxation and mental wellbeing. Frequent community events, volunteer activities, and informal gatherings foster social cohesion and a sense of belonging.

- **Environmental and Biodiversity Benefits**

- 4.21 The park contains mature trees, diverse plant life, and habitats that support local wildlife, including pollinators and bird species. Its green cover helps mitigate urban heat and improve air quality, which are important in adapting to climate change. Protecting it as a Local Green Space will preserve these natural services.

- **Cultural and Heritage Significance**

- 4.22 The park holds historical features and long-standing traditions that contribute to local identity. Its design and community stories form part of the area's cultural fabric, making it irreplaceable in character and meaning.

- **Accessibility and Strategic Location**

- 4.23 Situated within walking distance for a large proportion of the local population, the park is a key green link in the urban landscape. It connects to walking and cycling routes, enhancing sustainable travel and encouraging active lifestyles.

Alignment with Planning Policy

- 4.24 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) supports the designation of Local Green Spaces that are demonstrably special to a local community and hold particular significance. Lowther Gardens meets these criteria through its beauty, recreational value, biodiversity, and cultural importance.

5. Memorial Park, Kirkham

Introduction

- 5.1 Memorial Park is a popular and attractive park and is a community asset that delivers environmental, social, and economic benefits. Designating it as a Strategic Local Green Space will ensure its long-term protection, enhance its role in supporting local wellbeing, and safeguard its recreational value for future generations.
- 5.2 The park has been appreciated by the community for over 100 years. The park has facilities for a wide range of recreation interests, it is a leisure time destination for small and large groups and therefore, it is likely that the park features in many people's collective experience of place.
- 5.3 The memorial garden is large so many people at once can visit without feeling they are intruding on other's contemplation / quiet time. The memorial garden is built into the steep slope and has a southern entrance accessed by a staircase, hard landscaping and metal poppies. The carpet of metal poppies make it visually dramatic and distinctive.
- 5.4 The tree lined avenue footpath - linking Barnfield with the parish church – which has an intimate character - is uncommon in parks generally. A walker on the avenue passes the war memorial garden, the recreation ground, the war graveyard and the open field. The avenue serves to compartmentalise the diffident parts of the park which creates an engaging visitor experience.
- 5.5 The war memorial was designed by TH Mawson & Sons and unveiled by General Sir Richard HK Butler on 7 November 1926. According to the War Memorials Archive website (19 Nov 2014), film footage of the memorial (presumably the unveiling) is held by the Northwest Film Archive.
- 5.6 Walking along the tree-lined avenue feels special, like an activity on its own in the park:
 - avenue design — Long, straight paths framed by evenly spaced trees echo the formality of classical gardens and aristocratic estates. The sense of symmetry signals order, refinement, and intention.
 - natural enclosure — The canopy forms a 'green ceiling' - turning a simple path into a kind of open-air hall. This architectural quality makes the walker feel poised and elevated.
- 5.7 The children's playground accommodates a large number of apparatus for a wide range of ages. It is one of the biggest playgrounds in the borough.

Historic background

- 5.8 The memorial garden is one of the lesser known works of Thomas Mawson, the prolific and renowned landscape architect. There is some ambiguity, however, about who actually designed it, as Mawson worked increasingly with his son - Edward Prentice Mawson.
- 5.9 The project to establish the gardens and war memorial was led by Reverend Cresswell Strange, who was Headmaster of Kirkham Grammar from 1919 to 1945. The opening of the gardens and memorial were filmed and the film is available through the NW Film Archive.

- 5.10 It is said locally that there were originally the same number of trees along the pathways as there were names on the WW1 memorial.

Principal features

- 5.11 The park is divided into a southern part and a northern part by the distinctive tree lined wide path - that runs from the road of Barnfield to St Michaels Church – which is shown on the 1840s OS map.
- 5.12 On the north side there is a large recreation field that is known as People’s Park that is used for football etc. The field overlooks the Bowland Forest hills and there are metal soldier profile cut-outs (public art) that tie it visually to the memorial garden on the other side of the path. Lying between People’s Park and St Michaels is a war graveyard park (a Commonwealth War Graves Commission park)
- 5.13 On the south side is a children’s playground that caters for teenagers as well as younger children, the war memorial garden designed into the steep slope, and an open field.
- 5.14 The path is densely lined on both sides by uniform large trees planted at regular centres. This avenue is particularly distinctive and is rare. The avenue gives spatial structure and formality to the park; it has strong landscape architecture character.

Overview

- 5.15 Community events are held at the park including Parade of the Pollinators bee celebration, ice sculpture festival, Spring festival, car show. The park is more than a popular open space — it is a vital community asset that delivers environmental, social, and economic benefits. Designating it as a Strategic Local Green Space will ensure its long-term protection, enhance its role in supporting local wellbeing, and safeguard its recreational value for future generations.
- 5.16 The park has been appreciated by the community for many years. The space is a leisure time destination for small and large groups and therefore, it is likely that the park features in many people’s collective experience of place.

Conservation principles

- **Evidential / historic value**

- 5.17 The park has not contracted over its lifetime, the space has been used in different ways as demand changes.

- **Aesthetic value**

- 5.18 The park serves young and old, energetic and sitting uses. The events that attract large numbers of people are varied. Diverse groups can enjoy the collective group experience. It is expected that people engage with the asset emotionally.

- **Communal value**

- 5.19 The large size of the park allows numerous events throughout the year which draw a high level of visitors and bring enjoyment so the asset brings people together which can give a sense of community belonging.

Value as a strategic open space

- **Community Wellbeing and Social Value**

- 5.20 The Park serves as a safe, inclusive, and accessible space for residents and visitors of all ages and a wide range of interests. It supports physical activity while also providing an environment for relaxation and mental wellbeing. Community events and informal gatherings foster social cohesion and a sense of belonging.

- **Environmental and Biodiversity Benefits**

- 5.21 The ground cover helps mitigate urban heat and improve air quality which are important in adapting to climate change. Protecting it as a Local Green Space will preserve these natural services.

- **Cultural and Heritage Significance**

- 5.22 The Park holds historical features and long-standing traditions that contribute to local identity. Its community stories form part of the area's cultural fabric, making it irreplaceable in character and meaning.

- **Accessibility and Strategic Location**

- 5.23 Situated within walking distance for a large proportion of the local population, the park is a key green link in the urban landscape. It connects to walking and cycling routes, enhancing sustainable travel and encouraging active lifestyles.

Alignment with Planning Policy

- 5.24 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) supports the designation of Local Green Spaces that are demonstrably special to a local community and hold particular significance. Lowther Gardens meets these criteria through its beauty, recreational value, biodiversity, and cultural importance.

6. The Green, Wrea Green

Introduction

- 6.1 The village Green is in the largest in Lancashire in and includes a large duck pond. The Green is more than an attractive village green — it is a vital community asset that delivers environmental, social, and economic benefits. Designating it as a Strategic Local Green Space will ensure its long-term protection, enhance its role in supporting local wellbeing, and safeguard its recreational value for future generations.
- 6.2 The Green has been appreciated by the community for many generations. The park is a leisure time destination for small and large groups and therefore, it is likely that the Green features in many people's collective experience of place.

Historic background

- 6.3 The local duck pond is known as "The Dub", a term which probably derives from the word daub. Cottagers dug for daub and later clay to make their houses.
- 6.4 There are still some bylaws concerning the Green that make interesting reading:
1. No person shall drive or wheel any cart, truck or other vehicle onto the village Green.
 2. No person shall dig, cut or remove any sods.
 3. No person shall hold a public meeting, religious, political or otherwise on the green.
- 6.5 In 1905, Wrea Green Cricket Club asked permission to level and lay out a portion of the green as a cricket pitch.
- 6.6 The village green is the largest in Lancashire and up to the middle of the twentieth century, it was not uncommon for cattle and horses to graze on the green. There were at least three ponds on the green, although two were filled in and levelled at the bequest of the cricket team, for a level cricket pitch.
- 6.7 In 1976 the worst drought in Britain for 250 years (crop failures and insect plagues, especially ladybirds) gave the Green a moon surface appearance.

Principal features

- 6.8 The Green has a large duck pond, a cricket pitch, fixed seating and small planted beds.

Interventions

- 6.9 There is an annual charity Car Carnival in April, the annual village Field Day (gala/club day) takes place in July, and Wrea Green Horticultural Society holds a village show in September

Community value

- 6.10 The events at the park draw a high level of visitors and bring enjoyment, and a sense of pride and community belonging. The costal openness makes it a place to picnic etc. and to stroll taking in the views.

Summary & recommendation

Overview

- 6.11 The Green is more than a popular open space — it is a vital community asset that delivers environmental, social, and economic benefits. Designating it as a Strategic Local Green Space will ensure its long-term protection, enhance its role in supporting local wellbeing, and safeguard its recreational value for future generations.
- 6.12 The Green has been appreciated by the community for many years. The space is a leisure time destination for small and large groups and therefore, it is likely that the park features in many people's collective experience of place.

Conservation principles

- **Evidential / historic value**
- 6.13 The Green has not contracted over its lifetime, the space has been used in different ways as demand changes.
- **Aesthetic value**
- 6.14 The Green serves young and old, energetic and sitting uses. The events that attract large numbers of people are varied. Diverse groups can enjoy the collective group experience. It is expected that people engage with the asset emotionally.
- **Communal value**
- 6.15 The large size of the Green allows numerous events throughout the year which draw a high level of visitors and bring enjoyment so the asset brings people together which can give a sense of community belonging.

Value as a strategic open space

- **Community Wellbeing and Social Value**
- 6.16 The Green serves as a safe, inclusive, and accessible space for residents and visitors of all ages and a wide range of interests. It supports physical activity - particularly cricket- while also providing an environment for relaxation and mental wellbeing. Community events and informal gatherings foster social cohesion and a sense of belonging.
- **Environmental and Biodiversity Benefits**
- 6.17 The ground cover helps mitigate urban heat and improve air quality which are important in adapting to climate change. Protecting it as a Local Green Space will preserve these natural services.
- **Cultural and Heritage Significance**
- 6.18 The park holds historical features and long-standing traditions that contribute to local identity. Its community stories form part of the area's cultural fabric, making it irreplaceable in character and meaning.
- **Accessibility and Strategic Location**

6.19 Situated within walking distance for a large proportion of the local population, the park is a key green link in the urban landscape. It connects to walking and cycling routes, enhancing sustainable travel and encouraging active lifestyles.

- **Alignment with Planning Policy**

6.20 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) supports the designation of Local Green Spaces that are demonstrably special to a local community and hold particular significance. Lowther Gardens meets these criteria through its beauty, recreational value, biodiversity, and cultural importance.

7. Local Green Spaces - summary and conclusion

Lowther Gardens

- 7.1 The park is part of green wedge running from Lytham Hall (the borough's only grade 1 listed building) in the north to the estuary. This green corridor makes a positive contribution to the layout of the town. The park is significantly larger and its deep belt of large trees at the boundaries makes it markedly different design to other gardens in the town. This distinctiveness makes a strong contribution to the character of the area and the sense of place.
- 7.2 The park provides a setting for the historic community theatre, historic shelters which are sited in the park. and a setting for the cricket ground adjacent and the medieval roadside St Cuthbert's cross which are both locally listed.
- 7.3 The park accommodates a variety of recreation uses - both active and gentle – some of which are a unique offer in the town. The park design has sections which have an open character and also has secluded sections which offers choice of experience for visitors. The secluded sections in particular allow calmness and quiet reflection which can provide wellbeing opportunities, and the mature woodland provides space for wildlife, which adds an extra dimension to the overall experience as well as contributing to the quality of the natural environment.
- 7.4 Several annual events are held making it an attraction for people beyond the local community.

Lytham Green

- 7.5 The wide area of grass is significantly wider than many towns' open spaces at coast which makes it seem unique. The rarity makes a strong contribution to the physical form and layout of the town.
- 7.6 The open character accentuates the dominance of the listed buildings on the Green - the promenade shelter and the former lifeboat house and iconic windmill and the locally listed Charley's Mast – and the nearby landmark buildings including the distinctive houses along Inner Promenade and the listed White Church (Fairhaven URC).
- 7.7 The large area of openness encourages dog walking, promenading, and informal gathering. There is no other very large and open space in the town so it has local significance for recreation. Several annual events are held making it an attraction for people beyond the local community.

Fairhaven Lake

- 7.8 The large body of water is unique in the Lytham St Annes and the lake with adjoining gardens makes a strong contribution to the physical form and layout of the Fairhaven with Ansdell area.
- 7.9 The model Spitfire aeroplane at the park is unique and the large Japanese garden designed by Renowned Mawson (uncovered in 2021) is rare.

- 7.10 The design of the park on the north side has a regular layout to accommodate several different recreation facilities; it has high density character. The design of the park on the south side is markedly different: it is informal layout that mainlines space for calmness and quiet reflection. The park includes a waterside path which allows for close encounters with the water birds. The location between the coast and the large historic houses along Inner Promenade provides distinctive views.
- 7.11 Several annual events are held making it an attraction for people beyond the local community.

Memorial Gardens

- 7.12 The park is a large area in relation to the compact town centre that it borders; it makes a strong contribution to the physical form and layout of the town. It provides a varied outdoor space for different sections of the community. It provides views to the listed St Michael's church and to the countryside. The tree lined avenue is distinctive, it adds a promenading function to the park. The memorial garden design uses the steep slope and is distinctive, it gives a tranquil character to the park.

Wrea Green

- 7.13 The Green is a very large open area that dominates the village physical form and layout. It provides much of the character of the village and gives a very strong sense of place. It provides a setting for some of the most historic houses in the village and the rural Fylde area. The Green is large enough to remain a casual recreation space when events are taking place so it holds local significance for recreation.
- 7.14 Several annual events are held making it an attraction for people beyond the local community.

A collaborative partnership with the community multiplies the benefits that parks and green spaces deliver

- 7.15 The council nurtures positive, productive relationships with a range of community partners, including local organisations, businesses and residents. The council works with and support these partners, who deliver events, maintenance, fundraising, advocacy and programming that greatly extend the work a council could realistically achieve on its own. The increased use and engagement of parks and green spaces by diverse partners also contributes to inclusivity, as more people access and benefit from green spaces.

Prioritising quality improves the varied benefits of parks and green spaces

- 7.16 The Council wishes to focus on delivering parks and green spaces that meet high-quality standards. Improving and sustaining the quality of their parks and green spaces supports wider council objectives, such as improving health and wellbeing, and is critical for reducing inequalities in access to nature and disparities in health outcomes.

Strategic importance

- 7.17 The five green spaces identified in this exercise are visually distinctive and make a strong contribution to resident's sense of place. They are highly regarded by the local community and are used year-round. They have strategic importance to the borough.

8. Public Open Space

- 8.1 Small areas of public open space make a strong contribution to people's sense of place and also contribute to wellbeing for residents. Several new POS areas have been created in recent years which are identified on the Proposal Map.
- 8.2 Children's play areas at residential sites provide 'release valve' space for children and families. Without adequate green spaces, children may have limited safe outdoor areas for play, which can contribute to poorer health, reduced social skills, and in some cases increased risk of involvement in crime or anti-social behaviour.
- 8.3 Semi-natural green spaces for community use are appreciated for their tranquil character and for recreation value.
- 8.4 A village green has recently been developed at Elswick that has provided a semi natural green space with a large pond, meandering path, fixed seating etc. The landscaped park - which was driven by the local community - harmonises with the location's landscape and makes a distinctive focal point to the village; it is cherished by the community.
- 8.5 Public open spaces are being provided throughout the borough and have become expected. Demand for POS is not expected to decline and the Local Plan shall continue to support retention and new provision.

Golf courses

- 8.6 There are six golf courses in the borough – one of which is run as a borough council concession on council land - which serve the population and visitors. The courses contain mature tree belts which make a substantial woodland contribution to the landscape.
- 8.7 Demand for open space sport provision generally may increase, however no new golf courses are envisaged.



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Authorised by: Eddie Graves, Planning Policy Manager