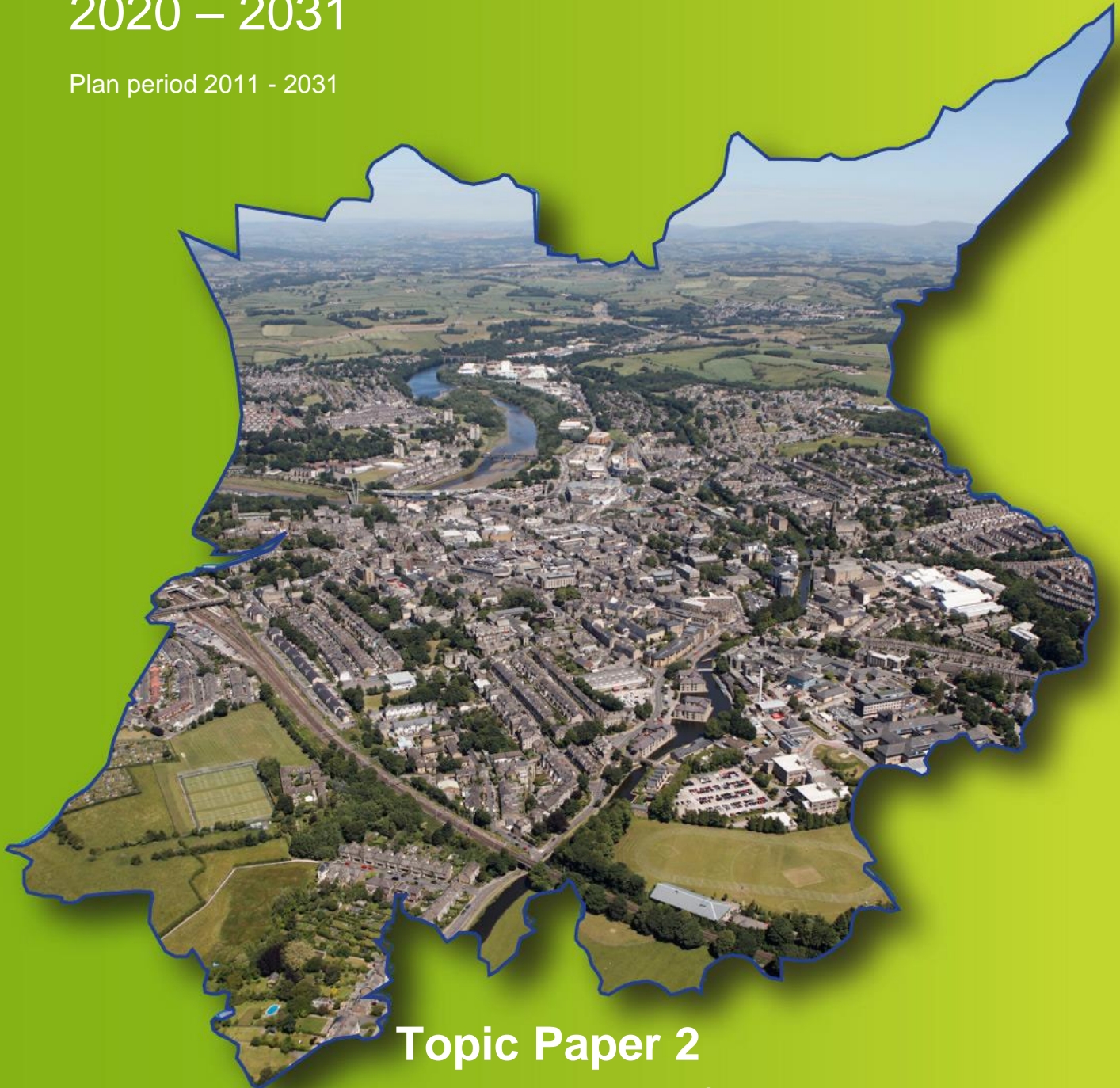


A Local Plan for

Lancaster District

2020 – 2031

Plan period 2011 - 2031



Topic Paper 2 Green Blue Infrastructure Consideration of Alternative Policy Approaches [May 2021]

Contents

1.0	Introduction	2
2.0	Policies relating to Green-Blue Infrastructure	5
	POLICY DM43: GREEN AND BLUE INFRASTRUCTURE.....	7
	POLICY SP8: PROTECTING THE NATURAL ENVIRONMENT.....	16
	POLICY SC4: GREEN SPACE NETWORKS -GREEN AND BLUE CORRIDORS AND CHAINS	22
	POLICY SC5: RECREATION OPPORTUNITY AREAS	29
	POLICY DM27: OPEN SPACE, SPORTS AND RECREATIONAL FACILITIES	34
	POLICY DM45: PROTECTION OF TREES, HEDGEROWS AND WOODLAND	41

1.0 Introduction

This document sets out what alternative policy approaches have been considered in the Climate Emergency Local Plan Review (CELPR).

At the scoping consultation stage, a list of 32 policies that are contained in the adopted Local Plan were highlighted as possibilities for amendments as part of the CELPR.

The policies from this list that related to Green-Blue Infrastructure are as follows:

POLICY NUMBER	POLICY TITLE	POLICY DESCRIPTION	IMPLICATIONS ON CLIMATE CHANGE
SP8	Protecting the Natural Environment	The policy provides a strategic approach to protecting the natural environment and provides some specific references to the impacts of Climate Change on the natural environment, particularly in relation to flood risk matters.	This policy does have direction in relation to climate change and therefore is likely to lead to review through this process to reflect wider changes in the Plan – particularly in relation to changes to flood risk policy.
SC4	Green Space Networks	This policy seeks to identify a range of existing green space networks that are strategically important across the district.	The enhancement and expansion of green infrastructure (including green space networks) is important in addressing Climate Change. Therefore consideration should be given to whether this policy area can be expanded in its scope.
SC5	Recreation Opportunity Areas	This policy seeks to identify a range of recreational opportunity areas across the district whose delivery should be promoted through the life of the plan.	The enhancement and expansion of recreational areas within the district is important in addressing Climate Change. Therefore consideration should be given to whether this policy area can be expanded in its scope.
DM27	Open Space, Sports and Recreational Facilities	The policy sets out the presumption towards the protection of public open spaces. The policy also links to the need for new open spaces within new residential development and the enhancement of existing spaces.	The scope of the Local Plan Review could look at how Green Infrastructure (including the POS network) could be enhanced further. To achieve greater levels of GI delivery to scope of the policy could be tweaked.
DM43	Green Infrastructure	The policy sets out an approach to the protection of and improvement of Green Infrastructure within the district.	The policy could be expanded and reinforced to greater promote the role of Green Infrastructure and their networks across the district for the wider benefit of local communities and the environment.
DM45	Protection of Trees, Hedgerows and Woodland	The policy sets out an approach which supports the protection and retention of valuable trees, hedges and woodland. It also sets a policy position in relation to the increase of tree coverage.	The policy could seek to go further in relation to increasing tree coverage across the district.

Scoping consultation stage outcomes

During the consultation, green and blue infrastructure emerged as the most frequently mentioned topic by the respondents. Issues raised related to the protection and improvement of green infrastructure within the District, the protection and planting of trees, hedgerows and woodland, the improvement and strengthening of the green infrastructure network, the integration and multifunctionality of green infrastructure in the District, and the role of sustainable drainage measures to reduce flood risk.

The enhancement of policies to address green and blue infrastructure in the district was supported by the majority of respondents, including members of the public, local action groups, United Utilities, Natural England, Canal and Rivers Trust, Wildlife Trust, Sport England, Lead Local Flood Authority, Environment Agency and Arnside and Silverdale AONB.

Responses received on behalf of developers regarding SuDS were, however, less positive, with the majority of the opinion that the current policy framework is appropriate, compliant with national policy, and no substantial change to the Council's approach is necessary. Concern has been raised that a mandatory requirement for SuDS would be unsound. Though some acknowledged the importance and opportunity of multi-functional green and blue infrastructure. There was little discussion of viability concerns regarding green infrastructure.

Numerous recommendations have been made about how the local plan can address the issues raised:

- Take an integrated, holistic approach to green and blue infrastructure, with developments making space for water and the wildlife that thrives in that environment, whilst providing recreational spaces. Emphasising the multi-functionality of green and blue infrastructure.
- Increase the green and blue space in development to act as water retention areas.
- Policies should include monitoring requirements for the implementation and management of SuDS and green infrastructure.
- Standards for water management, maintenance and SuDS should be written into policies and enforced.
- Plans for the management of surface water should be included at the preplanning stage and considered as part of any application.

- Green and blue infrastructure strategy should consider the benefits integrating habitat forming schemes.
- Peatland protection.
- Policies should ensure the provision of safe, extended, enhanced, traffic-free walking and cycling routes.
- Make space for the provision of tree planting schemes, possibly for development carbon emissions offsetting. Additionally, develop urban tree planting schemes.
- Establish policies in place to retain native, existing, well established and mature trees and hedgerows.
- Consideration of Biodiversity Net Gain targets.
- 20-minute neighbourhoods.
- Provide explicit examples of green and blue infrastructure that should be implemented.
- Identify, protect and unlock land for productive agroecological growing within the District. Focus on urban areas, for example by including the provision of edible landscaping. The planning process should prioritise food growing within new developments; schemes should be required to create productive land or community gardens, orchards and allotments.
- Should identify land to be designated as green open space and encourage community involvement in identifying and managing new public green spaces.
- Any policy changes need to ensure that the protection for national and local sites remains.
- Policy DM53 should cross reference to the environmental policy to ensure compliance with habitat regs.
- Policy DM59 should carefully consider siting of large apparatus and potential impacts on designated sites and AONB.
- Green and blue infrastructure networks and links should be strengthened.

2.0 Policies relating to Green-Blue Infrastructure

The existing policies in the adopted Local Plan that relate to Green- blue Infrastructure, and were included within the list of 32 policies proposed for amendment during the scoping consultation that ran between September and November 2020, are as follows:

- **DM43: Green Infrastructure**
- **SP8: Protecting the Natural Environment**
- **SC4: Green space networks**
- **SC5: Recreation opportunity areas**
- **DM27: Open Space, Sports and Recreational Facilities**
- **DM45: Protection of Trees, Hedgerows and Woodland**

These policies are set out below, with their associated supporting text. The proposed new policy changes are illustrated as strikethrough text and new additional text.

A discussion of the alternative policies and policy detail is considered is given for each, including information on the SA/SEA/HRA work that is being undertaken as well as how the policies ensure better outcomes in relation to climate change.

How do the policies in this topic paper ensure better outcomes in relation to Climate Change?

In response to the Climate Emergency declaration, which was the trigger for this review, there have been some significant changes made to policies which relate to green and blue infrastructure to ensure that through the planning system we are doing all we can to mitigate and adapt to the impacts of climate change we face in the Lancaster District.

Fundamentally, the policies outlined in this topic paper now not only refer to green infrastructure, but also blue infrastructure. The two are inextricably linked due to the multifunctional nature of these spaces, functions which can help with the approaches taken to mitigate and adapt to the impacts of climate change. In order to tackle climate change, a single space should not be considered to have just one use. For example, an open space within a development, whilst its primary purpose may be to meet the recreational needs of the residents of the new development, but during periods of intense rainfall it may provide a valuable space to store water to protect nearby properties and businesses.

The same space, if appropriately managed, could also provide a haven for wildlife. Therefore, making the most of the uses a space can enable the same space to perform stronger in terms of its role in climate change adaptation.

It is therefore important to recognise the valuable role our blue spaces can provide in how we adapt to climate change. As set out within the Water Management Alternative Policy Approaches Paper, (topic paper 1) we are witnessing increased volumes of precipitation and severe weather events which has resulted in a number of areas within the District being flooded. It is anticipated that these events will become more intense and occur over a shorter time period, leading to more flash flooding events.

In addition to harnessing the multifunctional value of green and blue infrastructure, the policies in this topic paper also emphasise the importance of connectivity and considering the role a green/blue space, corridor or chain as part of the wider green and blue infrastructure network which spans across the District. Improving and enhancing the connectivity within green/blue spaces, corridors and chains makes the network more resilient to the impacts of climate change, for example fragmentation. Increased fragmentation can lead to the degradation of habitats and subsequently result in the loss of species. However, a better-connected network, from an ecological perspective, means that species are better able to move and respond to the changes in climate that we are facing. A robust green and blue infrastructure network enables them to adapt their way of life to increase their chances of survival. A better-connected network also has benefits for humans and the way in which we are able to mitigate against the impacts of climate change. For example, improving the connectivity of cycle routes and 'greening' them, makes cycling a more attractive and safe mode of transport, it also contributes towards enhancing people's health and wellbeing, whilst at the same time encouraging them to use a more sustainable mode of transport instead of the private car.

The policies covered in this topic paper raise the importance of the climate change adaptation/mitigation value that green and blue infrastructure can provide, and that the original, intended purpose is managed and maintained in perpetuity to ensure the adaptation/mitigation benefits provided from a green and blue infrastructure perspective are secured for the long term.

Green and Blue Infrastructure

POLICY DM43: GREEN AND BLUE INFRASTRUCTURE

~~Green Spaces and Green Corridors~~ Green and Blue Spaces, Corridors and Chains

The Council seeks to protect the District's green and blue spaces, corridors and chains to prevent the fragmentation and isolation of these valuable assets that contribute towards the wider green and blue infrastructure network. ~~Green Infrastructure~~. To achieve this the integrity and connectivity of the Green and Blue Infrastructure network, as identified in the Lancaster District Green and Blue Infrastructure Strategy, will be protected, managed, maintained, ~~protected~~ and enhanced to improve the quality and value of the District's green and blue spaces, corridors and chains and provide ~~deliver the~~ multi-functional benefits ~~they provide~~.

Individual green and blue spaces ~~must~~ ~~should~~ be retained wherever possible, particularly in relation to spaces that have a recognised value, whether this is a community, ~~or~~ environmental or climate change adaptation/mitigation value.

Opportunities to extend the ~~framework~~ network of green and blue spaces, ~~and green~~ corridors and chains in the district ~~should~~ ~~must~~ be taken, and development proposals that will result in damage to the integrity of or severance of a green and/or blue corridor or chain will be resisted by the Council.

~~Any development proposal that involves the loss of designated green space will be resisted by the Council.~~ Development proposals ~~should~~ ~~must~~ seek to integrate green and blue spaces, ~~and green~~ corridors and chains ~~into development proposals~~ onsite and forge linkages with the existing ~~green space~~ wider green and blue infrastructure networks. The design of development proposals must consider the value green and blue infrastructure can provide in terms of recreation, active travel, water management, landscape, biodiversity, and the historic environment, and ultimately contribute towards climate change mitigation and adaptation.

A Green and Blue Infrastructure Management and Maintenance Plan will be required to detail how the green and blue infrastructure assets will be managed to ensure the long term benefits these spaces provide are secured and maintained.

Any development proposal that involves the loss of designated green or blue space will be resisted by the Council. In exceptional circumstances, the loss of green and blue spaces, ~~and green~~ corridors and chains will only be considered acceptable where appropriate mitigation measures are provided. This would include replacement habitat / provision being provided which is of an equal or better standard (in both quantitative and qualitative terms) than existing.

Development proposals should incorporate new and/or enhanced amenity green spaces of an appropriate type, standard, size and reflects the needs / deficiencies for the area as set out within the Councils Open Space Assessment or successor documents. Proposals

will be expected to give due consideration to the requirements set out in Policy DM27 and Appendix D of this DPD and, where appropriate, the requirements of site specific policies contained in the Strategic Policies and Land Allocations DPD.

Where on-site amenity green space provision has been demonstrated to not be possible, or the Council is satisfied that on-site provision is not beneficial or appropriate, financial contributions will be sought towards the creation of new facilities off-site or to enhance and improve existing provision to meet the needs of the community.

Allotment Provision

Existing allotments, which are recognised to have significant value to the local community will be protected and, where appropriate, improved. The Council will support the provision of new allotment facilities and other food growing places where opportunities arise ~~and a clear need is demonstrated via local evidence.~~

Garden Provision

The Council recognises that **natural** garden space, particularly within urban areas, is a vital source of green space to residents and of significant importance to natural habitats. The loss or reduction of garden spaces in urban areas could lead to a decrease in the quality of life and a significant impact on the natural environment. In accordance with paragraph ~~53~~ **70** of the National Planning Policy Framework the Council will resist proposals that will involve the loss of garden spaces to built development where it will result in harm to the local environment and amenity.

- 11.3 Green **and blue** Infrastructure is a wide-ranging term that can encompass a number of environmental features including open spaces, recreational areas, **registered** parks and gardens, allotments, biological and geological conservation sites, landscape features, rivers, canals and watercourses, woodland, street trees and planting, orchards, village greens, green roofs and walls, cycle routes, pedestrian walkways and Public Rights of Way (PROW), green **and blue** corridors **and chains**, and open countryside. This, however, is not a definitive list of the types of Green Infrastructure assets. The National Planning Policy Framework defines Green Infrastructure as ‘a network of multi-functional green space, urban and rural, which is capable of delivering a wide range of environmental and quality of life benefits for local communities’. Policy DM43 sets out the beneficial roles that ~~of~~ green **and blue** spaces, ~~and~~ **corridors and chains** can contribute to in the locality. **Whilst most types of green and blue infrastructure may have a primary purpose or function, by their nature these assets are multifunctional, providing a range of benefits and improving our ‘natural capital’.** Given that these functions co-exist, development proposals can design and use land more effectively or efficiently to generate multiple benefits for people, nature and climate.

Due to their array of uses and subsequent multifunctionality, Policy DM43 sets out the beneficial roles and values that ~~of~~ green and blue spaces, ~~and green~~ corridors and chains can contribute to ~~in the locality~~, and the importance of their connectivity, in contributing towards the resilience of the wider green and blue infrastructure network, particularly in the face of climate change.

11.4 To inform this Local Plan Review the Council produced a Green and Blue Infrastructure Strategy which identified six key themes/uses of green and blue infrastructure, which are recognized to be cross-cutting, reflecting the multifunctionality and connectivity of these spaces, corridors and chains. These were:

- Recreation/Accessible Greenspace
- Ecology/Biodiversity
- Water Management
- Active Travel
- Landscape
- Historic Environment

The design of development proposals should begin with a 'GBI first' approach, exploring the role, function and value of green and blue spaces from the start. The design must therefore consider the value green and blue infrastructure can contribute towards each of these key GBI themes/uses, and fundamentally towards the mitigation and/or adaptation of climate change. For example, above grounds SuDS schemes not only help to manage water and reduce flood risk in response to increased rainfall, but they can also provide an aesthetic landscape feature within a development and also net gains in biodiversity. The Council has developed a GBI toolkit as part of the Green and Blue Infrastructure Strategy so that the climate change mitigation/adaptation value of green and blue infrastructure can be assessed, and to provide a tool which can be used to inform the design of green and blue infrastructure to help deliver multifunctional spaces. Where possible, all development proposals must deliver green and blue infrastructure onsite, considering how the form, layout and make-up of the green/blue infrastructure fits within the context and function of the existing wider green and blue infrastructure network to maximise the most appropriate benefits (as set out in the Lancaster District Green and Blue Infrastructure Strategy).

- 11.5 The Council will retain a presumption towards the retention and protection of green and blue spaces, ~~and green corridors and chains, particularly where it can be demonstrated that they~~ unless it can be demonstrated that the site provides no value, either economically, environmentally or socially to the community they serve and is unable to provide any benefits in terms of climate change mitigation and/or adaptation. Opportunities to extend and enhance the quality and value of these ~~and extend these~~ natural assets, such as those set out in the Lancaster District Green and Blue Infrastructure Strategy, ~~should~~ must also be sought and will be supported by the Council. Development proposals that involve the loss of such spaces will be resisted by the Council unless it has been demonstrated that the benefits that the proposal provides outweigh the loss of ~~open green and blue~~ space and the lost ~~open~~ space is replaced with ~~facilities~~ provision that is of equal, if not better, standard than those existing in a suitable, nearby and accessible location.
- 11.6 Once created, it is important to ensure that green and blue infrastructure assets are managed and maintained so that they continue to effectively deliver the long-term uses and benefits that they were designed to provide. Therefore, a Green and Blue Infrastructure Management and Maintenance Plan will be required. This will need to include long-term design objectives, a detailed maintenance schedule, clearly defined management responsibilities and set out the appropriate funding mechanisms that will be put in place to provide for the on-going maintenance of green and blue infrastructure delivered as part of the development. This should relate to all green and blue infrastructure that is not within private gardens. In relation to blue infrastructure, to avoid duplication and where appropriate, this Plan should cross-reference the Surface Water Lifetime Management and Maintenance Plan that is required to ensure SuDS provide long term drainage solutions and continue to address flooding.
- 11.7 The Council published a new Open Space Assessment for the district (prepared by KKP consultants and published in 2018) and a Playing Pitch and Outdoor Sports Strategy (also prepared by KKP consultants and published in 2018). These provide an up-to-date position on open space and recreation matters that will be relevant in the determination of future planning applications. These assessments are considered to represent key pieces of evidence in relation to this topic and therefore the Council will expect applicants to have due regard to their content and recommendations of these documents or other successor documents on this topic area.

- 11.8 Development proposals should be considered against the requirements for on-site provisions and off-site financial contributions [towards open space](#), which are set out in Appendix D of this DPD. The requirements set out in Appendix D are based on national standards and will be used as a basis for discussion for negotiations between the Council and applicants. Consideration should also be given to the Planning Advisory Note (PAN) on this matter. Issues of viability will be given consideration within the negotiation process with both commercial and residential development proposals expected to make contributions toward improvement of green [and blue](#) infrastructure.
- 11.9 In considering the issue of viability, development proposals should consider whether it is appropriate to provide either on-site [open space](#) provision or financial contributions to the enhancements and improvement of existing nearby facilities. Dialogue is recommended between applicants and the Council to inform the understanding of open space requirements in the local area.
- 11.10 Development that forms part of a strategic land allocation, as identified in the Strategic Policies & Land Allocations DPD, should take direction from the specific policies relating to the site (and Masterplan if applicable) in relation to open space [and general green and blue infrastructure](#) requirements.

Local Food Growing & Allotments

- 11.11 Allotments are an important element of open space and offer a significant range of benefits for people, communities and environments. They provide recreational value to their users, support local biodiversity, contribute toward the urban landscape, contribute to the physical and mental well-being of their user, provide the opportunity to grow fresh produce, [help mitigate and adapt to climate change](#), and contribute toward a healthy lifestyle that is active, sustainable and socially inclusive.
- 11.12 There are currently ~~21~~ [24](#) allotment sites within the district, providing approximately ~~22.29~~ [19](#) hectares of land for the growing of food. Despite this provision, there remains a waiting list and the demand for allotment sites continues to increase, with the greatest levels of both supply and demand in the Lancaster area.

11.13 From a planning perspective, the Council will address such demand through new development, in particular larger development proposals that will be able to accommodate provision for new allotments and community growing spaces.

11.14 Allotments can play a key role in increasing levels of physical activity across the district, providing an alternative to formal sporting activities. In light of the recognised need for additional provision of allotments across Lancaster, innovative approaches to increasing provision should be considered, including links and partnerships with local schools where opportunities to do so exist. The value of allotments as a social opportunity, ~~and~~ an alternative option for exercise ~~and~~ [in the fight against climate change](#) is recognised by the Council. The location of allotments at schools should be investigated as a potential solution to the provision of new facilities, particularly in rural locations.

11.15 The Council will continue to seek to address this deficiency through the more efficient use of existing provision and the identification of new sites for this purpose in areas of need. The development of new housing, particularly in the South Lancaster area as set out within the relevant policies of the Strategic Policies & Land Allocations DPD, will be expected to address specific needs in this locality.

Policy DM43 Alternative Approach considered for the policy

In light of the Green and Blue Infrastructure Strategy that has been produced for the Lancaster District to inform this Local Plan Review, significant changes have been made to this policy. Of particular note is the inclusion of blue infrastructure, instead of solely concentrating on green infrastructure. As the proposed revised NPPF definition for Green (and now Blue) Infrastructure demonstrates, you cannot have one without the other given the multi-functional and interchangeable nature of green and blue spaces. It should no longer be seen as one use for one space, and this revised policy aims to highlight this and require the consideration of other uses in accordance with the updated evidence base. Greater emphasis has therefore been placed upon the quality and value of these assets, and how (in accordance with policy SC4, these should not simply be referred to as 'corridors' but also 'chains' given their more circular nature).

A key concern with regards to provision of new/enhanced green or blue spaces is the management

and maintenance of these assets, and so now through this policy it is requested that a Green and Blue Infrastructure Operation and Management Plan is to be submitted with all proposals to ensure these are maintained in perpetuity, as often they can look aesthetically pleasing as soon as the development has been completed but as time goes on if not properly looked after these areas can lose their quality and value, and pose more risks and concerns than benefits, and so this needs to be monitored and brought under control, clearly set out in a plan that is to be approved by the Council.

- **Do nothing:** The policy could remain unchanged but that would fail to recognize the important findings of the Green **and Blue** Infrastructure Strategy, such as the multifunctionality of such spaces, the role of the wider network and connectivity, and also the 6 key themes which can usefully inform the design of new development to create more effective and beneficial uses for both humans and nature in the face of climate change when properly considered at the design stage (rather than an after thought)
- **Set green and blue infrastructure standards:** As this is not a full Local Plan Review we're not able to introduce specific standards for GBI due to impact this could have on housing numbers/density/viability – would need to be considered as part of a full local plan review. But it is recognised that GBI should where possible link up to existing GBI network, and multiple benefits should be sought from a space (as this doesn't necessarily affect the amount of space – just encourages a re-think of how amenity space for example should be looked at. So not just one use for one space) Open space standards are the only ones that have specifically been previously set/established in adopted Local Plan.
- **Remove specific reference to allotment provision:** This was considered because thought was given as to whether a particular type/use of GBI should be specifically referenced within the policy, or whether the policy should be kept more general. The decision was made to keep the specific section on 'allotment provision' in given the role it plays in climate change adaptation/mitigation (and to remove this section would not be in-keeping with the climate change focus of this review) and it was also a topic which was raised numerous times in the Climate Change People's Jury recommendations
- **Remove specific reference to private gardens:** This was considered because thought was given as to whether a particular type/use of GBI should be specifically referenced within the policy, or whether the policy should be kept more general. However, at this stage the Lancaster District

Green and Blue Infrastructure Strategy has not been able to fully consider the role of private gardens within the wider GBI network, but it is recognised that they play an important role and so it was deemed appropriate to keep the specific section on ‘garden provision’ in the policy

How does this policy ensure better outcomes in relation to Climate Change?

Fundamentally this policy now not only refers to green infrastructure, but also blue infrastructure. The two are inextricably linked due to the multifunctional nature of these spaces, functions which can help with the approaches taken to mitigate and adapt to the impacts of climate change. In order to tackle climate change, a single space should not be considered to have just one use.

This policy crucially raises the importance of the climate change adaptation/mitigation value that green and blue infrastructure can provide, and that the original, intended purpose is managed and maintained in perpetuity to ensure the adaptation/mitigation benefits provided from a green and blue infrastructure perspective are secured for the long term.

SA/SEA/HRA considerations (completed by consultants AECOM):

Alternatives in the context of SA/SEA need to be strategic in nature, meaningful and deliverable. Procedural choices such as ‘not changing the policy’ would not lead to significantly different outcomes in terms of sustainability.

Options such as whether to remove specific reference to green infrastructure types are not necessary to test in the SEA (or would be difficult to test given the lack of detailed evidence around the role of specific types of GI use).

The SA process has been utilised to provide a broad commentary on the policy amendments and make further recommendations for enhancement where appropriate.

Suggested changes by Lancaster City Council	SA topics likely to be affected	Delivery / potential conflicts	City Council Comments
Greater recognition of blue infrastructure and links made to the Lancaster District Green and Blue Infrastructure	<i>Biodiversity +ve</i> <i>Natural resources +ve</i>	Unlikely to lead to issues or major conflicts in relation to other SA Objectives.	Comments noted.

Suggested changes by Lancaster City Council	SA topics likely to be affected	Delivery / potential conflicts	City Council Comments
Strategy	<i>Health and wellbeing +ve</i>	Striking an appropriate balance between the multifunctional uses of green and blue infrastructure will be critical to how successfully the policy is applied.	
Greater recognition of the role of green and blue infrastructure for climate change adaptation and resilience (and a need to demonstrate how proposals will address this).	<i>Lowering carbon emissions +ve</i>		
Stronger wording in relation to the protection and enhancement of blue and green infrastructure.	<i>Climate change adaptation +ve</i>		

HRA Screening

Policy	Policy Title and Description	Implications on Climate Change	Suggested changes by Lancaster City Council	Screening Outcome	City Council Comments
Policy DM43	Green Infrastructure The policy sets out and approach to the protection of and improvement of Green Infrastructure within the district.	The policy could be expanded and reinforced to greater promote the role of Green Infrastructure and their networks across the district for the wider benefit of local communities and the environment.	Greater recognition of blue infrastructure and links made to the Lancaster District Green and Blue Infrastructure Strategy Greater recognition of the role of green and blue infrastructure for climate change adaptation and resilience (and a need to demonstrate	No Likely Significant Effect. Screened out. This policy is designed to protect and enhance (where possible) the natural environment. The implementation of the suggested changes to this policy is not expected to have any implications on European sites	Comments noted.

Policy	Policy Title and Description	Implications on Climate Change	Suggested changes by Lancaster City Council	Screening Outcome	City Council Comments
			how proposals will address this). Stronger wording in relation to the protection and enhancement of blue and green infrastructure		

Protecting the Natural Environment

POLICY SP8: PROTECTING THE NATURAL ENVIRONMENT

Lancaster district contains important landscapes, species and habitats that are valued features of the natural environment. Through the Lancaster District Green and Blue Infrastructure Strategy, the existing green and blue infrastructure network has been identified. Development must protect, maintain, enhance and extend the District's green and blue spaces, corridors and chains that make up the wider network, and their multifunctional value, integrity and connectivity to ensure the network is as resilient as possible to the impacts of climate change.

The Council recognises the importance of biodiversity and geodiversity, and has prepared a Local Plan that will seek to protect sites of recognised importance; it will also seek to protect areas of land that are functionally linked to areas which are of International and / or National importance. Development proposals will be expected to protect, maintain and enhance the district's biodiversity and geodiversity, and other green and blue infrastructure functions, through the appropriate location of uses, sympathetic design, sustainable construction techniques and appropriate mitigation measures.

Lancaster district is not immune to the effects of Climate Change, in particular the associated risks from extreme weather events and increasing levels of rainfall and sea level rise. The Local Plan has been prepared in consultation with the Environment Agency, Lancashire County Council (the Lead Local Flood Authority for Lancaster district) and United Utilities to ensure that flood risk issues are clearly considered, and flood resilience is addressed, and the impacts of future growth will not create new flooding issues or exacerbate existing problems and seeks to reduce flood risk overall.

The Council will continue to work with all relevant partners to address issues of flood risk, whether from river, sea or other sources, to implement schemes that will reduce overall flood risk or better manage the continuing effects of Climate Change. Development proposals in areas of known flood risk will be expected to consider their direct and in-direct impacts on flooding and include appropriate mitigation measures to ensure water is managed correctly.

~~Development proposals will be expected to protect, maintain and enhance the district's biodiversity and geodiversity through the appropriate location of uses, sympathetic design, sustainable construction techniques and appropriate mitigation measures. The Council will also support opportunities to maximise energy efficiency.~~

- 10.1 Lancaster district has a unique range of environmental designations, from International importance (such as Morecambe Bay) down to sites that have local value – such as Biological Heritage Sites. The Lancaster District is also home to two Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB's); Arnsdale and Silverdale and the Forest of Bowland.
- 10.2 The Local Plan has the responsibility to ensure that important landscapes, species and habitats are protected from development that would be harmful and inappropriate. A range of international, national and locally designated sites have been identified within the plan that are protected from future development. Taken together, the Local Plan identifies types of historic, landscape and natural features of value, considering each through detailed and specific policies in order to explain their significance and the reasons to protect and conserve them.
- 10.3 To inform the Local Plan Review, the Council have produced a Green and Blue Infrastructure Strategy, which highlights the multifunctional values and benefits of the District's green and blue spaces, corridors and chains, which make up the existing green and blue infrastructure network, and explores opportunities for the enhancement and expansion of this network. Ultimately the aim is to ensure the green and blue infrastructure network is as resilient as possible to the potential impacts of climate change, and can ultimately reduce, and mitigate and/or adapt to the consequences the District faces as a result of changes in our climate. For example, habitat fragmentation, which can then lead to habitat degradation and species loss.
- 10.4 In identifying future growth areas, in particular the release of strategic greenfield sites, the Council have been mindful of the balance that is needed between the competing needs of protecting the environment against the need to deliver sufficient growth to meet the district's

housing and economic needs, whilst also addressing the subsequent implications that may arise as a result of climate change.

- 10.5 In order to achieve this a range of ecological and landscape work has been undertaken, along with Sustainability Appraisal and Habitats Regulation Assessment¹. Together these provide a clear understanding of the potential environment effects of new development. These have been critical in influencing both the allocation of land and, most importantly, the detail of the policy contained within the plan.
- 10.6 Climate change remains a key issue for the Local Plan to address. This can be achieved through supporting schemes that seek to promote more sustainable forms of transport, sustainable construction methods, the delivery of low carbon and renewable energy, increases and enhancements to green and blue infrastructure, and ensuring that development is adequately protected from flood risk.
- 10.7 The district has suffered from extreme weather events and flooding – December 2015 saw significant flooding occur along the River Lune especially to property in Lancaster and Halton and further events in the South Lancaster, Galgate and Halton occurred in November 2017. The Local Plan has been prepared with these risks in mind, with allocations made on land that is not vulnerable to future flooding and with an expectation that development should be designed in such a way as to not create new flooding issues in future or exacerbate current problems, for example through the effective implementation of green infrastructure natural flood management techniques.

Policy SP8 Alternative Approach considered for the policy

This policy and supporting text remain largely unchanged. Climate change is already a key focus of this policy, particularly with regards to its impact upon flood risk which is a key concern for the Lancaster District when it comes to protecting the natural environment, given the history of previous flooding events across the District. This policy already seeks to reduce the risk of flooding, rather than simply not make it worse. As part of this Local Plan Review with a specific focus on climate change, it is the intention that other water management policies will also seek to follow the same approach of reducing flood risk, as opposed to not adding to the level of flood risk.

¹ <http://www.lancaster.gov.uk/planning/planning-policy/about-the-local-plan>

However, it was considered important to highlight through this strategic policy that is in place to protect the natural environment, that the Council is in the process of producing a Green and Blue Infrastructure Strategy for the District. Through which the existing District-wide green and blue infrastructure network has been mapped, and the strategy thus seeks to explore opportunities for the improvement of the network via enhancement and expansion to ensure the green and blue network, which is multi-functional and thus provide multiple benefits (for humans and nature) and has the ability to adapt and/or mitigate against the impacts of climate change that may be felt across the District. For example, a better connected green and blue infrastructure network means the network is less susceptible to the impacts of fragmentation, which can have significant implications for the functioning of habitats and their quality, and subsequently affects its ability to support species, which can then lead to species decline. At the same time it is recognised that land is a finite resource, especially when designing a development proposal and so this policy seeks to highlight at a strategic scale the multifunctional value of green and blue spaces and how this should be considered as part of the development proposal process.

Alternative policy approaches considered for SP8 were:

- **Do nothing:** This would mean there would be no reference to the Lancaster District Green and Blue Infrastructure Strategy, the importance of the wider GBI network and the multifunctionality of the green and blue spaces, corridors and chains, and the role they play in mitigating and adapting to climate change. To not include this would be to ignore a key piece of evidence underpinning the Local Plan Review highlighting the importance of the District's natural environment.
- **Don't remove reference to maximizing energy efficiency:** Given the focus of this policy is about 'protecting the natural environment' reference to maximising energy efficiency is more appropriately covered within the new 'Sustainable Design and Construction' policy. However, in light of this review being about ensuring the planning system does all it can to mitigate and adapt to climate change, maximising energy efficiency is a key strategic principle that should be sought in all new development and is covered within Policy CC1.

How does this policy ensure better outcomes in relation to Climate Change?

The existing wording of this policy already highlights the importance of flood resilience in response to

increasing precipitation, arising from the changes we are witnessing in our climate. It also states that future growth is not to create new flooding issues or exacerbate existing problems, but also to seek to reduce flood risk overall. However, to further strengthen this policy in terms of ensuring better outcomes for climate change adaptation and mitigation, the role of the green and blue infrastructure (GBI) network is highlighted.

As set out at the start of this paper, the Lancaster District Green and Blue Infrastructure (GBI) Strategy has been a key piece of evidence to inform and underpin this Local Plan Review, identifying the existing GBI network, and the benefits of a better connected, multifunctional GBI network in providing means and ways of adapting and mitigating to climate change. This policy therefore states that development should not only protect and maintain the GBI network, but also deliver opportunities that will enhance and extend the network, as ultimately this will create a network that is more resilient to the impacts of climate change.

For example, when considering the 'landscape' aspect of GBI, the potential role of trees should be factored in as part of the design process, because the right trees in the right places can not only intercept rainfall to reduce the rate of run-off and stabilise the soil to facilitate infiltration into the ground rather than run-off, but they can also sequester carbon by capturing carbon dioxide from the atmosphere and transforming it into biomass. Therefore, because this policy states that development must enhance and extend the District's GBI network, opportunities like this must be explored, and thus it is the aim of this policy that more mechanisms (in this case/example, trees) will be put in place to both mitigate and adapt to the impacts of climate change.

SA/SEA/HRA considerations (completed by consultants AECOM):

Alternatives in the context of SA/SEA need to be strategic in nature, meaningful and deliverable. Procedural choices such as 'not changing the policy' would not lead to significantly different outcomes in terms of sustainability.

The SA process has been utilised to provide a broad commentary on the policy amendments and make further recommendations for enhancement where appropriate.

Suggested changes by Lancaster City Council	SA topics likely to be affected	Delivery / potential conflicts	City Council Comments
Reference added to the Lancaster Green and Blue Infrastructure Strategy	Climate change adaptation ? Biodiversity ? Natural Resources ?	Reiterating the importance of the strategy is likely to raise awareness and likelihood of its successful use in new proposals.	Comments noted
Removal of sustainable design policy clauses (to move to a new specific policy dealing with such matters)	No implications	Policy detail is covered elsewhere.	Comments noted

HRA Screening

Policy	Policy Title and Description	Implications on Climate Change	Suggested Changes by Lancaster City Council	Screening Outcome	City Council Comments
Policy SP8	Protecting the Natural Environment The policy provides a strategic approach to protecting the natural environment and provides some specific references to the impacts of Climate Change on the natural environment, particularly in relation to flood risk matters.	This policy does have direction in relation to climate change and therefore is likely to lead to review through this process to reflect wider changes in the Plan – particularly in relation to changes to flood risk policy.	Reference added to the Lancaster Green and Blue Infrastructure Strategy Removal of sustainable design policy clauses (to move to a new specific policy dealing with such matters)	No Likely Significant Effect. Screened out. This policy specifically looks at protecting the natural environment. The implementation of the suggested changes to this policy is considered to have no adverse impacts and potentially some beneficial effects on European sites.	Comments noted

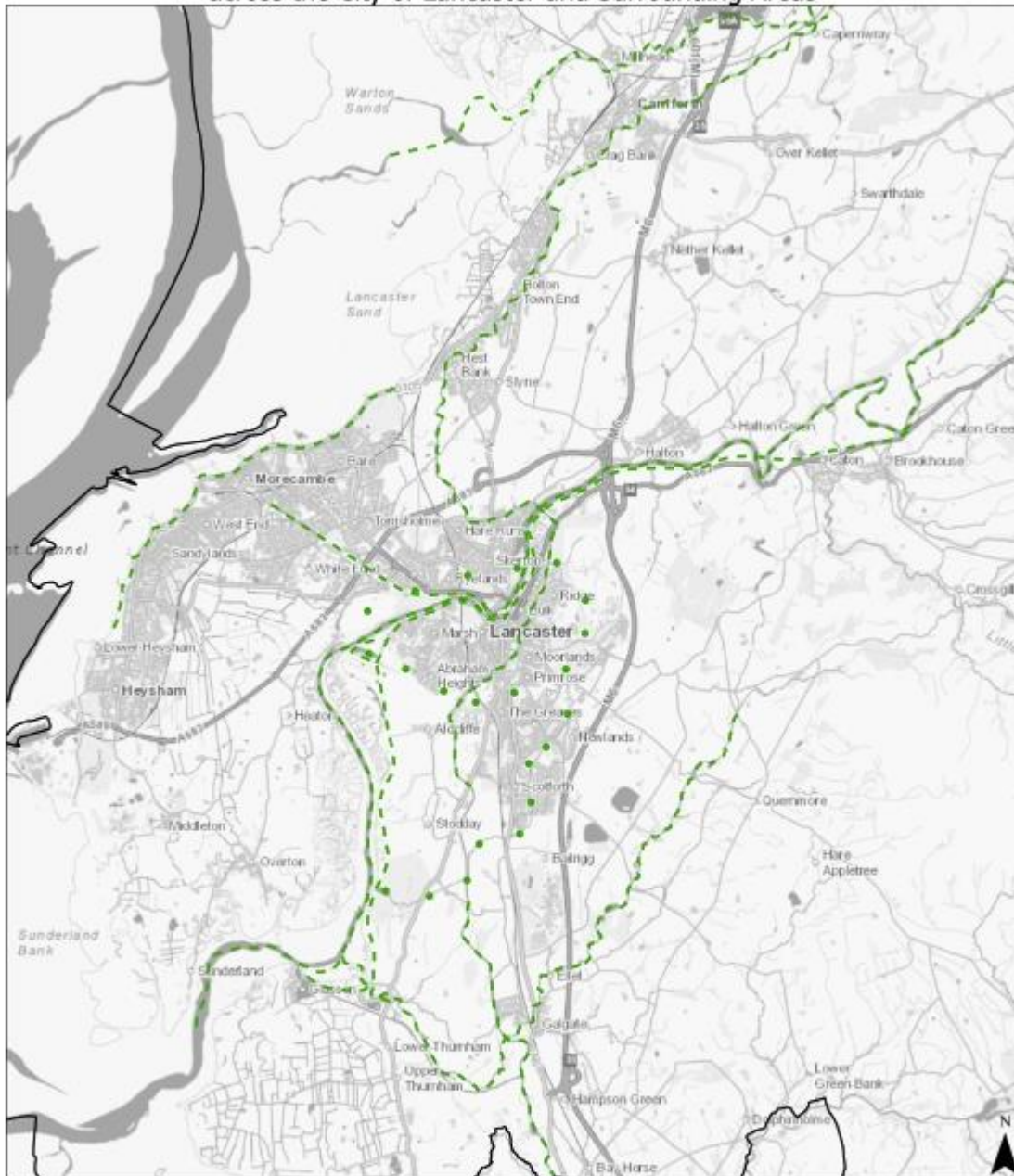
POLICY SC4: ~~GREEN SPACE NETWORKS~~ GREEN AND BLUE CORRIDORS AND CHAINS

The Council has identified on the Local Plan Policies Map (and has shown in Figure xx below) a number of ~~greenspace networks~~ green and blue corridors and chains that will be protected from development which would cause inappropriate harm and damage to their value and integrity.

MORECAMBE PROMENADE & HEYSHAM PROMENADE AND COASTLINE
THE CHAIN OF ~~OPEN GREEN~~ SPACES ~~SURROUNDING ENCIRCLING~~ LANCASTER CITY CENTRE
THE RIVER LUNE CORRIDOR FROM ~~MARSH POINT CATON~~ TO GLASSON DOCK
THE CHAIN OF ~~OPEN GREEN AND BLUE~~ SPACES ALONG ~~THE BURROW BECK VALLEY~~
LANCASTER CANAL
THE LANCASTER TO MORECAMBE CYCLE TRACK & THE MORECAMBE RAILWAY TRIANGLE
RIVER CONDER
RIVER LUNE
RIVER KEER

~~The Council will investigate opportunities to improve and enhance~~ New developments will be expected to contribute, where appropriate, to improving and enhancing the multifunctionality and connectivity within these ~~networks~~ corridors and chains ~~where appropriate to do so~~, and demonstrate how this would contribute towards climate change adaptation and/or mitigation, as set out in Appendix X of the Lancaster District Green & Blue Infrastructure Strategy.

Policy SC4: Green and Blue Corridors and Chains
across the City of Lancaster and Surrounding Areas



Legend

- District Boundary
- SC4 - Green and Blue Chains
- SC4 - Green and Blue Corridors



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Figure XX: Map to show the Green and Blue Corridors and Chains identified in policy SC4

23.17 There are a number of green and blue ~~space networks~~ corridors and chains across the District which contribute towards the wider Lancaster District green and blue infrastructure network, as set out in the Lancaster District Green and Blue Infrastructure Strategy. ~~and recreational open space systems. These can form chains of~~ These corridors and chains are made up of green and blue spaces such as registered parks and gardens, school playing fields, dedicated cycle and pedestrian routes, watercourses, the canal, canal towpaths, allotments, community growing spaces, orchards and private open spaces. It is recognised that the list of green and blue infrastructure corridors and chains identified in policy SC4 is not exhaustive because there are numerous others across the District, but these have been specifically identified for protection due to their:

- Location within or adjacent to urban areas most under pressure from new development (and subsequently should be the focus for climate change mitigation/adaptation)
- Strategic scale and nature
- Clear unifying features, with visible linear or circular connectivity
- Multifunctionality (spaces within the chain or corridor fulfill more than one of the key uses identified in the Green and Blue Infrastructure Strategy)

23.18 In order to be able to mitigate and adapt to the impacts of climate change, it is important to protect, maintain, enhance and extend the connectivity within, and the multifunctional role of, these green and blue corridors and chains. The Lancaster District Green and Blue Infrastructure Strategy identified six key themes/uses of green and blue infrastructure, and Appendix X of the Strategy sets out from the perspective of each theme, how planning policy can improve and enhance the connectivity and functionality of these strategic green and blue corridors and chains with regards to:

- Recreation
- Active Travel
- Biodiversity
- Water Management
- Landscape
- Historic Environment

The Council has also developed a GBI toolkit as part of the Green and Blue Infrastructure Strategy so that the climate change mitigation/adaptation value of green and blue

infrastructure can be assessed, and to provide a tool which can be used to inform the design of green and blue infrastructure to help deliver multifunctional spaces.

~~These greenspace systems can form the basis of a network of open spaces for recreation, biodiversity and the development of the district's walking and cycling network and have been identified using the following criteria:~~

- ~~• Forming a chain of 3 or more individual green spaces;~~
- ~~• Areas that are strongly linear with clear unifying features;~~
- ~~• Comprising open land within or adjoining urban areas of visual, recreational or biodiversity importance;~~
- ~~• Related to cycling and walking networks;~~
- ~~• Areas that include significant open land in areas of recreational open space deficiency;~~
- ~~• Areas that provide a setting for important townscapes.~~

Policy SC4 Alternative Approach considered for the policy

The intentions of this policy remain largely the same, with the purpose to 'be protected from development which would cause inappropriate harm and damage to their value and integrity'. However, what exactly is to be protected has slightly changed in light of evidence undertaken to inform this Local Plan Review. The Lancaster District Green and Blue Infrastructure (GBI) Strategy highlighted the importance of not only green spaces, but also blue spaces, and how the multifunctional nature of these spaces and therefore the important role of blue infrastructure, and that it's not all purely about green infrastructure. Consequently, reference has also been made to the multifunctionality of these spaces, and the importance of the improvement and enhancement of these values, rather than just purely focusing upon connectivity. Given the nature of the chains and corridors identified, many of them are already well connected i.e. the Lancaster Canal and Morecambe to Lancaster cycle track. Furthermore, the GBI Strategy highlighted that there is a District-wide green and blue infrastructure (GBI) network, and so it would be more appropriate to refer to the specific aspects of this network, mentioned in the policy, as 'corridors' and 'chains' rather than 'networks' themselves, to avoid confusion because they themselves make up the wider network.

Given the focus of this review is to look at how more can be done through the planning system in response to the Climate Emergency declaration reference has been made to climate change adaptation and mitigation so that these corridors and chains are improved with this in mind.

Finally, two new and two updated 'chains' and 'corridors' have been added to the list as a result of the findings of the GBI Strategy and also the incorporation and importance of blue infrastructure, and not just green. It's important to note that although environmentally designated sites such as SPA's/SSSI's and BHS' haven't been identified, it doesn't mean they are not important and/or strategic parts of the GBI network. They are, but they are already protected. There is currently no equivalent policy for green and blue infrastructure corridors and chains.

Alternative policy approaches considered for SC4 were:

- **Do nothing:** Keep the policy as worded. However this would mean that there would be no reference to blue infrastructure or the fact that not all connectivity is linear and some can be more circular, hence 'chains'. It will also mean that there is no recognition of the multifunctional value of these corridors and chains, which when combined can help contribute towards climate change mitigation and/or adaptation.
- **Just make minor changes to names of assets:** Change 'networks' to 'chains and corridors' to acknowledge they're part of a bigger District-wide GBI network. 'Corridor' implies linear and this is not always the case, and so 'chains' was considered more appropriate for those more circular. As a bare minimum it's also important to include blue infrastructure and consider the role of the District's blue spaces, corridors and chains.
- **Keep the current list of 6 identified 'Greenspace Networks' (i.e. don't add or change any networks):** This could be an option but currently they only include green spaces and so there is no reference/acknowledgement of the role of blue spaces. To adopt this option would also be to ignore the findings of the GBI Strategy.

How does this policy ensure better outcomes in relation to Climate Change?

Whilst the intended purpose of this policy remains the same, in light of the evidence undertaken to inform this policy review (the Green and Blue Infrastructure Strategy) it is important to highlight that there is a District-wide green and blue infrastructure (GBI) 'network', which is made up of 'chains' and 'corridors', that are both green *and* blue. This amendment to the policy alters the way in which these previously identified 'networks' are viewed, to emphasise the important role and contribution these

(now) strategic 'corridors' and 'chains' play in the overall, wider GBI network. Identified in areas that are under greatest pressure from development (urban areas in accordance with policy SP2), these corridors and chains form the backbone of the wider network, and thus have been identified to highlight the importance of their protection, enhancement and extension, to create better quality GBI, that is better connected to facilitate the movement of humans and nature in resilience against the impacts of climate change, and provides multiple uses to address the multiple issues we face that contribute towards, or are posed by, climate change. For example: management of flood water, carbon sequestration, biodiversity net gain against the threat of loss, shade in response to increasing temperatures, active modes of travel as an attractive alternative to private modes of transport and recreational space close to homes.

The amendments to this policy therefore seek new developments to demonstrate how improvements and enhancements made to the multifunctionality and connectivity within these corridors and chains contributes towards climate change adaptation and/or mitigation, so that as a District we create a GBI network that is resilient in the face of climate change.

As has been previously highlighted, the role of *blue* corridors and chains must be included if we are to effectively address climate change, you cannot have one (green infrastructure) without the other (blue infrastructure). It is becoming increasingly apparent that in order to effectively and efficiently mitigate and adapt to climate change, the two must be considered and approached together to reap the most benefits and ensure better outcomes for climate change. Consequently, blue chains/corridors have been added to the list set out in this policy.

SA/SEA/HRA considerations (completed by consultants AECOM):

Alternatives in the context of SA/SEA need to be strategic in nature, meaningful and deliverable. Procedural choices such as 'doing nothing' would not lead to significantly different outcomes in terms of sustainability. Widening the identified networks is not considered to be a choice that lends itself to meaningful SA/SEA. To not take account of the GBI strategy is considered unreasonable and contrary to the objectives of the Local Plan Review.

The SA process has been utilised to provide a broad commentary on the policy amendments and make further recommendations for enhancement where appropriate.

Suggested changes by Lancaster City Council	SA topics likely to be affected	Delivery / potential conflicts	City Council Comments
River Conder and River Lune identified as important blue infrastructure networks / chains	<i>Natural resources +ve</i> <i>Biodiversity +ve</i> <i>Climate change adaptation +ve</i>	There should be no reason why development proposals should not routinely consider the importance of green and blue infrastructure. Ensuring multifunctional uses that are compatible will perhaps be the greatest challenge.	Comments noted
Greater emphasis on the role of development proposals in enhancing the green and blue infrastructure networks and how they help to address climate change issues.	<i>Natural resources +ve</i> <i>Biodiversity +ve</i> <i>Climate change adaptation +ve</i> Health and wellbeing +ve		

HRA Screening

Policy	Policy Title and Description	Implications on Climate Change	Suggested Changes by Lancaster City Council	Screening Outcome	City Council Comments
Policy SC4	Green Space Networks This policy seeks to identify a range of existing green space networks that are strategically important across the district.	The enhancement and expansion of green infrastructure (including green space networks) is important in addressing Climate Change. Therefore consideration should be given to whether this policy area can be expanded in its scope.	River Conder and River Lune identified as important blue infrastructure networks/ chains Greater emphasis on the role of development proposals in enhancing the green and blue infrastructure networks and how they help to address climate change issues.	No Likely Significant Effect. Screened out. This policy is designed to protect, enhance and expand the natural environment and recreation space within the district. The implementation of the suggested changes to this policy is considered to have no adverse	Comments noted.

Policy	Policy Title and Description	Implications on Climate Change	Suggested Changes by Lancaster City Council	Screening Outcome	City Council Comments
				impacts and potentially some beneficial effects on European sites.	

Recreational Opportunity Areas

POLICY SC5: RECREATION OPPORTUNITY AREAS

Through future development proposals the Council will investigate the potential to provide significant new or improved open space in the following areas of deficiency.

CENTRAL MORECAMBE (VIA THE MORECAMBE AREA ACTION PLAN DPD)
CENTRAL LANCASTER (VIA 'BEYOND THE CASTLE' PROJECT)
LAND AT WILLOW LANE / CORONATION FIELD, LANCASTER
MORECAMBE WEST END
WESTGATE AREA, MORECAMBE
MARSH AREA, LANCASTER
LAND AT FORMER THOMAS GRAVESON SITE, WARTON ROAD, CARNFORTH
EAST LANCASTER STRATEGIC SITE

The Council will work with all key stakeholders and the local communities to investigate opportunities for improvement, expansion or creation of recreational facilities in the areas identified above.

The Council will also require opportunity areas to be in accordance with the requirements set out in policy DM43.

23.19 Opportunities for recreational improvement are set out within Policy SC5 and illustrated in figure 23.2 of this DPD where both qualitative and quantitative improvement could allow for opportunities to start to address the deficiencies in open space and recreation within the district and provide improvements to existing provision.

23.20a It is important to ensure that these recreational opportunity areas are fulfilled in accordance with the requirements set out in policy DM43 (Green and Blue Infrastructure). As consideration should also be given to the additional green and blue infrastructure uses and benefits that these opportunity areas could also provide, given the multifunctional nature of green and blue spaces.

The Lancaster District Green and Blue Infrastructure (GBI) Strategy that was undertaken to inform the review of the Local Plan in light of the climate emergency declaration identified 6 key themes which represent the array of GBI uses that could also be improved in these areas to provide greater benefits for both humans and nature, particularly within the context of climate change mitigation/adaptation. The additional uses/improvements that should be given consideration to see if the opportunity areas can provide additional value are:

- Active travel
- Ecology/Biodiversity
- Landscape
- Water management
- Historic environment

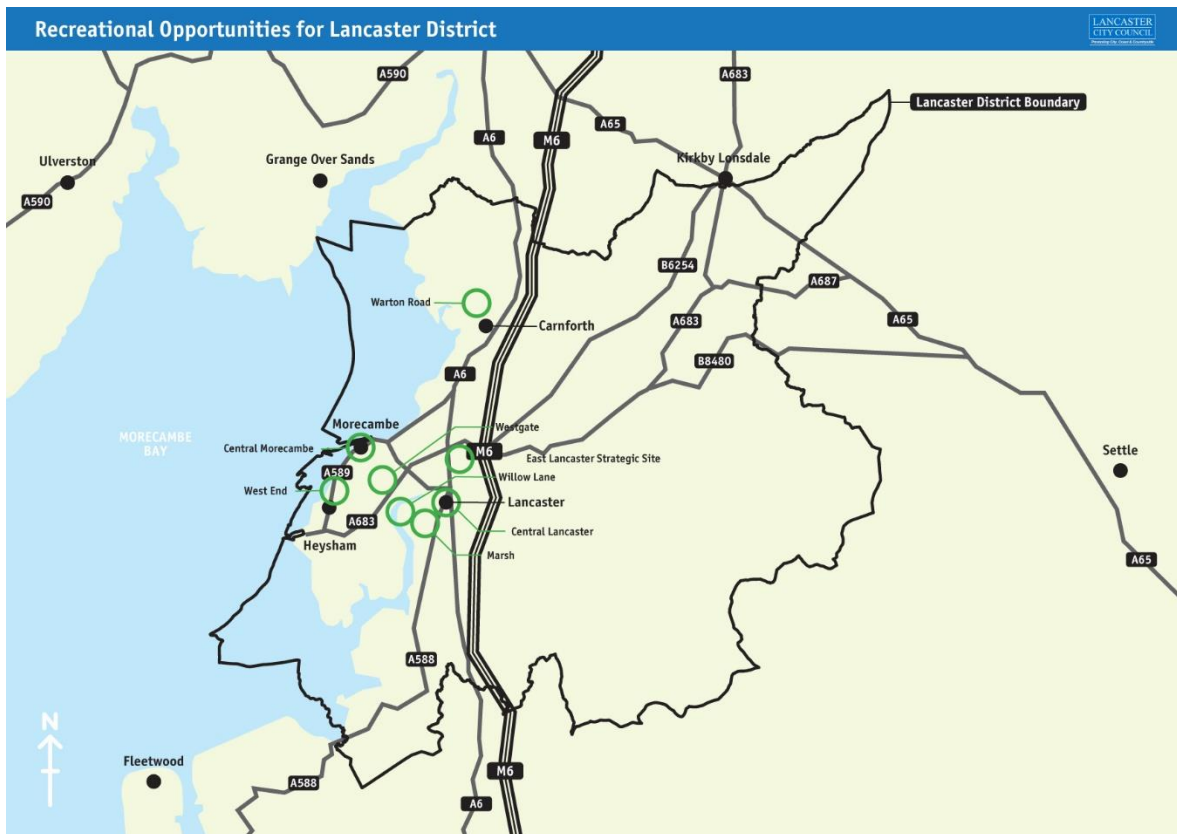


Figure 23.2: Recreation Opportunity Areas in Lancaster District

Policy SC5 Alternative Approach considered for the policy

This policy and supporting text remain largely unchanged. The purpose of this policy is to identify specific recreation opportunity areas for open space and recreational improvements to address both qualitative and quantitative deficiencies. From a climate change perspective, in light of the Lancaster

District Green and Blue Infrastructure (GBI) Strategy that is currently being produced, it was felt that it would be beneficial to make reference to additional green and blue infrastructure uses that could be explored in addition to recreation. As set out in the GBI Strategy, 'recreation' was one of the 6 key themes/uses identified for GBI. Given the multi-functionality of green and blue spaces and the opportunities they present to help mitigate and/or adapt to the impacts we face as a result of climate change, it was considered appropriate to require the exploration of additional uses to be stated within this policy.

Alternative policy approaches considered for SC5 were:

- **Do nothing:** To an extent the linkages between this policy and climate change are perhaps not as obvious as others, and so it could be argued that as part of this Climate Emergency Local Plan Review this policy does not need to be changed. In itself the improved availability and quality of open spaces for recreation can help encourage lifestyle changes. For example if recreational open spaces are more accessible i.e. on people's doorsteps, they don't need to then travel far to access green space. Also, such spaces can contribute towards the wider GBI network, and if appropriately designed, increase its resilience through improved quantity and quality.
- **Re-appraise current identified areas:** Using the open space evidence produced by KKP (which came forward after this policy) it would be possible to spatially map the accessibility buffers identified by KKP in the Open Space Standards Paper, and to also use the findings from the GBI Strategy linked to areas of deprivation to see if there are any trends in relation to the availability/accessibility of open space. This could help address food poverty and support community food growing, reducing food miles to help combat climate change. The policy would very much retain a 'recreation' focus.
- **Assess to see whether there are 'new' recreation opportunity areas:** Use the approach set out above to see if there is any additional areas of deficiency in relation to 'recreation' provision and also re-appraise the currently identified areas
- **Identify other types of 'opportunity areas'** in relation to the other 5 themes identified in the GBI Strategy (ecology/landscape/active travel/water management/historic environment). However, not all these themes are as easily quantifiable in terms of deficiency. Also, fundamentally through the GBI Strategy, the Council is seeking to promote the exploration of opportunity areas for enhancement/extension anywhere within the District where it is considered possible/appropriate – so don't necessarily want to quantify and provide a definitive list/particular locations because that would be difficult to evidence and would

suggest that there aren't deficiencies elsewhere. Ultimately the purpose of planning policy is to seek to ensure the entire GBI network is the best it can be. In policy SC4 specific chains and corridors have been identified due to their strategic nature and their urban location, and have not been formerly identified on the premise of a particular GBI theme.

How does this policy ensure better outcomes in relation to Climate Change?

The existing policy wording focuses upon recreation, but when considering how we respond to climate change (either mitigation and/or adaptation) it is important to explore the multiple functions that a space can provide to ensure we make the most of our finite resource of land. Therefore, a sentence has been added to this policy to state that new or improved open spaces within the areas identified in this policy should not only consider the recreational value that they provide, but also the other benefits and uses that could be provided, and that this should include climate change adaptation and/or mitigation measures. For example, an amenity green space could when required, be used as an above ground attenuation pond, as a sustainable urban drainage system. In this way the space would provide a better outcome in terms of climate change adaptation by providing a space for water during times of flood/peak rainfall which is known to be linked to climate change.

SA/SEA/HRA considerations (completed by consultants AECOM):

Alternatives in the context of SA/SEA need to be strategic in nature, meaningful and deliverable. Procedural choices such as 'doing nothing' would not lead to significantly different outcomes in terms of sustainability. Widening the identified networks is not considered to be a choice that lends itself to meaningful SA/SEA.

The SA process has been utilised to provide a broad commentary on the policy amendments and make further recommendations for enhancement where appropriate.

Suggested changes by Lancaster City Council	SA topics likely to be affected	Delivery / potential conflicts	City Council Comments
Recreation areas must consider the potential for multifunctional use that incorporates blue and green infrastructure.	Health and wellbeing ? Natural resources +ve? Biodiversity +ve? Climate change adaptation +ve?	Could take some strength away from the recreational focus of the policy. Achieving suitable	As the plan is to be read as a whole it is considered that it would be more appropriate to cross reference the requirement to be in accordance with policy DM43 (which sets out the key principles for delivering

Suggested changes by Lancaster City Council	SA topics likely to be affected	Delivery potential conflicts	City Council Comments
		multifunctional uses will be critical.	green and blue infrastructure) rather than repeating the need for spaces to provide additional green and blue infrastructure uses, including climate change adaptation and/or mitigation measures.
Consideration of the climate change mitigation and adaptation 'services' that community facilities and land provide will need to be taken.	Climate change adaptation <i>+ve?</i>	Raises awareness of the need to address climate change, without adding onerous requirements upon proposals.	Comments noted

HRA Screening

Policy	Policy Title and Description	Implications on Climate Change	Suggested Changes by Lancaster City Council	Screening Outcome	City Council Comments
Policy SC5	Recreation Opportunity Areas This policy seeks to identify a range of recreational opportunity areas across the district whose delivery should be promoted through the life of the plan.	The enhancement and expansion of recreational areas within the district is important in addressing Climate Change. Therefore consideration should be given to whether this policy area can be expanded in its scope.	Recreation areas must consider the potential for multifunctional use that incorporates blue and green infrastructure	No Likely Significant Effect. Screened out. This policy is designed to protect, enhance and expand the natural environment and recreation space within the district. The implementation of the suggested change to this policy is considered to have no adverse impacts and potentially some	Comments noted.

Policy	Policy Title and Description	Implications on Climate Change	Suggested Changes by Lancaster City Council	Screening Outcome	City Council Comments
				beneficial effects on the European sites.	

Open Spaces, Sports and Recreational Facilities

POLICY DM27: OPEN SPACE, SPORTS AND RECREATIONAL FACILITIES

Protection of Open Space, Sports and Recreational Facilities

The Local Plan Policies Map identifies a range of designated open spaces, sports and recreational facilities within the district which have been provided for their important value. Proposals that seek to protect and enhance existing designated open spaces, sports and recreational facilities shall be supported by the Council. The Council will not permit the loss of designated open space, sports and recreational facilities unless:

- I. An assessment has been undertaken to demonstrate that it is surplus to requirements;
- II. An assessment has been undertaken to demonstrate that it no longer has an economic, ~~environmental~~ or community value, which shall include consultation with key stakeholders and the local community;
- III. An assessment of the environmental and climate mitigation and adaptation value has taken place;
- IV. The loss resulting from development would be replaced by equivalent or better, high quality provision in a suitable location;
- V. The development is for alternative open space, sports and recreation provision, the benefits of which clear outweigh the loss.

Development proposals that are adjacent to designated open spaces, sports and recreational facilities will be required to incorporate design measures that ensure that there are no negative impacts on amenity, landscape value, ecological value and functionality of the space. The Council will only permit development that has identified negative impacts on open space, sports and recreational facilities where appropriate mitigation measures or compensation measures have been provided.

The Council will protect amenity spaces, particularly in the main urban settlements of Lancaster, Morecambe, Heysham and Carnforth that are not specifically designated as open space but have an economic, environmental or social value to the community they serve. Development of such sites will not be encouraged unless appropriate re-provision is provided or it is clearly demonstrated to the satisfaction of the Council that the land in question does not provide any social, economic, environmental or climate mitigation/adaptation ~~social~~ value.

The Creation of New Open Space, Sports and Recreational Facilities

Development proposals located in areas of recognised open space, sports and recreational facility deficiency will be required to provide appropriate contributions toward open space, sports and recreational facility provision, either through provision on-site or a financial contribution toward the creation of new or the enhancement of existing open spaces, sports and recreational facilities off-site. Development proposals should give due consideration to the standards and thresholds set out in Appendix D of this DPD in relation to open space requirements or, where appropriate, site specific policies contained within the Strategic Policies & Land Allocations DPD.

Any provision made for open space, sports or recreational facilities should be fully accessible to the public without any restrictions, and will be provided in addition to any private amenity space or landscaping. Proposals should not have an adverse impact on surrounding residential amenity in terms of light and noise disturbance, with any potential impacts being appropriately mitigated against. **The design should also be in accordance with the requirements set out in DM43.** The management and maintenance of open space, sports or recreational facilities should address the requirements of Appendix D of this DPD **and be set out in a Management Plan.**

- 7.1 The provision of open spaces, sports and recreational facilities, for the benefit of local amenity and as a source of recreation and activity, is vitally important to aid the well-being of local residents and create a positive sense of place. **This fostered sense of community and increased local engagement is important for climate resilience in the face of extreme weather events.** Open spaces, sports and recreational facilities are additionally important infrastructure for mitigating and adapting to climate change. Among other climate benefits, they act as rainwater reservoirs during extreme weather events, provide shade and evaporative cooling, and act as areas for carbon sequestration. Additionally, they can support habitat connections and contribute to increasing biodiversity. The climate change mitigation/adaptation value of green and blue infrastructure can be assessed utilising the GBI toolkit, developed as part of the Green and Blue Infrastructure Strategy, which can also help with the design of green and blue infrastructure to help deliver multifunctional spaces.
- 7.2 It is therefore important to ensure that the design of open spaces, sports and recreation provision is in accordance with policy DM43 (Green and Blue Infrastructure). The multifunctional uses and subsequent benefits that open spaces can provide was highlighted through the Council's Green and Blue Infrastructure Strategy, and so at the design stage consideration must be given to the additional benefits and uses that could be delivered within the space, particularly in relation to climate change mitigation and/or adaptation. Consideration should also be given to how the new open space relates to the existing wider green and blue infrastructure network

and designed accordingly to reap the most benefits in terms of the enhancement and extension of the existing network.

- 7.3 The Council have prepared and published a new Open Space Assessment for the district (prepared by KKP consultants and published in 2018) and a Playing Pitch and Outdoor Sports Strategy (also published by KKP consultants and published in 2018). These provide an up-to-date position on open space and recreational matters which will be relevant in the determination of future planning applications.
- 7.4 At this point in time it remains the position that a deficiency applies across most of the urban areas of the district. Therefore the Council's approach will be to resist development that would result in the loss of open space, sports and recreational facility provision, in particular spaces that have an environmental, [climate change mitigation/adaptation](#) or community value. The Council believe this to be a vital piece of evidence in understanding the current demands and future needs for a range of open space types. The Council expects development proposals to seek to address deficiencies in open spaces where necessary and appropriate to do so, making use of the most up-to-date Council evidence on public open space and playing pitch provision.
- 7.5 Not all open space is important for recreational, environmental and community uses, nor does it necessarily contribute to the visual amenity of the locality. Existing open spaces may also offer the opportunity to contribute to necessary development, improvements to the urban environment or enhancements to existing open spaces. Therefore, where exceptional circumstances are demonstrated, consideration will be given to proposals that involve the loss of identified open spaces. However, in determining whether open space should be released for development, community involvement will be central to the decision making process. This must be undertaken by the developer / applicant in advance of the submission of the planning application.
- 7.6 The Council will seek to retain all open space, sports and recreational facilities where they are concluded to have a value, either to the local community that they serve or for other environmental values, [including climate change mitigation and adaptation value](#). Community ownership of open spaces, sports and recreational facilities will be encouraged by the Council. The management and improvement of such assets should be championed through the local

communities in which they serve and are of value to. The Council will seek to work in partnership with the local community to assist with the ongoing maintenance of open space, sports and recreational facilities.

- 7.7 Proposals will be expected to have due regard to the inclusion of open spaces, sports and recreational facilities within the development that is appropriate in scale and nature to what is being proposed. Proposals should be considered against the requirements for on-site provisions and off-site financial contributions that are set out in Appendix D of this DPD. The requirements set out in Appendix D are based on national standards and will be used as a basis for negotiations between the local planning authority and applicants. Consideration should also be given to the content of the Council's Planning Advisory Note (PAN) on this matter, or successor documents.
- 7.8 In considering the issue of viability, development proposals should consider whether it is appropriate to provide either on-site provision or financial contributions to the enhancements and improvements of existing nearby facilities. This is set out in more detail via the Council's Planning Advisory Note on this matter. Dialogue is recommended between applicants and the Council to inform the understanding over open space requirements in the local area. Issues of viability will be given due consideration within the negotiation process.
- 7.9 Whilst commercial development is unlikely to give rise to the need for open space provision, landscaping will form a key element of any proposal, [and consideration must also be given to the additional green and blue infrastructure uses and benefits that could be provided.](#)
- 7.10 Development that forms part of a strategic land allocation, as identified in the Strategic Policies & Land Allocations DPD should take direction from the specific policies relating to the site (and Masterplan / Development Brief where applicable) in relation to open space, sports and recreational facility requirements.

Policy DM27 Alternative Approach considered for the policy

This policy and supporting text remain largely unchanged in light of the climate change review of the Local Plan as the policy specifically relates to the provision of open space in accordance with the evidence produced by KKP. The position remains that designated open spaces should be protected,

recognising that they are of economic, social and environmental value. However, as demonstrated through the Council's Green and Blue Infrastructure Strategy, such spaces can also provide climate mitigation and adaptation value, and so this has been added into the policy. Reference has also been added to highlight that open spaces don't just provide recreational value, as green infrastructure assets they can provide multiple functions and subsequent benefits, and so it has been requested through the policy and supporting text that this is considered at the design stage. For example when designing the layout of a development proposal, consideration should be given to where the open space would be best located in relation to the other uses it could provide and how it sits within the existing green and blue infrastructure network. The policy position with regards to the design of GBI is set out in policy DM43 and so this policy has been cross-referenced to avoid the need for repetition.

Alternative policy approaches considered for DM27 were:

- **Do nothing:** This policy relates to the protection and creation of open space and recreational facilities and so it could be left as it is. However, in doing so, this would not highlight the benefits and values such spaces can provide in terms of climate change mitigation and/or adaptation.
- **Set out specific design guidance:** Consideration was given to the possibility of setting out design guidance but given each site and situation is different this would be quite difficult. Also, not sure this policy would be the most appropriate place, instead it was decided that cross-reference to DM43 (Green and Blue Infrastructure) would be the best approach and would avoid unnecessary repetition. Likely that the Green and Blue Infrastructure Strategy or subsequent documentation would be a more appropriate location for further design guidance, or a PAN?

How does this policy ensure better outcomes in relation to Climate Change?

Very few changes have been made to this policy from a climate change perspective due to its specific focus upon the provision of open space, sports and recreational facilities. However, it is important to highlight in the section that discusses the loss of open spaces, that such spaces can provide climate change mitigation and adaptation value. This has not previously been acknowledged, but even if a space doesn't provide economic, community or even environmental; value, it could have the potential to provide climate change and adaptation value, and so this must be assessed to ensure better outcomes are achieved through this Local Plan Review for climate change.

The policy now also states that when designing an open space, consideration should not just be given purely to its recreational value, but other functions and values that could be provided by that space, in particular those that would aid mitigation and adaptation to climate change.

SA/SEA/HRA considerations (completed by consultants AECOM):

Alternatives in the context of SA/SEA need to be strategic in nature, meaningful and deliverable. Procedural choices such as ‘doing nothing’ would not lead to significantly different outcomes in terms of sustainability. Widening the identified networks is not considered to be a choice that lends itself to meaningful SA/SEA.

The SA process has been utilised to provide a broad commentary on the policy amendments and make further recommendations for enhancement where appropriate.

Suggested changes by Lancaster City Council	SA topics likely to be affected	Delivery / potential conflicts	City Council Comments
Recreation areas must consider the potential for multifunctional use that incorporates blue and green infrastructure.	<p><i>Health and wellbeing ?</i></p> <p><i>Natural resources +ve?</i></p> <p><i>Biodiversity +ve?</i></p> <p><i>Climate change adaptation +ve?</i></p>	<p>Could take some strength away from the recreational focus of the policy.</p> <p>Achieving suitable multifunctional uses will be critical.</p>	<p>As the plan is to be read as a whole it is considered that it would be more appropriate to cross reference the requirement to be in accordance with policy DM43 (which sets out the key principles for delivering green and blue infrastructure) rather than repeating the need for spaces to provide additional green and blue infrastructure uses, including climate change adaptation and/or mitigation measures.</p>
Consideration of the climate change mitigation and adaptation ‘services’ that community facilities and	<p><i>Climate change adaptation +ve?</i></p>	<p>Raises awareness of the need to address climate change, without adding onerous requirements</p>	<p>Comments noted</p>

Suggested changes by Lancaster City Council	SA topics likely to be affected	Delivery / potential conflicts	City Council Comments
land provide will need to be taken.		upon proposals.	

HRA Screening

Policy	Policy Title and Description	Implications on Climate Change	Suggested Changes by Lancaster City Council	Screening Outcome	City Council Comments
Policy DM27	<p>Open Space, Sports and Recreational Facilities</p> <p>The policy sets out the presumption towards the protection of public open spaces. The policy also links to the need for new open spaces within new residential development and the enhancement of existing spaces.</p>	<p>The scope of the Local Plan Review could look at how Green Infrastructure (including the POS network) could be enhanced further. To achieve greater levels of GI delivery to scope of the policy could be tweaked.</p>	<p>Recreation areas must consider the potential for multifunctional use that incorporates blue and green infrastructure .</p> <p>Consideration of the climate change mitigation and adaptation ‘services’ that community facilities and land provide will need to be taken.</p>	<p>No Likely Significant Effect. Screened out. This policy protects current open space and recreational facilities from development. It also sees an opportunity to extend green infrastructure through the provision of additional multi-functional areas.</p> <p>Provided the wording in the original policy is retained: ‘Development proposals which are within the vicinity of designated open spaces will be</p>	<p>Comments noted.</p>

Policy	Policy Title and Description	Implications on Climate Change	Suggested Changes by Lancaster City Council	Screening Outcome	City Council Comments
				required to incorporate design measures that ensure that there are no negative impacts on amenity, ecological value and functionality of the space.', the implementation of the suggested changes to this policy is considered to have no adverse impacts and potentially some beneficial effects on the European sites.	

Trees and Woodland

POLICY DM45: PROTECTION OF TREES, HEDGEROWS AND WOODLAND

Protection of Trees, Hedgerows and Woodland

The Council will support the protection of trees and hedgerows that positively contribute, either as individual specimens or as part of a wider group, to the visual amenity, landscape character and/or environmental **and climate mitigation and adaptation** value of the location.

The Council will also protect ancient, **veteran** trees and ancient woodland, supporting opportunities which increase the resilience of all woodlands, **trees and hedgerows** to climate change, pests and diseases.

New development should positively incorporate existing trees and hedgerows. Where this cannot be achieved the onus is on the applicant to justify the loss of trees and hedgerows as part of their Arboricultural ~~Implications~~ Impact Assessment (AIA – further guidance as to the content of such an assessment is provided within the Council’s Planning Applications Validation Guide). Where the loss is adequately justified the Council will seek replacement tree planting at the ratios adopted in the Council’s Tree Policy (2010), or successor documents.

~~Encouraging~~ Providing Tree and Hedgerow Cover

The Council will expect ~~appropriate opportunities to encourage~~ the planting of new trees, hedgerows and woodland ~~to take place, where appropriate,~~ making use of indigenous species, throughout the district in an effort to mitigate against the impacts of Climate Change, ~~and to enhance the character and appearance of the district,~~ and to positively contribute towards the landscaping of the site and enhancement of the local character.

11.16 The district has many fine examples of important and significant trees, which may be defined as trees that are ancient, of veteran status, of historic importance or rare. Trees are also a wildlife resource and are notable for their contribution to the landscape character and visual amenity of an area. The Council will actively seek to protect these significant trees from development that would involve their loss or harm. The protection of significant trees has many benefits economically, socially and environmentally including their contribution to the reduction in atmospheric carbon dioxide levels and mitigation of climate change.

11.17 The majority of trees within the district are not protected by Tree Preservation Orders (TPOs) or located within designated Conservation Areas. However, this does not mean that non-designated trees are not considered to be significant and worthy of protection from loss or harm.

11.18 Development proposals should incorporate existing and notable features, such as significant trees within their proposals. The retention of existing trees can assist in providing context and character to a development and ensure that the proposals respect the character and value of the surrounding landscape and townscape. The Council will resist the loss of trees within development proposals, particularly where it can be demonstrated that appropriate alternative design solutions exist that can allow for retention and incorporation of such features into the overall design of a new development.

11.19 The Council will support the retention of existing trees within development proposals. However, where it is adequately demonstrated that retention is not possible or feasible to achieve, and the loss does not involve trees that are of significant value, then consideration will be given to whether suitable mitigation measures would compensate for the losses sustained. In making this assessment, the Council will have regard to the provision of its Tree Policy², adopted in 2010, and the replanting ratios contained therein.

11.20 Any development proposals that have implications for existing trees must be accompanied by an Arboricultural ~~Implications~~ Impact Assessment, which should set out the potential impacts and implications for existing trees that may arise from a development proposal. The assessment must also include measures to protect trees and provide appropriate mitigation measures.

11.21 Although a felling licence is not required from the Forestry Commission if full planning permission is granted, the Forestry Commission remain a non-statutory consultee on development that either directly affects or is within 500 metres of ancient woodland. Consent from the Forestry Commission may also be required under the Environmental Impact Assessment (Forestry) Regulations if the proposed development involves afforestation, deforestation, forest roads or forestry queries.

Hedgerows

11.22 Hedgerows contribute significantly to the natural environment and landscape character of an area and can provide important habitats for a range of species, provide shelter, and help reduce noise and atmospheric pollution. They add to the character and quality of the local environment and can have significant historic value. As with the protection of trees, these assets should be retained, **protected and enhanced**, through proposals incorporated into development schemes. Where possible, opportunities should also be sought to extend these valuable ecological networks by increasing and enhancing hedgerow cover.

Increasing Tree Coverage

11.23 Tree cover across the district was estimated to be approximately 6.9% in March 2010 (Woodland Trust) compared to 9.9% for England. Through the course of this plan period the Council will

² <https://www.lancaster.gov.uk/planning/trees/tree-policy>

seek to increase the level of tree cover across the district in an effort to mitigate and adapt to the impacts of climate change through initiatives such as the Council's One Million Trees ambition. The Council is also preparing a District wide Tree Strategy, which will look to identify opportunities for tree planting.

11.24 Whilst it is recognised that large portions of the district include upland areas the level of tree cover in the district is still significantly less than the national average. The Council will therefore explore opportunities for growth in the level of tree cover where appropriate locations exist. There will be many opportunities to achieve this. The increased provision of trees in new development, through suitable and appropriately designed landscaping schemes, is a key component of delivering growth in tree cover.

11.25 Development proposals will be encouraged and supported to incorporate trees, which should be at an appropriate scale, and be the right tree in the right place, using the correct choice of tree species in relation to the site characteristics ~~be indigenous species and of local provenance.~~ The inclusion of fresh tree planting will be considered in relation to the impact it will have on the surrounding character and landscape. ~~This guidance is in addition to the operation of an existing Tree Sponsorship Scheme.~~

Policy DM45 Alternative Approach considered for the policy

This policy and supporting text has remained largely unchanged in content and direction with regards to the protection of trees, hedgerows and woodland. Minor tweaks have been made for clarity and consistency. With regards to new tree and hedgerows cover, reference is already made to the role of these assets in the effort to mitigate against the impact of climate change. In the section at the start of the policy which refers to protecting existing trees, hedgerows and woodland, wording has been added to highlight the climate change mitigation/adaptation value these features can provide, as another reason to prevent their loss or damage.

Alternative policy approaches considered for DM45 were:

- Do nothing: Whilst if the policy was not changed at all it would not significantly differ to the proposed changes set out above, it would not highlight the important climate change adaptation/mitigation value that trees can provide, and our District's existing tree stock are

valuable carbon sinks, more so than new trees so it is important that they are protected for this reason. Other minor changes were made to improve the legibility of the policy, so do not affect the content or direction of the policy.

How does this policy ensure better outcomes in relation to Climate Change?

Only minor changes have been made to this policy as the role of trees as mitigation against the impacts of climate change is already mentioned. Alterations were made to emphasise the value that trees, hedgerows and woodland can provide in terms of climate change mitigation and adaptation as a reason to justify the protection of the existing stock. Also, the policy currently only refers to opportunities that increase the resilience of woodlands to climate change, but it is important to consider the role of trees and hedgerows too, particularly within the context of smaller development proposals and how they can be used to mitigate and/or adapt to climate change.

SA/SEA/HRA considerations (completed by consultants AECOM):

Alternatives in the context of SA/SEA need to be strategic in nature, meaningful and deliverable. Procedural choices such as ‘doing nothing’ would not lead to significantly different outcomes in terms of sustainability. Widening the identified networks is not considered to be a choice that lends itself to meaningful SA/SEA.

The SA process has been utilised to provide a broad commentary on the policy amendments and make further recommendations for enhancement where appropriate.

Suggested changes by Lancaster City Council	SA topics likely to be affected	Delivery / potential conflicts	City Council Comments
Widens the description of the functions that trees and woodland have in relation to climate change.	<i>Lowering carbon emissions +ve Climate change adaptation +ve</i>	No issues likely	Comments noted
Strengthens wording in relation to opportunities for the planting of trees, woodland and hedgerows.	<i>Biodiversity +ve Lowering carbon emissions +ve Climate change adaptation +ve</i>	No issues likely as policy provides flexibility (i.e. where appropriate)	Comments noted

Policy	Policy Title and Description	Implications on Climate Change	Suggested Changes by Lancaster City Council	Screening Outcome	City Council Comments
Policy DM45	<p>Policy DM45 Protection of Trees, Hedgerows and Woodland</p> <p>The policy sets out an approach which supports the protection and retention of valuable trees, hedges and woodland</p>	<p>The policy remains largely unchanged however wording has been added to highlight the climate change mitigation/adaptation value these features can provide.</p>	<p>Widens the description of the functions that trees and woodland have in relation to climate change.</p> <p>Strengthens wording in relation to opportunities for the planting of trees, woodland and hedgerows.</p>	<p>No Likely Significant Effect. Screened out. This policy is designed to protect and enhance the natural environment. The implementation of the suggested changes to this policy is considered to have no adverse impacts and potentially some beneficial effects on the European sites.</p>	<p>Comments noted.</p>