



Lancaster City Council

Bailrigg Garden Village Area Action Plan

Landscape and Visual Appraisal of the Landscape Masterplan Framework

September 2021
Prepared by LUC

**LANCASTER
CITY COUNCIL**

Promoting City, Coast & Countryside



Document control

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2.0	September 2021	Final draft	S Crewe R Hammonds	P Macrae
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Project

Bailrigg Garden Village Area Action Plan

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LANCASTER
CITY COUNCIL

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Contents

Chapter 1 Introduction

Chapter 2 Landscape and Visual Appraisal of the Landscape Masterplan Framework

Chapter 3 Challenges to Implementing the Ambitions of the Masterplan

Chapter 4 Recommended Mechanisms for Delivery of the Landscape Masterplan Framework

Chapter 5 Requirement for Further Work

References



Chapter 1

Introduction

Chapter 1 Introduction

Following issue of JTP's Landscape Masterplan Framework in Summer 2021, LUC has undertaken an appraisal of the emerging design deliverables. This work stage will ensure that the emerging South Lancaster Area Action Plan (AAP) reflects the sensitivity assessment findings from LUC's earlier work to inform the spatial planning of the site.

This report systematically assesses the Landscape Masterplan Framework, with the aim to ensure the emerging design parameters and landscape considerations are reflected in the Lancaster South AAP Development Plan Document (DPD).

In addition, the report summarises the challenges of implementing the ambitions of the Landscape Masterplan Framework and provides recommendations for embedding landscape proposals / Green and Blue Infrastructure (GBI) into the formal stages of the Lancaster South AAP DPD. This document builds on the key growth principles set out in Policy SG1 of the Lancaster District Local Plan (Strategic Policies and Land Allocations DPD)¹. Requirements for further work are also outlined in order to ensure sufficient evidential basis to secure design aspirations.

Background

In March 2021, LUC prepared an update of the landscape evidence base to support the development of the emerging Lancaster South AAP DPD. The study aimed to understand and demonstrate how development in the area could be secured in a sensitive manner, identifying opportunities that would enable growth whilst retaining the sense of place that resides in the existing landscape. The report provided an assessment of the sensitivity of the landscape to both residential and commercial development, together with recommendations to inform the masterplanning and development planning process.

Working on behalf of Lancaster City Council (LCC), JTP has led the two-staged masterplanning process to develop a community, landscape and place-making-led Landscape Masterplan Framework for Bailrigg Garden Village (BGV). The design process included a series of workshops focusing on existing context, constraints and opportunities to help shape and articulate a vision for the development. The Lancaster South AAP DPD will seek to include the detailed masterplan for BGV as well as a design code for future development.

Report structure

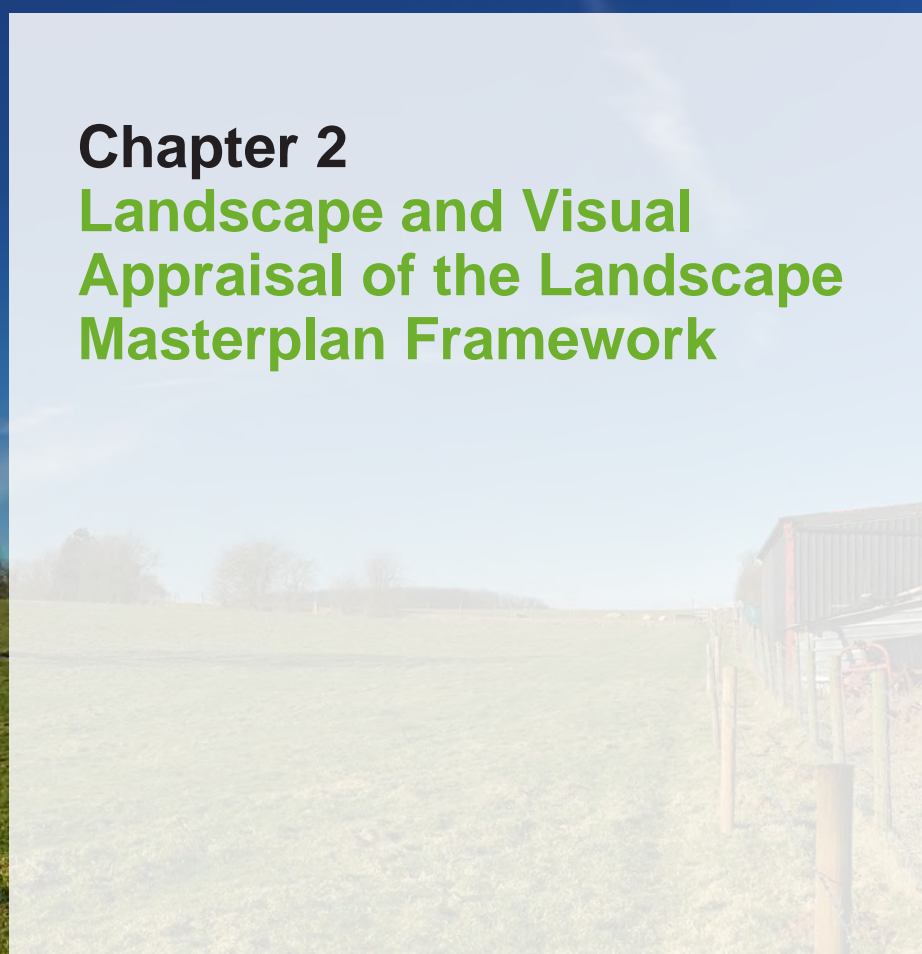
The remainder of this report is structured as follows:

- **Chapter 2:** provides a landscape and visual appraisal of the Landscape Masterplan Framework;
- **Chapter 3:** outlines the challenges to implementing the ambitions of the Landscape Masterplan Framework;
- **Chapter 4:** presents recommendations for implementing landscape proposals and GBI enhancements; and
- **Chapter 5:** sets out the potential requirement for further work to ensure sufficient evidential basis to secure landscape aspirations.

A landscape photograph showing a vast green field under a clear blue sky with a few wispy clouds. A single, large, leafless tree stands prominently in the middle ground. In the background, there is a line of trees and a fence. The foreground shows a grassy slope with some fallen leaves.

Chapter 2

Landscape and Visual Appraisal of the Landscape Masterplan Framework



Chapter 2

Landscape and Visual Appraisal of the Landscape Masterplan Framework

LUC has undertaken a systematic appraisal of the Landscape Masterplan Framework, testing the individual landscape parcels against the suggested design principles identified as part of the earlier sensitivity assessment. The results of the analysis are provided in the following tables.



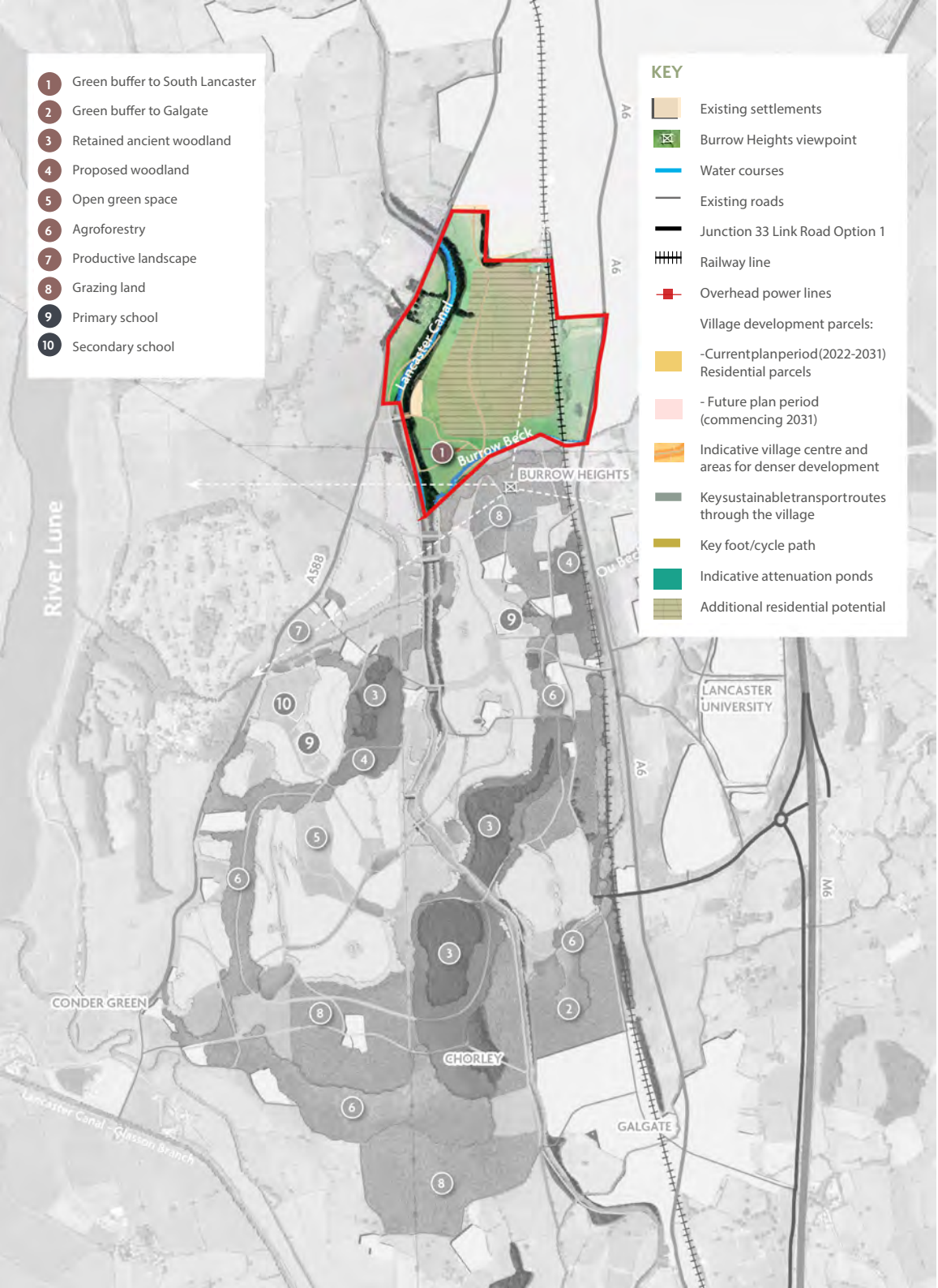
- 1 Green buffer to South Lancaster
- 2 Green buffer to Galgate
- 3 Retained ancient woodland
- 4 Proposed woodland
- 5 Open green space
- 6 Agroforestry
- 7 Productive landscape
- 8 Grazing land
- 9 Primary school
- 10 Secondary school

KEY

- Existing settlements
- Burrow Heights viewpoint
- Water courses
- Existing roads
- Junction 33 Link Road Option 1
- Railway line
- Overhead power lines

Village development parcels:

- Current plan period (2022-2031) Residential parcels
- Future plan period (commencing 2031)
- Indicative village centre and areas for denser development
- Key sustainable transport routes through the village
- Key foot/cycle path
- Indicative attenuation ponds
- Additional residential potential



**Bailrigg Garden Village Area Action Plan
for Lancaster City Council**

September 2021

Landscape Parcel 1: Scotforth South Western Fringe

Landscape Sensitivity to residential development	L-M	Landscape Sensitivity to commercial development	M
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Proposed land use as defined within the Landscape Masterplan Framework:

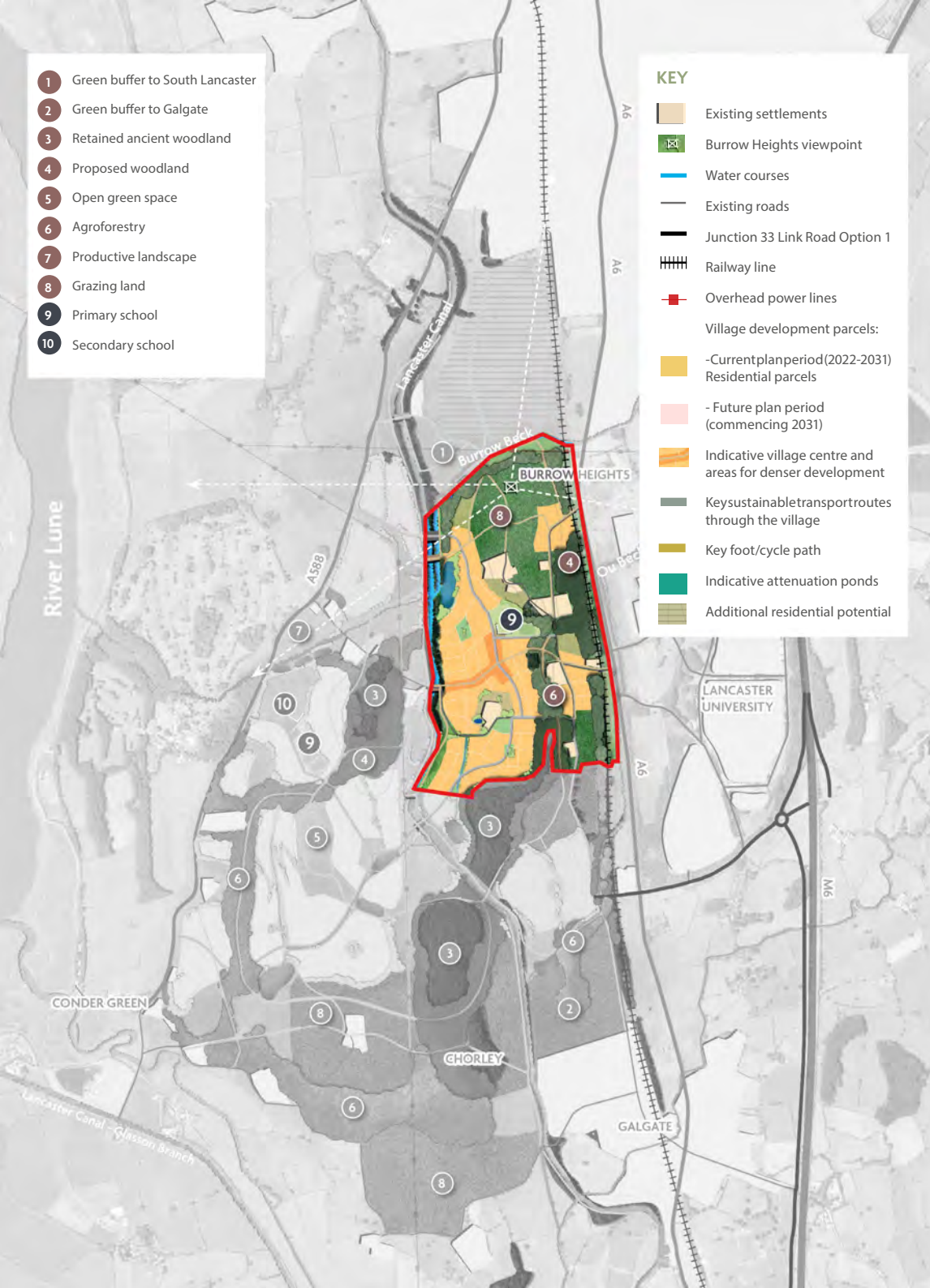
- Proposed area of additional residential potential stretching from land lying immediately north of Burrow Beck towards the existing settlement fringe of Scotforth;
- Retention of existing vegetation bordering the route of the Lancaster Canal;
- Land located between Burrow Beck and Lancaster Canal described as 'green buffer to South Lancaster'; and
- Preservation of panoramic views looking north from the summit of Burrow Heights.

Appraisal of the Landscape Masterplan Framework:

- Proposed residential development is positioned on the summit of the drumlin landform, promoting greater intervisibility with the wider landscape. The siting of built form on the topographical high point of this landform would potentially disrupt the vista looking north from Burrow Heights.

Opportunities for further design development:

- Ensure that proposed residential land use responds to the drumlin topography. Ensure that proposed built form does not disrupt the vista from Burrow Heights (located within Landscape Parcel 2);
- Soften and redefine the stark settlement edge at Scotforth and secure a scale and form of residential development which reflects the adjoining residential area. Proposed development should be carefully stitched in to the existing irregular settlement edge to ensure integration of character and avoid the creation of a physically separate place.
- Explore the opportunity to extend the pattern of ribbon development along the A6 Scotforth Road and promote east-west linkages to enhance access across the West Coast Main Line;
- Explore the opportunity to provide linkages and corridors of connectivity from Lancaster Canal to the area of proposed residential development.



- 1 Green buffer to South Lancaster
- 2 Green buffer to Galgate
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- Existing settlements
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Village development parcels:

- Current plan period (2022-2031) Residential parcels
- Future plan period (commencing 2031)
- Indicative village centre and areas for denser development
- Keysustainable transport routes through the village
- Key foot/cycle path
- Indicative attenuation ponds
- Additional residential potential

Bailrigg Garden Village Area Action Plan for Lancaster City Council

September 2021

Landscape Parcel 2: Burrow Heights Farmland

Landscape Sensitivity to residential development	M	Landscape Sensitivity to commercial development	M-H
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Proposed land use as defined within the Landscape Masterplan Framework:

- Integration of proposed village centre / denser development and a proposed primary school;
- Village development parcels bordering Burrow Road, Tarnwater Lane as well as proposed road alignments running broadly north-south. Retention of existing settlements / built form;
- Preservation of panoramic long distance views from the summit of Burrow Heights;
- Proposed tracts of woodland parallel to the route of the West Coast Main Line, including areas of agroforestry to the north of Park Coppice; and
- Proposed wetland creation / attenuation pond adjacent to the Lancaster Canal.

Appraisal of the Landscape Masterplan Framework:

- Proposed development retains the undeveloped character of Burrow Heights;
- The pattern of residential development follows garden village principles, characterised by a clustered and compact layout. The proposed development is largely located on the foothills of the existing drumlin landform, ensuring the landscape retains its role as a setting for the city of Lancaster;
- Integration of a network of sustainable transport routes, including east-west alignments.

Opportunities for further design development:

- Ensure the existing PROW connecting Whinney Croft to the alignment of Burrow Road (via Burrow Heights) is retained;
- Ensure that residential development located within Landscape Parcel 1 does not disrupt longer distance views from Burrow Heights towards townscape features in Lancaster or wider intervisibility with the Lake District. Avoid residential development that fails to respond to the pattern of existing road corridors and 'turns its back' on the street frontage;
- Explore the potential to incorporate a bridge access to extend the village centre across the corridor of Lancaster Canal. This intervention would seek to integrate the canal into the setting of the proposed built development, helping to promote sense of place; and
- Ensure sufficient consideration is given to the alignment of roads and building layouts in order to minimise earthworks and promote sustainability.

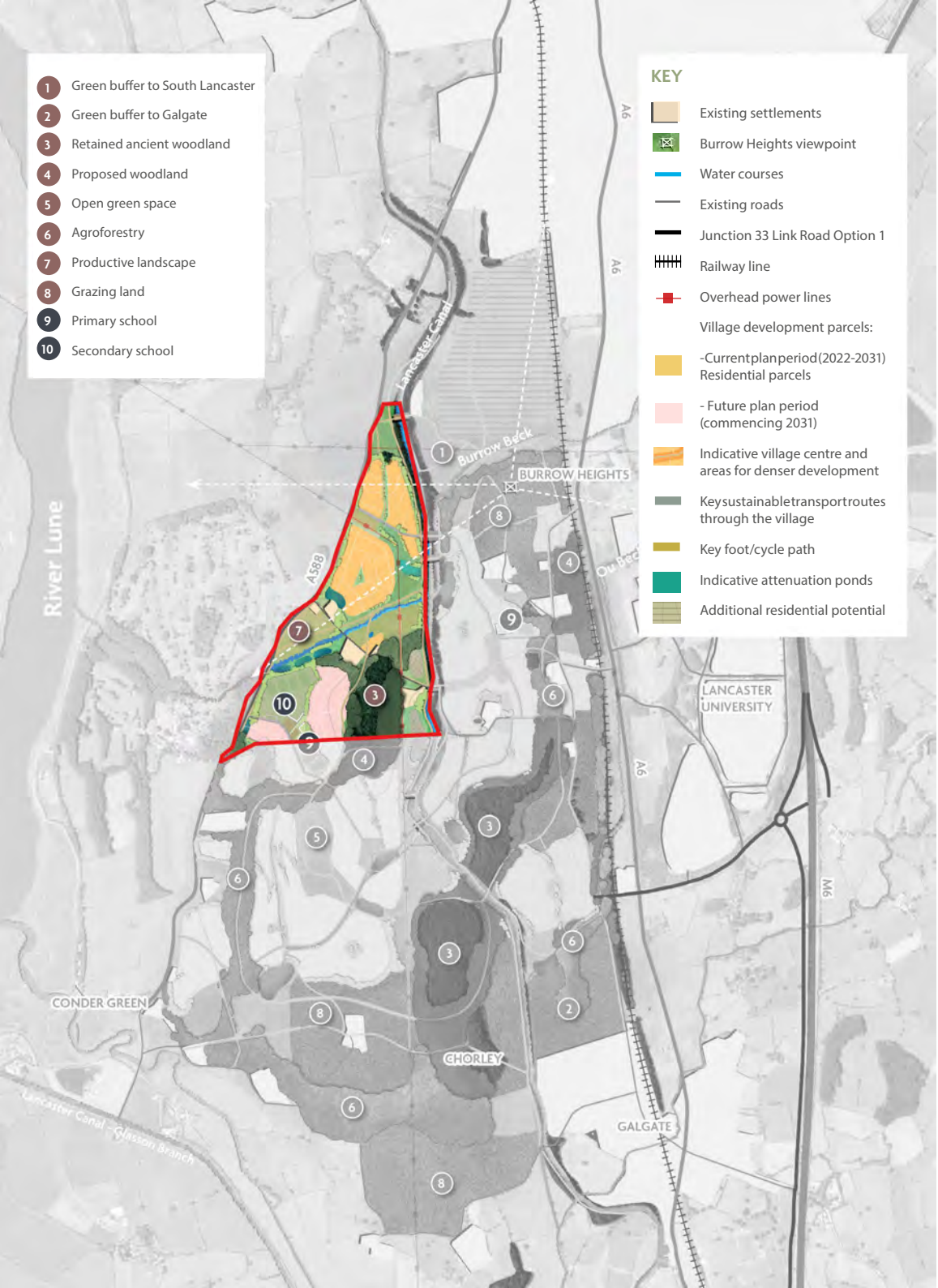
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KEY

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Village development parcels:

- Current plan period (2022-2031) Residential parcels
- Future plan period (commencing 2031)
- Indicative village centre and areas for denser development
- Keysustainabletransportroutes through the village
- Key foot/cycle path
- Indicative attenuation ponds
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**Bailrigg Garden Village Area Action Plan
for Lancaster City Council**

September 2021

Landscape Parcel 4: Tarnwater Lowland Farmlands

Landscape Sensitivity to residential development	M	Landscape Sensitivity to commercial development	M
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Proposed land use as defined within the Landscape Masterplan Framework:

- Proposed village development parcels on land to the north of Tarnwater Lane;
- Retention of existing settlements and built form bordering Tarnwater Lane;
- Proposed residential parcels included within the current period of the Local Plan (2022-2031) at the landscape parcel's southern limit;
- Integration of a proposed secondary school at land to the west of Crane Wood;
- Proposed area of productive landscape at Lane End; and
- Proposed supplementation and enhancement of Crane Wood.

Appraisal of the Landscape Masterplan Framework:

- Proposed residential development avoids the summits of drumlins and hillsides. The retention of vegetation bordering the Lancaster Canal provides visual enclosure and landscape integration; and
- The proposed pattern of woodland enhancement and supplementation at Crane Wood positively reflects the elongated drumlin topography.

Opportunities for further design development:

- Explore the opportunity to introduce a pattern of residential development that responds to the alignment and frontage of the A588 road corridor, including the integration of dual aspect dwellings;
- Seek opportunities to retain and enhance the network of roadside and field boundary hedgerows where possible; and
- Consider wider linkages to the canal network from areas of proposed development. The potential exists for Lancaster Canal to be used as a key linkage between existing and proposed settlement, emphasising its historic function as a communication corridor.

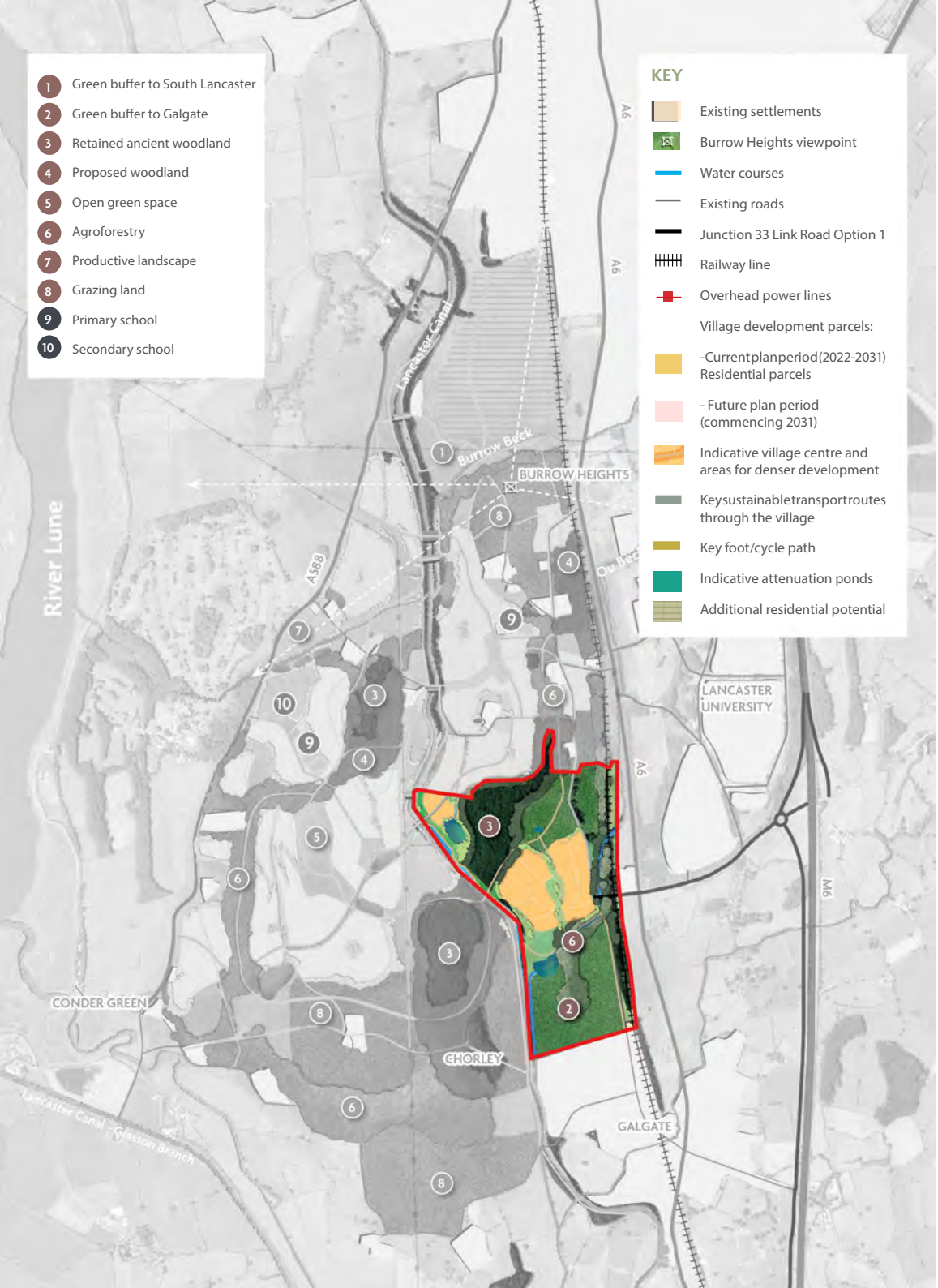
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Village development parcels:

- Current plan period (2022-2031) Residential parcels
- Future plan period (commencing 2031)
- Indicative village centre and areas for denser development
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**Bailrigg Garden Village Area Action Plan
for Lancaster City Council**

September 2021

Landscape Parcel 5: Galgate South Western Fringe

Landscape Sensitivity to residential development	L-M	Landscape Sensitivity to commercial development	M
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Proposed land use as defined within the Landscape Masterplan Framework:

- Proposed village development parcels at land lying between Highland Brow and Park Coppice;
- Retention of tract of ancient woodland at Park Coppice;
- Proposed attenuation pond and village development parcel immediately west of park Coppice, south of Ashton Park Bridge;
- Land located at the southern extent of the landscape parcel is described as 'green buffer to Galgate'; and
- Proposed belts of agroforestry within close proximity to Shearset Beck Bridge.

Appraisal of the Landscape Masterplan Framework:

- The integration of a large tract of landscape buffer provides physical and visual separation from Galgate;
- Proposed residential development avoids the summits of the two hills, including the summit of Highland Brow, to reduce intervisibility with the wider landscape; and
- The proposed form and scale of the area of agroforestry is consistent with wider woodland blocks within the landscape parcel, including at Park Coppice.

Opportunities for further design development:

- Promote patterns of visual enclosure through the proliferation of existing and proposed woodland blocks; and
- Explore the opportunity for enhanced east-west linkages across the corridor of the Lancaster Canal. Direct connections could also be created to the canal corridor from the areas of proposed residential development as a mechanism to promote active travel provision and recreational offer.

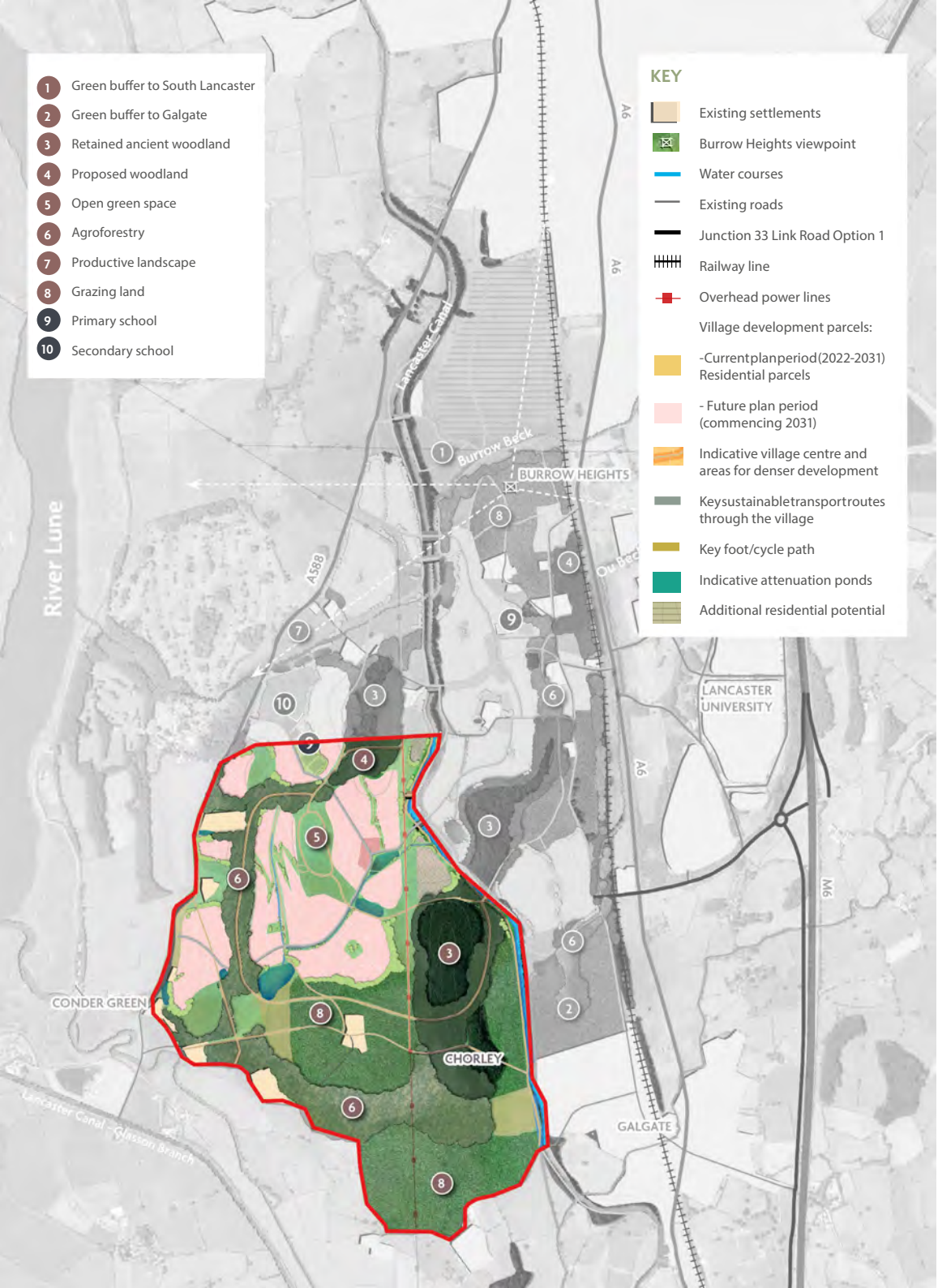
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Village development parcels:

- Current plan period (2022-2031) Residential parcels
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**Bailrigg Garden Village Area Action Plan
for Lancaster City Council**

September 2021

Landscape Parcel 6: Conder Green Drumlines

Landscape Sensitivity to residential development	M	Landscape Sensitivity to commercial development	M-H
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Proposed land use as defined within the Landscape Masterplan Framework:

- Proposed residential parcels outside the current period of the Local Plan (2022-2031), centred around a large expanse of open green space and on land bordering the A588;
- Retention of built form at existing farmsteads, including Heronswood Farm, Webster's Farm, Berry's Farm and Parkside Farm;
- Proposed supplementation and enhancement of Crane Wood;
- Retention and supplementation of ancient woodland tracts at Old Park Wood and Forerigg Wood;
- Proposed belts of agroforestry to the south and west of the landscape parcel; and
- Retention of large areas of grazing land lying at the landscape parcel's southern limit, including bordering retained built form at Parkside Farm.

Appraisal of the Landscape Masterplan Framework:

- The development proposals retain the rural qualities of the land to the south of the landscape parcel through the introduction of a mosaic of pastoral land and agroforestry;
- The proposed belt of agroforestry, orientated broadly north-south, does not reflect the pattern of existing topography; and
- The proposed area of open green space retains the distinctive undeveloped character of the drumlin landform.

Opportunities for further design development:

- Retain the pattern of historic field boundaries at the southern extent of the landscape parcel due to their inherent landscape sensitivity;
- Refine the residential development proposals in order to avoid the summits of drumlins, retaining the pattern of small woodland blocks and ponds at topographical high points; and
- Development proposals should respond positively to the drumlin topography, retaining the availability of long distance views towards the salt marshes to the west and Morecambe Bay.



Chapter 3 **Challenges to Implementing the Ambitions of the Masterplan**

Chapter 3 Challenges to Implementing the Ambitions of the Masterplan

With an aspirational vision come a number of challenges for its successful delivery. This chapter explores the potential barriers which may arise when attempting to deliver GBI and the wider ambitions of the Landscape Masterplan Framework.



Funding

Funding is often a difficult barrier to overcome as the direct financial benefits of strategic landscape proposals are not easily calculated. Furthermore, it is generally found that the people who benefit the most from GBI are not the ones providing the up-front capital.

Funding should be secured up-front for GBI. It is often the landscape element of designs which suffer with value engineering when projects go over budget. This can also have long-term implications on the level of landscape management afforded to a site and the time frames within which target habitats can be expected to mature.



Communication

Stakeholder and community engagement throughout the design process is essential in delivering community buy-in and sustained stewardship. This can be particularly important for proposals which aim to return some of the landscape back to its former 'wild' state as public perceptions can see these spaces as being unkempt. The use of signage and interpretation boards is essential to ensure communities are on board with proposals. This in itself offers a valuable opportunity to 'tell the story' of a place's heritage and to deepen our connection with nature - recognised as increasingly beneficial to our health and quality of life.



Partnership working

Partnership working can be a barrier to the successful delivery of the GBI network in both the implementation and maintenance stages. There is the potential for recipients of developer contributions for BVG to be pooled (as well as supplemented with other sources) to fund a dedicated GBI Officer within LCC. This role would hold a strategic responsibility for delivering multi-partnership approaches set out within the Landscape Masterplan Framework.



Land ownership

The successful implementation of GBI as part of the Landscape Masterplan Framework will require continual dialogue with landowners in order to deliver the overarching vision. Facilitated by JTP, a number of stakeholder charettes and community workshops have already been successfully delivered as part of the engagement process. Design development will also require a complex understanding of land options to overcome barriers in the creation of a network of multifunctional green spaces.



Stakeholder buy in

Stakeholder buy-in is an essential component of delivering successful projects of all scopes, including elected members, local people, interest groups and statutory authorities. Projects will need to encourage community ownership to ensure their ambition is realised. An added challenge for BGV is that not all the stakeholders currently exist, as residents will not move in for some time.

There can also be a lack of understanding in what GBI entails. However, a 'champion' figure at LCC, such as the proposed GBI Officer, would help to facilitate this engagement.



Long term stewardship

The long-term aspirations of the Landscape Masterplan Framework requires a strong governance structure and ecologically-led management programme, particularly in relation to productive landscapes. Some proposals will need capital funding to establish a GBI asset and revenue funding to secure its long-term management. Long-term stewardship arrangements should be discussed at the very early stages of planning a GBI intervention. Solutions are likely to draw on creative thinking regarding financing mechanisms and community ownership of assets.



Climate change

Changing pressures on the landscape caused by a variable climate and more extreme weather events could see the landscape fail to function as successfully in the future. For example, the risk of wildfires within areas of agroforestry, grassland and wild areas will increase in the future. These spatial planning considerations should therefore be incorporated into emerging design work. This also applies to the increased risk of flooding. In addition, proposals for productive land use should consider changing land practices associated with climatic fluctuations.



Long term evaluation

One of the major selling points of GBI is its ability to provide multifunctional benefits. However, if the benefits of the Landscape Masterplan Framework are not monitored and quantified by the community and stakeholders, its long-term stewardship may not be secured.

Generally, it's seen that GBI benefits are felt in the long-term, which the number of short-term benefits being limited and holding poor financial value. Therefore, it is essential that the long-term benefits are continued to be monitored. This can also ensure landscape is valued outside of environmental designations.




Social equity

As well as economic and environmental sustainability, the ambitions of the Landscape Masterplan Framework are to promote social inclusion and equity, as seen through the community-led theory of productive landscapes. Equal access to green space is often not the case across most of the UK, with people from low income or ethnic minority backgrounds experiencing poor access to high quality open space. Therefore, applying strict open space and potentially ANGSt standards across the Landscape Masterplan Framework will be a key tool for achieving this ambition.



Policy silos

GBI can deliver nature-based solutions to a number of critical issues facing society today, including public health, water management, housing, population growth, economic growth, biodiversity loss and climate change. Frequently it is seen that to address these issues, separate sectoral policies are produced which regularly lead to disintegrated development and contested visions. To achieve the social, environmental and economic ambitions of the Landscape Masterplan Framework, GBI should be seen as more than an environmental concept, but as a multifunctional strategic spatial planning tool.



Chapter 4
**Recommended Mechanisms
for Delivery of the
Landscape Masterplan
Framework**

Chapter 4

Recommended Mechanisms for Delivery of the Landscape Masterplan Framework

Best practice implementation approaches for GBI are still an evolving field. This often makes it difficult for urban planners and other professionals to develop a robust delivery plan for strategic landscape frameworks. The opportunity exists for BGV to draw on previous case studies to propose a range of successful delivery mechanisms.

To overcome the barriers set out within Chapter 2, a variety of mechanisms are required to ensure the successful delivery of the Landscape Masterplan Framework. This chapter sets out recommendations for future policy development, securing GBI on-site, funding mechanisms and future proofing of GBI assets.

Future policy development

'Mainstreaming' GBI and supporting the replacement of planning policies

GI / GBI policy assessment tools offer the potential to ensure all policies within the Local Plan review and South Lancaster AAP DPD support GBI planning and provision within the Landscape Masterplan Framework. The policy assessment toolkit available on the 'Mainstreaming GI' website developed by Natural Environment Research Council (NERC)² is well respected and sets out an assessment process based on a content analysis of Plan wording.

The tool highlights how two main principles should be used to guide the replacement of policies, including:

- **Functional coverage:** the extent to which GBI is covered across all over chapters, including the introduction and vision for the Plan; and
- **Strength of policy wording:** the phrasing used to articulate the treatment of GBI.

The tool kit also provides a set of 'exemplar GI policies' which can guide the development of those proposed for LCC. The tool has also been used effectively to inform a number of planning documents, specifically GBI strategies and Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs).



Claypits, Glasgow a city which scored highly in the Mainstreaming GI toolkit



Mainstreaming Green Infrastructure Toolkit

The 'Mainstreaming GI' toolkit, developed by Natural Environment Research Council (NERC), provides a checklist³ which policies can be assessed against to ensure that GI /GBI is embedded. This includes:

- **Providing support for GBI investment**
 - The value of GBI is explicitly recognised and justified within the Plan's vision, principles or objectives.
- **Policy integration**
 - GBI benefits are explicitly stated within economic, social, health and climate change policies
 - The extent to which GBI policy is mainstreamed outside the environmental policies.

The tool kit provides a strong emphasis on more explicit recognition of the value of 'place-making' as a unifying concept for GBI. The team which developed the tool recommend that scoring is undertaken independently by two assessors and then compared.



RECOMMENDATION: A dedicated policy should sit alongside the Local Plan structure which facilitates the 'mainstreaming' of GI / GBI using references which are weaved through other policy areas. This will allow the concept of GBI to move outside of any policy 'silos' and be incorporated within other agendas including health, economy, growth and social issues.

CASE STUDY: Enfield London Borough Council

The Enfield Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) 'Nature for People: A Biodiversity Action Plan for Enfield'⁴ was adopted in 2011 with the aim to ensure the conservation of biodiversity, promote recognition of the value of biodiversity and to promote equitable access to nature.

The 2020 BAP Review document (during the interim period prior to Local Nature Recovery Strategies coming into place) provides recommendations to ensure the objectives of the BAP remain current in achieving a thriving biodiversity that is accessible to the local community and that supports the delivery of current London-wide commitments.

A key recommendation within the document includes the need to consolidate knowledge of current delivery of biodiversity actions, which is currently shared across several council departments. The report concludes that a clear definition of the role to oversee future action on biodiversity and nature recovery is required to promote biodiversity and support the delivery of a cross-boundary nature recovery strategy.

A suite of 'exemplar' GI policies derived from the highest scoring policies identified in the *Green Infrastructure Policies in Central Scotland Green Network: A Review of Local Authority Policies on Green Infrastructure in Built Development*

Ensure GBI is fully embedded within the Lancaster South AAP DPD

Planning policy should play a critical role in the delivery of GBI both across BGV and the wider Lancaster District by setting clear expectations for it as part of the Local Plan review and Lancaster South AAP DPD. This will set the precedent for what is expected of developers, consultants and communities when it comes to the planning, design and management of green and blue assets. LCC has a duty to act on climate change, generate employment, maintain healthy functioning ecosystems, maximise physical and mental well-being, and

heritage assets. However, it can often be difficult to deliver policy expectations due to competing policy priorities.

RECOMMENDATION: It is essential that LCC's ambitions for the Landscape Masterplan Framework are embedded within the Local Plan review and Lancaster South AAP DPD, rather than being dealt with through an isolated policy alone. Planning policy should aim to move outside its usual environmental remit and engage with other policy sectors using holistic policy hooks such as placemaking, placekeeping, and the climate emergency.

Green Infrastructure Primary Policy	
Green infrastructure is integral to place-making underpinned by the qualities of successful places, and therefore must be part of the design process from the outset, providing water management, access networks, habitat enhancements and open space functions.	
To achieve this developers should: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> discuss what green infrastructure is appropriate for the site at pre-application meetings with the planning authority and relevant stakeholders; appraise the site context for green infrastructure functions, undertake habitat and hydrological assessments of the site as requested through pre-application discussions, and demonstrate how these have influenced their design; and, take opportunities to achieve multi-functionality by bringing green infrastructure functions together. 	
Green Infrastructure Functions	
Water Management	Access Networks
Development proposals should integrate naturalised SuDS features into the design of green infrastructure, and where they are part of open space obligations should be safe and accessible creating an attractive and distinctive setting for new developments.	Development proposals should maintain and enhance the quality and connectivity of access networks, integrating active travel routes (linking work places, schools, community facilities and public transport hubs) and recreation routes into green infrastructure.
Habitat Enhancements	Open Space
Development proposals should conserve and enhance on-site biodiversity, and habitat networks within and adjacent to the site.	Development proposals should meet local accessibility, quality and quantity standards for open space, and be designed to cater for the needs of the community.
Stewardship of Green Infrastructure	
Developers should provide details of the green infrastructure functions and maintenance requirements, and the party responsible for these, and demonstrate funding arrangements for their long-term delivery to the satisfaction of the local authority before construction starts.	



Green and Blue Infrastructure Delivery Plans

Often developed concurrently with GBI strategies, GBI Delivery Plans form live documents which provide a costed evidence base for projects contributing to the GBI network. The documents are designed to set out how the objective of an LPA can be translated into a defined set of costed projects for delivery. Key opportunities for GBI project delivery are outlined, including opportunity area descriptions and funding mechanisms.

RECOMMENDATION: The Green and Blue (GBI) Infrastructure Strategy for Lancaster District (currently out for public consultation)⁶ details exemplar case studies and delivery mechanisms. It is recommended that the Action Plan accompanying the GBI Strategy is continuously updated to reflect design development at BGV. The opportunity also exists to potentially identify ‘Strategic Delivery Areas’ to help target priority areas for implementation of GBI.

CASE STUDY: Glasgow and Clyde Valley (GCV) Strategic Development Plan (Clydeplan)⁸

The GCV Green Network Partnership have been at the forefront of Green Network thinking since 2007, leading with the development of guidance and greenspace initiatives. In order to identify strategically important areas for Green Network delivery, the Partnership undertook analysis which identified sixteen locations across the City Region. These are known as Green Network Strategic Delivery Areas (SDAs). The identification of the SDAs has guided where resources of the Partnership should be targeted.

Strategic Delivery Areas (SDAs) are locations where a correlation exists between strategic Green Network priorities and opportunities for delivery. Where this correlation is identified the opportunity exists to deliver a range of Green Network related benefits.

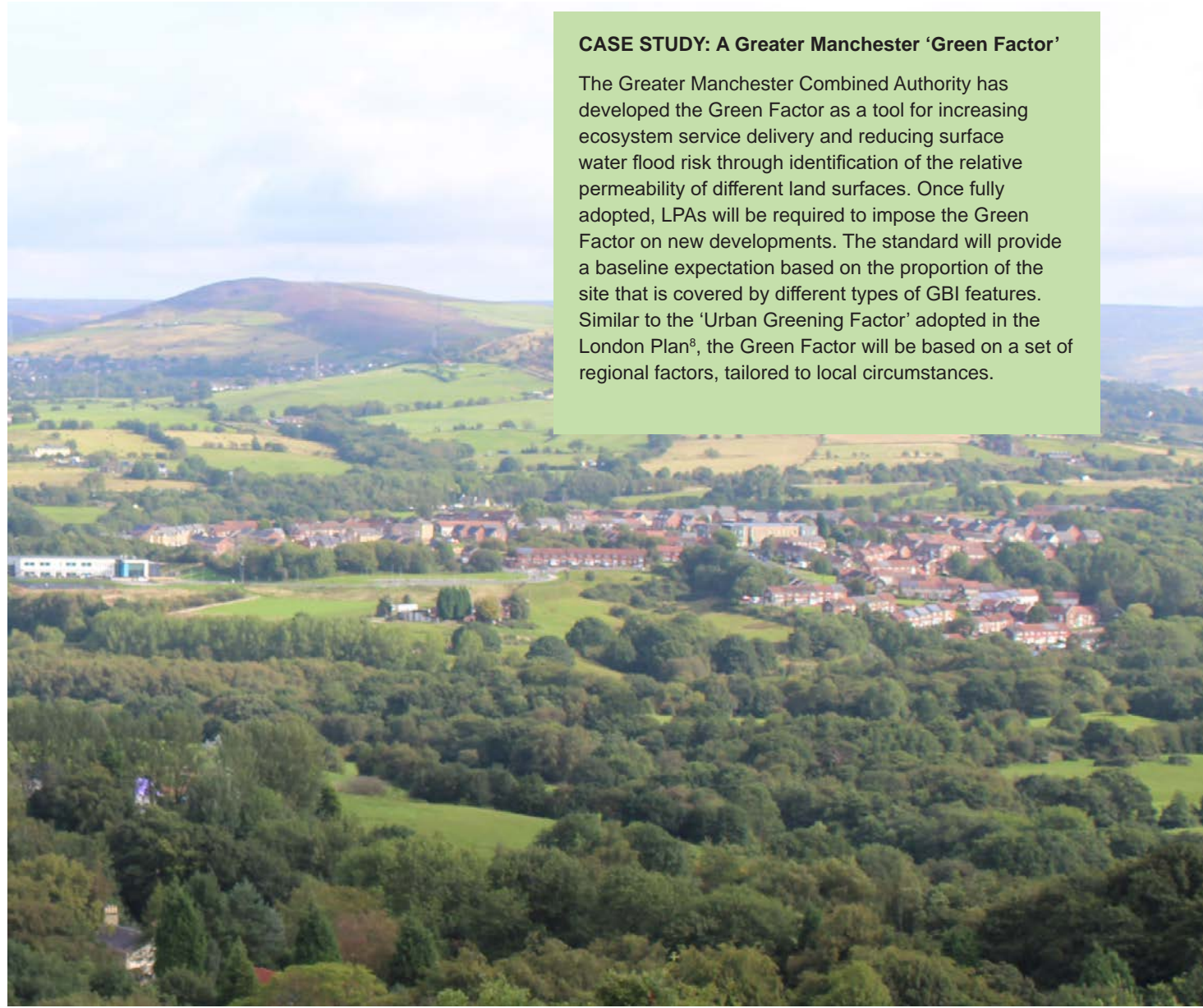
Supplementary Planning Documents, Design Guides and Design Codes

SPDs or Design Guides offer the potential to further set out the expectations and ambitions of LCC in a clear manner. The Landscape Masterplan Framework will provide a basis for the application of a Design Code for BVG. This will act as a mechanism to deliver design quality in projects through the achievement of defined standards. Design codes are considered essential to guide the appropriate nature and siting of Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG). These should support future strategic planning for potential BNG delivery if off-site compensation is unavoidable.

Neighbourhood Planning

Neighbourhood plans offer the opportunity to address the planning and delivery of green space through the identification of GBI deficiencies which may then be considered through new development or planning gain. Planning at the neighbourhood level also requires that GBI is considered in terms of its value to the local community, environment and economy. The inclusion of policies for green spaces can therefore be used to designate 'Local Green Spaces' to protect them for current and future generations.

RECOMMENDATION: It is recommended that LCC consider the preparation of a GBI Technical Guide to address GBI needs and outline what will be expected to be delivered through development within BGV. In addition to setting out and providing detail on the expectations of the Landscape Masterplan Framework, the GBI Technical Guide would also provide the opportunity to summarise best practice in terms of design, delivery and management of GBI.



CASE STUDY: A Greater Manchester 'Green Factor'

The Greater Manchester Combined Authority has developed the Green Factor as a tool for increasing ecosystem service delivery and reducing surface water flood risk through identification of the relative permeability of different land surfaces. Once fully adopted, LPAs will be required to impose the Green Factor on new developments. The standard will provide a baseline expectation based on the proportion of the site that is covered by different types of GBI features. Similar to the 'Urban Greening Factor' adopted in the London Plan⁸, the Green Factor will be based on a set of regional factors, tailored to local circumstances.



Recommendations for securing on-site GBI

Urban Greening Factor

Urban Greening Factors (UGF) are a composite metric that quantify the amount and quality of urban greening that a development scheme provides. As UGF provide a quantified requirement for biodiversity provision which is not a percentage of habitat loss (unlike BNG), their benefit is in areas where redevelopment is proposed on land with little or no existing ecological value which may be of limited use for BGV. The UGF works by attributing a score to various landscaping elements such as trees, green roofs and permeable paving. It does not take into account the losses or gains in biodiversity or the value of individual habitats. Its focus is instead on the overall ratio of built to natural landscaping. Zero is the lowest score, given to impermeable surfaces such as asphalt concrete and 1, the highest, given to natural vegetation on deep soils. An overall score is calculated for the whole site and a target can be set (typically 0.4 or 0.5 depending on the setting and ambitions for greening). The Greater London Authority (GLA) has incorporated the UGF into the New London Plan.

ANGSt Standards

Accessible Natural Greenspace Standards (ANGSt) aim to address the disparity in accessibility communities experience in relation to natural and semi-natural green space of various sizes. The concept was developed in the early 1990s to address recreational pressures around specific habitat types. The tool is a powerful mechanism in assessing current levels of accessible natural greenspace and planning for better provision. The three underlying principles of ANGSt are:

- Improving access to green spaces;
- Improving naturalness of green spaces; and
- Improving connectivity with green spaces.

Natural England's standards have recently been updated to provide a more thorough representation of what should be expected at the doorstep and neighbourhood scale, including:

Criterion	Size distance criteria	Travel times
Doorstep	≥0.5ha within 200m	Under 5 minutes walk
Local	≥3ha within 300m	5-10 minutes walk or 2 minutes cycle
Neighbourhood	≥10ha within 1km	15 minutes walk or 4 minutes cycle
Wider neighbourhood	≥20ha within 2km	25 minutes walk
District	≥100ha within 5km	20 minutes cycle
Sub-regional	≥500ha within 10km	40 minutes cycle
Local Nature Reserve	≥1ha per 1,000 people	

RECOMMENDATION: LCC should evaluate the usefulness of proposed ANGSt and UGF standards in supporting the delivery of high quality accessible natural green space within Lancaster District. The Landscape Masterplan Framework makes reference to the use of UGF as a key performance indicator for resilience objectives. However, it should be noted that the application of numeric standards associated with ANGSt, UGF, or BNG will result in different outcomes depending on the location of the site. For example, meeting the BNG standard will result in greater GBI enhancements than a UGF standard in rural locations, such as the landscape due to accommodate BGV.

Leveraging Biodiversity Net Gain

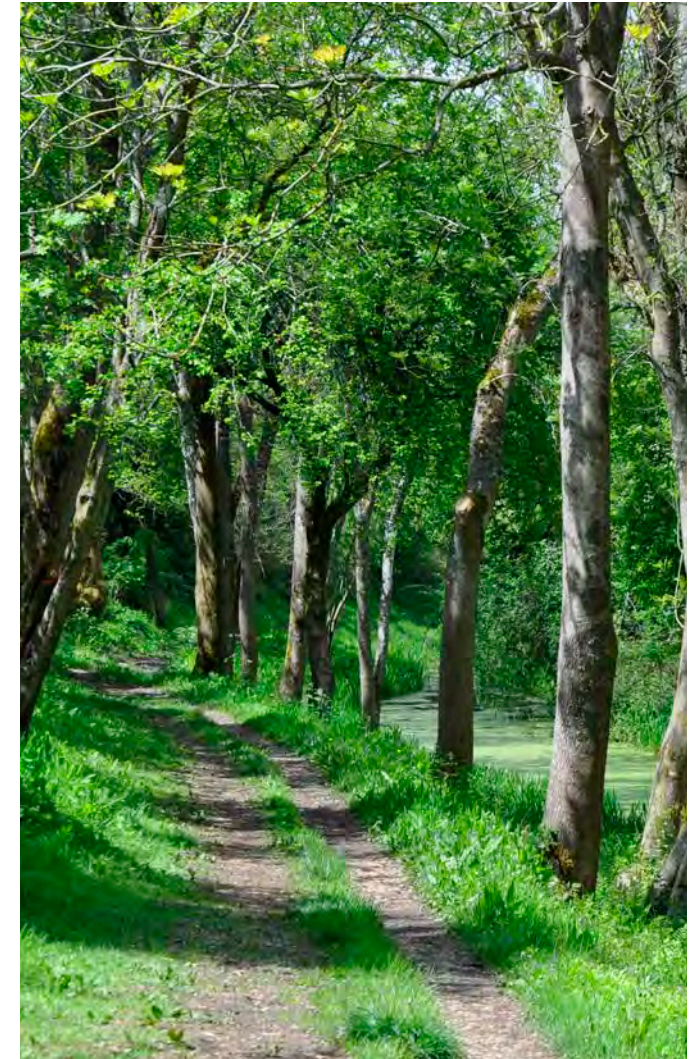
As set-out within paragraph 170 of the NPPF⁹, BNG forms a well-recognised metric for environmental enhancement. This delivery mechanism could act as an important tool for structuring developer response to GBI requirements whilst acting as a powerful lever for delivering the ambitions of the Landscape Masterplan Framework.

The 25 Year Environment Plan¹⁰ sets out the negative effects that development can have on biodiversity and includes the ambition that BNG is a feature of all new developments. At present the draft Environment Bill¹¹ contains provisions seeking minimum of 10% BNG from all development sites in order to offset losses to biodiversity as a result of development activity and to help create nature permeability within urban areas. However, there are anecdotal concerns that there may sometimes be a margin of error that falls within the 10% threshold for BNG due to the process in which it is calculated. As such, a key concern is that a 10% BNG may not deliver net gain, but possibly result in meeting an older metric of 'no net loss' for biodiversity on-site. As such a BNG requirement of 20% safeguards against that margin of error to deliver more credible outcomes for BNG. Where Net Gain cannot be achieved on individual development sites, the potential exists for offsetting by undertaking or funding of projects off-site (but within the Lancaster South AAP area), to ensure that a minimum of 20% BNG is achieved.

The UK Government consultation in relation to BNG explored whether other levels would be appropriate. The findings concluded that minimum of 10% "strikes the right balance between ambition, certainty in achieving environmental outcomes, and deliverability and costs for developers". As such the draft Environment Bill is currently drafted to require

a minimum of 10% BNG. The Defra impact assessment set out that 10% BNG is the minimum amount that could be required that would ensure that in reality, net gain is achieved. In addition, the UK State of Nature Report 2019¹² identifies urbanisation as a key driver resulting in biodiversity loss across the UK. As such, the emerging minimum 10% BNG requirement will help to reduce biodiversity losses that result from new development, with the intention of beginning to reverse this trend. A minimum 20% BNG requirement would provide even greater benefits for biodiversity. In addition, a minimum 20% BNG might increase access to nature by delivering naturalised areas closer to where people live.

The BNG and Local Nature Recovery Strategy Impact Assessment¹³ published by DEFRA sets out that the cost of delivering 20% net gain is only 19% higher than delivering 10% (see para 6.11.2). For brownfield sites these costs could potentially be lower. This suggests that the proposed approach would not result in significant additional costs to development, resulting in fewer viability concerns. It should be recognised that the costs of BNG will vary on a site by site basis and further viability testing will be required and undertaken as more proposals are prepared taking into account BNG targets. It is understood that the 20% requirement for BNG in Lichfield is working well and has been delivered by the majority of developments in recent years. The results are being monitored through 30 years of legacy.



RECOMMENDATION: The opportunity exists for the Landscape Masterplan Framework to exceed BNG obligations beyond the mandated 10% margin. Setting a requirement for 20% BNG in the Lancaster South AAP DPD is recommended in order to increase the provision for nature, to help address biodiversity losses due to development and to create additional opportunities for people to interact with nature. The 20% target is considered to be reasonable and deliverable in the context of the same target being successfully delivered elsewhere, for example in Lichfield. The delivery of 20% BNG requirement would be achieved as individual development sites within the overarching masterplan come forward, through the development management process. The cost would therefore be borne by developers and landowners as a development requirement.

CASE STUDY: Lichfield District Council

Lichfield District Council adopted a principle of BNG in 2015 within their Local Plan Strategy¹⁴ document. Specifically, Core Policy 13 requires an overall net gain to be achieved district wide, and Policy NR3 requires individual development sites to achieve net gain, otherwise they will be refused. The Biodiversity & Development SPD¹⁵ sets out the 20% requirement, which was defined following consultation with the local community and stakeholders. The requirement for 20% net gain was established due to the threat that new development poses to biodiversity through habitat loss.



The Lakes at Curborough, Lichfield (IM Land)

The Biodiversity & Development SPD includes a process diagram (page 12) as to how development should provide for biodiversity, including design-led recommendations. The SPD also includes a biodiversity opportunity map, setting out the opportunities that off-site provision could provide for. BNG is secured for a period of at least 25 years through legal agreements. It is understood that the 20% requirement for BNG in Lichfield is working well and has been delivered by the majority of developments in recent years. This example demonstrates that ambitious BNG targets of 20% can be delivered through the planning system.

Building with Nature Standard

Building with Nature¹⁶ is a standard which ensures nature is put at the heart of planning, design and management of new development. The standard provides planners, developers and designers with an evidence-based set of guidance on how to deliver good quality, multifunctional GBI on site. It raises the bar by showing clearly what 'good' looks like at each stage of the development process. One of the major benefits of using the standard is that it can reduce planning uncertainty by taking a proactive approach to nature-friendly development. By referencing the standards as part of policy, the opportunity exists for the establishment of a clear benchmark for developers proposing masterplans for new sites.

RECOMMENDATION: It is recommended that LCC explores accreditation with the Building with Nature Standard across BGV to ensure the consistent use of high quality GBI across the development parcels. This will reduce uncertainties in planning, whilst taking a pro-active approach to securing the nature-friendly development. The accreditation is achieved through the application of a number of standards which relate to the core functionality of GBI, wellbeing, water and wildlife.

CASE STUDY: Essex Green Infrastructure Strategy

The 2020 Essex Green Infrastructure Strategy¹⁷ champions high quality green space through the use of the Building with Nature Standard. The Strategy, which has been accredited 'Excellent', was a collaborative effort using an internal steering group, an online partnership platform to share information and live drafts of the Strategy, as well as working with over 60 different partners across the county. The Building with Nature accreditation has been used as a guiding principle to create a framework for the Strategy and reinforces the Council's commitment to providing sustainable and thriving communities for people and wildlife alike.



CASE STUDY: Falkirk Council

Published by Falkirk City Council in 2021 to promote well designed GBI within new development, Supplementary Guidance SG05¹⁸ outlines how GBI can be integrated into the design process. The document incorporates a 'GBI checklist' which summarises the key principles that developers should have regard to when designing new developments. A number of evaluation tools are also referenced in order to help review and improve the delivery of GBI provision for new developments. As statutory supplementary guidance, SG05 is part of the development plan and, along with the Falkirk Local Development Plan 2 (LDP2)¹⁹, is a primary consideration in the determination of relevant planning applications.

APPENDIX 1: GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE AND NEW DEVELOPMENT CHECKLIST

	Compliance (Yes/No/Not Relevant)	Comments
Process		
Design team assembled with appropriate qualifications, experience and accreditation.		
Site appraisal carried out to appropriate level		
Pre-application engagement with relevant stakeholders		
Pre-application discussions on conceptual design carried out		
Planning applications submitted with necessary green infrastructure supporting information		
Well Being: Open Space		
Appropriate multifunctional open space incorporated in design		
Open space properly integrated into layout		
Recreational needs of development provided for in terms of different categories of provision (playspace, parks, sports areas, natural greenspace/green corridors, guided by local open space audit)		
Any loss of open space compensated appropriately		
Well Being: Active Travel		
Active travel provision integrated into development providing access to active travel network and local facilities		
Active travel links are safe, convenient and direct		
Active travel links cater for different types of users		
Additional infrastructure is provided where appropriate		
Severance/impediments to existing active routes is avoided		
Specification of routes appropriate to level of use, users, and location		
Access plan produced and submitted		

Development of a GBI checklist

The development of a GBI checklist forms a useful review tool during the design process and outlines how a Local Planning Authority (LPA) expects proposals for developments to integrate high quality GBI from the earliest stage. A checklist therefore summarises the key principles developers should have regard to when developing GBI proposals within development masterplans. This includes the aim to 'raise the bar' for new development, not only to make 'beautiful' new places but also resilient ones and ones which will play a central part in achieving environmental goals.

RECOMMENDATION: The development of a GBI checklist as part of the Lancaster South AAP DPD would enable project auditing and embed clear expectations required of developers from the outset. In this way, expectations would be clear and GBI features would be designed in at an early stage rather than retrofitted later. This approach would also provide valuable certainty to the developer. The checklist could complement any existing mechanism used by LCC to evaluate planning applications for impacts on trees or ecology.



The Drum, Bo'ness (Urban Realm)

1. Has the landscape “led” the production of the masterplan?

High quality placemaking should be led by GBI. This should take the landscape context as the starting point, and should “work with” the landscape. This means that features such as SuDS should guide the very earliest design stages, rather than be retrofitted later.

2. Is tree cover significantly expanded?

With strong links to **SOA6**, the Woodland Trust is advocating for 30% canopy cover on all new sites, and the NPPF now requires all streets to be tree-lined. This should be the starting point for negotiations over tree cover. ‘Mini-forests’ should be considered for creation of larger ‘blocks’.

3. Have opportunities for rainwater harvesting been maximised?

These should be integrated in areas of identified water stress unless there is strong justification for an alternative approach.

4. Are multifunctional SuDS designed into the site?

Given identified levels of flood risk, these should be provided within all new development. To be delivered as a mosaic of multiple forms, including permeable paving, SuDS tree pits and wetland areas - rather than a single-function “hole in the ground.”

5. How does the site relate to the Nature Recovery Network?

Proposals for new development must include a map of local habitat connectivity opportunities and provide evidence of how the development strengthens rather than weakens this network.

6. How will the site be maintained in the long-term?

Long-term stewardship should be discussed at the earliest stages of design, to ensure stewardship in perpetuity. Models such as partnerships with the Land Trust or other charitable or community-led body should be explored.

7. Does the site integrate micro-greening features for wildlife-friendly housing?

These are ‘quick wins’ such as bat boxes, bird boxes and ‘hedgehog highways’ that can easily be designed into all new development. See the example of best practice at [Kingsbrook \(Aylesbury Vale\)](#).

8. Is there adequate space for growing or allotments?

To meet rising demand for growing space, and enhance opportunities to connect with nature on your doorstep, growing spaces should be provided as part of all new neighbourhoods.

9. Does the development connect beyond the ‘red line boundary’?

All development proposals should include a clear context map that illustrates how the proposed development will link into the wider GBI network as mapped by this Strategy, and identify ways the development will strengthen. This might include providing connecting habitats, links to strategic walking and cycling routes or contributions toward green 20-minute neighbourhoods.

10. Are walking and cycling the default mode for shorter journeys?

This will require the provision of traffic-free greenways which “knit” into wider cycling infrastructure - with a particular focus on providing engaging, sensory traffic-free routes to local schools.

CASE STUDY: Central Bedfordshire Council - ‘Checklist for Developers’

The checklist provides a starting point, in the form of a simple set of questions to be asked of any new development through the planning process, whether commercial or residential.

Mechanisms for securing funding

Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL)

The implementation of CIL would form a vital component in the funding of essential infrastructure projects across the Landscape Masterplan Framework. CIL was introduced through the Planning Act (2008) as a levy payable by developers towards the cost of local and sub-regional infrastructure to support development. This can apply to strategic District-wide projects and does not need to be directly related to the proposed development.

Section 106 Agreements

Developer contributions under Section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 should provide a mechanism for securing funding for the Council's GBI priorities. Section 106 agreements are a tool which makes a development proposal acceptable in planning terms, which would not otherwise be acceptable. There are three legal tests which must be met, in order for a Section 106 agreement to be appropriate:

- Must be necessary to make the development acceptable in planning terms;
- Must be directly related to the development; and,
- Must be reasonably related in scale and kind to the development.

The limitation of Section 106 in the past had been that contributions could not be pooled (beyond five developments) to invest in a strategic site. However, the Government lifted this restriction in 2019. This means that S106 can now be used to enhance or promote the wider GBI network, and could fund Borough-wide opportunities and GBI priority projects.

Infrastructure Levy

The Planning White Paper (PWP)²⁰ published in August 2020, entitled Planning for the Future, proposes scrapping Section 106 and the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) in favour of a nationally set value-based charge for developers. This Infrastructure Levy system for securing social benefits from development will bring numerous benefits, including providing greater clarity for communities and developers about the level of developer contributions expected and being more effective at capturing land value uplift.

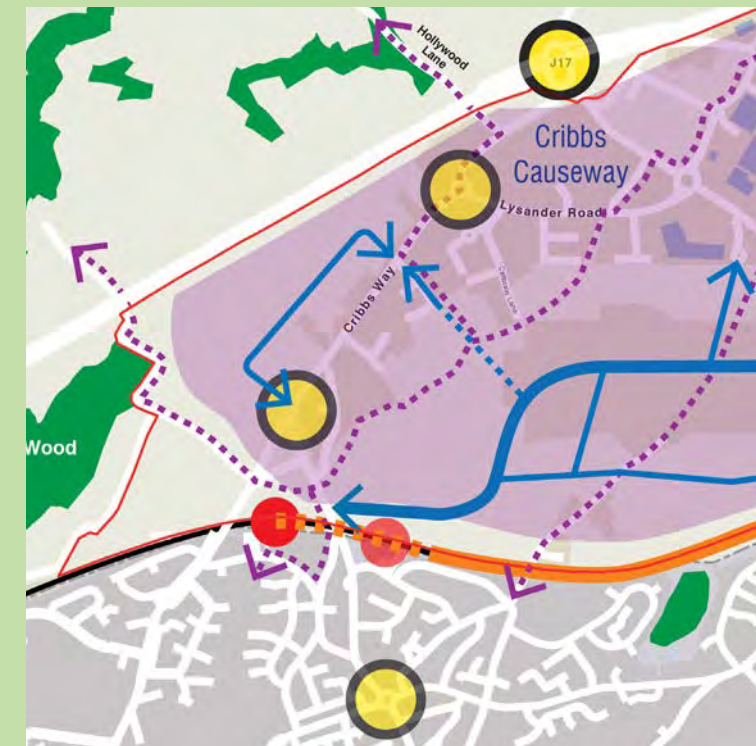
The PWP particularly focusses on the role of S106 in the delivery of housing and the payment of financial contributions but the reality is that S106 performs a much wider function than delivery of these benefits alone. It remains to be seen precisely how the proposed IL will substantively replace all the functions of the current S106 regime. Further details are yet to be published, and it is unknown when Section 106 Agreements and CIL will be phased out.

RECOMMENDATION: LCC should seek to ensure that their charging schedule is at a suitable level and that key projects included in the South Lancaster AAP DPD are included within an Infrastructure Funding Statement. Regular updating of this Statement will be key to ensure that completed projects are taken off the list and new key projects are added. This will allow for continued delivery and monitoring of projects through the period of the Local Plan and beyond. Further guidance in the form of Planning Obligation SPDs may also be required to ensure that developer contributions are secured in a consistent manner.

CASE STUDY: South Gloucestershire Council

Framework Agreements represent a useful way of entering into a single over-arching Section 106 Agreement which will ensure the funding needed for infrastructure. South Gloucestershire Council have implemented a Framework Agreement for the Cribbs Causeway / Patchway New Neighbourhood²¹ where developers across three individual planning applications pool contributions. This method requires multiple developers to agree the approach in a co-ordinated manner which can be difficult when various developers have different trajectories and time frames.

Cribbs/Patchway New Neighbourhood Development Framework SPD (2014)



CASE STUDY: Harlow and Gilston Garden Town

Harlow and Gilston was designated by the Government as a Garden Town in January 2017 and is proposed to supply an additional 23,000 homes within Hertfordshire. Using Garden City principles, including beautifully design neighbourhoods and homes, biodiverse landscapes, zero-carbon design, integrated active travel and sustainable transport, and long-term stewardship, the scheme will provide resilient communities of the future.

GBI plays an essential role from the outset of masterplanning within the Garden Town through its role in creating a framework for movement, delivering ecosystem services and integrating settlements with the wider countryside. Individual masterplans within the wider Garden Town will design new open space which expands on the existing Green Wedge network and connecting with strategic assets such as the Stort Valley. Furthermore, each individual settlement boasts their own GBI strategy which links with the overarching aims of the county. The existing settlement of Harlow will be a key focus for the retrofitting and regeneration of residential streets, public realm and employment space.

Much of the funding for GBI projects within the Garden Town will come from developer contributions. In addition, the development of the Gilston Area Neighbourhood Plan (2020-2033)²² has sought to provide a positive and proactive planning tool to assist in the delivery and implementation of the GBI principles illustrated in the overarching masterplan for the site.



Harlow and Gilston Garden Town - Architect's Journal

Wider Funding and off-site mechanisms (to account for the wider South Lancaster SG1 designation)

Beyond funding from developer contributions, GBI opportunities could be delivered from a diverse range of funding mechanisms. Funding will be dependent on the type of scheme, its origins and functions. Some proposals will require capital funding to establish a GBI asset and subsequently revenue funding to secure its long term management.

In 2021, a coalition of public and private partners (SWEEP) produced a report named Alternative Funding Mechanisms for Green Space²³. The report includes examples of some traditional, but mainly alternative, funding streams, and presents case studies that highlight their successful application. Alternative mechanisms are listed below:

- **Taxation:** Standard local and national government taxation structures allocate funding to GBI maintenance and interventions. There are a range of additional tax-related measures, however, that can provide specific support and additional income for these activities, such as location-specific taxes or business levies.
- **Income-generating opportunities and loans:** GBI can be used for commercial purposes to generate income, through the provision of services e.g. sports grounds and events, or settings for cafés.
- **Alternative management structures:** Management of GBI can be moved from local authority control to structures such as charitable trusts. This opens access to new sources of funding and can allow for a more strategic approach to finance to achieve stable annual funding.
- **Ecosystem development/payment for ecosystem services:** Environmental services and benefits, provided by GBI, can be utilised to generate income.

CASE STUDY: Newcastle Parks and Allotments Trust

The Newcastle Parks and Allotments Trust was established as a mechanism to discover new methods to finance and operate the city's parks in response to reductions in council funding. A large proportion of the delivery and maintenance of the city's parks and allotments were transferred to a charitable trust following Cabinet approval in November 2017. The charitable trust is driven by the concept of collaboration, incorporating individual action plans for each of the 33 parks. These action plans address challenges and opportunities and are currently being delivered in consultation with local communities.



- **Charitable giving and voluntary sector involvement:** These range from small scale opportunities, such as those involving local communities as volunteers in green space, to the larger scale, including seeking out corporate or philanthropic investment.
- **Multi-agency opportunities:** Working in partnership or collaboration, within or between organisations, offers opportunities to access specialist services and expertise, different funding sources, and achieve cost-savings.

Future proofing GBI assets

Maintenance and management of GBI

The quality and function of GBI and wider components of the Landscape Masterplan Framework, including how it will be maintained in the long term, should be considered from the outset. Without careful consideration given to the future management and maintenance of GBI, the range of benefits associated with GBI will diminish quickly over time.

RECOMMENDATION: LCC considers maintenance issues during the assessment of planning applications. When necessary, long term management and maintenance requirements are reflected in the planning permission or associated planning obligation. This includes enforcing the requirement for a Landscape Management and Maintenance Plan as part of LCC's approval prior to the commencement of development. The Lancaster South AAP DPD should detail management and maintenance requirements for GBI, including on and off-site requirements to facilitate long-term stewardship.



1. Income-generated opportunities and loans and taxation

- Sponsorship/naming rights
- Events of special uses
- Concessions
- Rental charges
- Bonds
- Tax Increment Financing (TIF)
- Business Improvement Districts
- Location-specific tax
- Levy
- Precepts



4. Charitable giving and voluntary sector involvement

- Subscription schemes
- Investment crowd-funding
- Donations/philanthropic partnerships
- Community/volunteer groups
- Corporate volunteering



2. Alternative management structures

- Endowments
- Community asset transfers
- Non-profit distributing organisations (NDPOs)



5. Ecosystem development/payment for ecosystem services

- Renewable energy tariffs
- Utility and rights-of-way leasing
- Offsetting
- Water management



3. Planning and development opportunities

- Property assets/investment portfolios
- Private sector
- Land sales
- Section 106 Planning Gain/CIL



6. Multi-agency opportunities

- Grant funding
- Innovative use of public budgets
- Shared-use agreements
- Special designations





Chapter 5 Requirement for Further Work

Chapter 5 Requirement for Further Work

To ensure the successful integration of the Landscape Masterplan Framework into the surrounding context of Lancaster District, a number of updates to existing documents and additional strategies could be delivered to support the ambitions of BGV.

Potential updates to existing strategies

- **Playing Pitch and Outdoor Sports Strategy and Action Plan (2018)²⁴**
- **Open Space Assessment Report and Standards Paper (2018)²⁵**
- **Green and Blue Infrastructure Strategy²⁶**
Action Plan and schedule of proposed projects to be updated to reflect developments at BGV to ensure the document is maintained as a 'live' resource
- **Rights of Way Improvement Plan (RoWIP)²⁷**
Action Plan and assessment of current needs / existing provision to be updated to reflect changes to the PRoW network at BGV.
- **Allotments Strategy²⁸**
Needs and provision assessment to be updated to reflect community food growing proposals at BGV.

Potential further work

- **GBI Checklist / Technical Guide for Developers**
(refer to Chapter 4)
- **Active Travel Strategy for BGV**
- **Management and Maintenance Plan**
(including mechanisms for community ownership)
- **GBI Funding and Action Plan**
- **Planning Obligation SPDs**
(may be required to ensure that developer contributions are secured in a consistent manner - see Chapter 4)





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