

9 Delivering a Quality Environment

LANDSCAPE PROTECTION

The Local Landscape

- 9.1 North Lincolnshire is a predominantly rural landscape interspersed by Scunthorpe, principal towns, large service centres and smaller settlements. The Lincolnshire Wolds Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) is a nationally designated area, currently with its northern limit near Caistor in West Lindsey. A proposed AONB extension will protect a further area within North Lincolnshire to conserve and enhance its natural beauty.
- 9.2 Landscape plays an important role in defining the character and appearance of the environment and, importantly, the setting of new development within the environment. It is important that new development is located and designed to recognise existing landscape character. Where appropriate, this should be through a specific landscape appraisal.
- 9.3 North Lincolnshire Council is committed to ensuring that the intrinsic value of our landscape is protected and, wherever possible, enhanced whilst enabling strategic, sustainable growth which is necessary for the area's communities and economies to thrive. Key views within the landscape and in to and out of settlements are valued by the local community and can also define the local identity of a place.
- 9.4 One of the core principles of NPPF is that planning should recognise the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside. Local plans should include strategic policies for the conservation and enhancement of the natural environment, including landscape. This not only includes designated landscapes such as the Lincolnshire Wolds Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty but also the non-designated wider countryside.

Policy DQE1p: Protection of Landscape, Townscape and Views

Landscape Protection

1. Development proposals that would cause unacceptable harm and do not respect and protect the distinctive character and quality of the landscape or important features or views will not be permitted. Proposals should have regard to the North Lincolnshire Landscape Character Assessment and should contribute to the conservation or enhancement of the local landscape, where possible.

Character and setting

2. Proposals should have particular regard to maintaining and responding positively to any natural and man-made features within the landscape and townscape which positively contribute to the character of the area. These may include but are not limited to historic buildings and monuments, other landmark buildings, topography, trees and woodland, hedgerows, walls, water features, field patterns, and the intervisibility between historic rural settlements.
3. Development proposals should:
 - a. relate well to local topography and the built form and be of an appropriate scale, siting, layout, design, density and use of materials to minimise the impact on the landscape character of the site and its surroundings;
 - b. include provisions for the long-term management and maintenance of any existing and proposed landscaping, woodlands and trees;
 - c. avoid detrimental effects on, or the loss of, features that make a significant contribution to the particular landscape character type;
 - d. where possible, aim to conserve, enhance or restore important natural and historic landscape features;
 - e. maintain and extend tree cover, where practicable, through the retention of important trees, appropriate replacement of trees to be lost, and new planting to support green infrastructure;
 - f. not have an unacceptable visual impact on skylines, key views and roofscapes and undertake measures, such as landscaping, to reduce those impacts where appropriate;
 - g. be supported by a landscaping scheme that includes new landscaping measures that positively integrate the development into the landscape character of the area; and
 - h. be supported by a landscape analysis and management plan in appropriate cases. This should take account of, as a minimum, the Lincolnshire Landscape Character Assessment and information obtained from the North Lincolnshire Historic Environment Record.
4. Where a proposal may result in significant harm it may, exceptionally, be permitted if the overriding benefits of the development demonstrably outweigh the harm. In such circumstances, the harm should be minimised and mitigated.

Create and protect views

5. All development proposals should take account of views in to, out of, and within development areas. Schemes should be designed to preserve or enhance key local views and vistas and create new public views, where possible by utilising considerate development, layout and design. Particular consideration should be given to views of significant buildings and views within landscapes which are more sensitive to change due to their open, exposed character and extensive intervisibility from various viewpoints.

Cumulative impacts

6. In considering the impacts of a proposal, both the cumulative impacts and individual impacts will be considered. Developers should complete a site-specific landscape appraisal, proportionate to the anticipated scale and impact of the proposal. This appraisal should assess the character and appearance of the site, respond to landscape character, climate change and flood alleviation, where appropriate, and propose improvements to local biodiversity and levels of amenity.

Proposed Extension to the Lincolnshire Wolds Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB)

7. Priority will be given to the protection and enhancement of the landscape character and natural beauty and setting of the proposed extension to the Lincolnshire Wolds Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB). The considerations set out in this policy are particularly important when determining proposals which have the potential to impact upon the proposed extension to the Lincolnshire Wolds AONB as identified on the policies map.

- 9.5 The Lincolnshire Wolds Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) designation will provide a similar level of protection as that afforded to National Parks. A management plan has been prepared for the existing AONB identifying the value and special qualities of the designation. The management plan does not carry the same planning weight as the Local Plan, but does establish key principles. For developments within the boundaries of the proposed Lincolnshire Wolds AONB extension, the management plan will be deemed to apply and will be a material consideration.
- 9.6 For many years there has been a desire amongst a partnership of organisations in North Lincolnshire (including the council) and Lincolnshire County Council to extend the existing Lincolnshire Wolds AONB boundary into North Lincolnshire, primarily to include the northern Wolds area up to the River Humber and Ancholme valley. The Council are engaging Natural England to prepare a case for the boundary extension. The formal process will include an assessment to determine if the area meets the statutory criteria of an AONB and, if designated, the area would be conserved for the nation as a special place. It would not mean the end of development or farming practices but would ensure that all development in the area meets the AONB criteria.
- 9.7 When considering landscape character and designing landscape schemes it is important to recognise the wider role that landscape performs. Whilst complementing the character and appearance of the site, landscape elements can provide wider functional purposes. For example, trees and hedges can provide important shade, aid drainage, and provide important habitat for wildlife. Broader landscape areas can provide a mechanism for responding to climate change and flood alleviation, and landscaping can be beneficial to air quality and the atmosphere. Good landscaping can also instil a sense of wellbeing which can promote healthy living.
- 9.8 The desire to extend the AONB to the northern Wold and Ancholme valley may also bring the need for landscape enhancement in that area, particularly around visual detractors such as Elsham Wold Industrial Estate (see also 'Policy DQE2p - Landscape Enhancement').

Alternatives Considered

No alternative options were considered through the consultation. However, support was given for the policy considering landscape protection, character and setting, creating and protecting views, and cumulative impacts. It is important that new development is located and designed to recognise existing landscape character. Where appropriate, this should be considered through a specific landscape appraisal. The Council is committed to protecting and enhancing the intrinsic value of our landscape whilst enabling the necessary strategic, sustainable growth. It is felt the policy provides an appropriate balance.

Monitoring

Indicator	Target
Maximise protection of the distinctive character and quality of our landscape, townscape and views	No specific target
Number of Appeals upheld contrary to this policy	No Appeals upheld

Policy DQE2p: Landscape Enhancement

The following landscape enhancement schemes are proposed:

Scunthorpe and Bottesford Urban Area

1. North West Escarpment
2. Bottesford Beck
3. Land North of Rowland Road
4. Lakeside
5. Land North of Doncaster Road
6. Ridgewalk/Sustrans route

Barton upon Humber

7. Barton East
8. Barton West
9. Waters' Edge

Brigg

10. River Ancholme
11. Wrawby Road Approach
12. Brigg North

Large service centres

13. Winterton North West
14. Messingham East
15. Messingham South
16. Broughton North
17. Broughton South
18. Epworth East

Larger rural settlements

19. Burton upon Stather East
20. New Holland Industrial Estate
21. New Holland Mere

Northern Wold and Ancholme Valley

22. Elsham Wold Industrial Estate

Ironstone Gulleets to the north-east of Scunthorpe

23. Lincoln Edge Scarp Slope

Development will only be permitted where it provides opportunities for landscape enhancement or creation.

- 9.9 The landscape enhancement schemes under policy DQE2p - Landscape Enhancement are shown on the Policies Map in an indicative manner. It is expected that each scheme will be defined by a process of negotiation. Where the provision of an allocated landscaping scheme is a prerequisite for achieving development of a site, the implementation and maintenance of allocated landscaping schemes will be achieved through the use of planning conditions and agreements. In other cases, the Council will undertake or secure funding for the implementation and maintenance of the allocated landscaping proposals. Such improvements will, in the majority of cases, need to be secured through management agreements.
- 9.10 The Ironstone Gulleys are distinctive and valuable features of the landscape to the north-east of Scunthorpe. Whilst parts of the area require protection as features of the landscape and for their nature conservation value, there remain significant opportunities for landscape enhancement throughout this area.

Alternatives Considered

No alternative options were considered through the consultation. The policy provides an update to Saved NLLP Policy LC15, and was supported overall.

Monitoring

Indicator	Target
Number of landscape enhancement schemes proposed by this policy that are implemented	All landscape enhancement schemes proposed by this policy to be implemented
Number of permissions granted contrary to this policy	No permissions granted contrary to this policy
Number of Appeals upheld contrary to this policy	No Appeals upheld

BIODIVERSITY & GEODIVERSITY

- 9.11 ‘Biodiversity’ is shorthand for biological diversity. It is a term commonly used to describe the variety of life in a particular area including plants, animals and other living organisms. There are many different definitions of biodiversity among which the one used under the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) is one of the most frequently cited: "the variability among living organisms from all sources including terrestrial, marine and other aquatic ecosystems, and the ecological complexes of which they are part, this includes diversity within species, between species and of ecosystems".
- 9.12 ‘Geodiversity’ is shorthand for geological diversity. It is a term which is commonly used to describe the variety of earth materials, forms and processes that constitute and shape the Earth. This includes a variety of rocks, minerals, fossils and other geological features.

- 9.13 North Lincolnshire has many areas which are noted for their natural beauty and biodiversity value. These areas also support a wide variety of species and habitats and form an important part of the network of biodiversity sites within the wider environment. Wildlife sites and habitats that are recognised as being of national, regional and local importance within or partly within North Lincolnshire include almost 30 Sites of Special Scientific Interest, over 250 Local Wildlife Sites, almost 40 Local Geological Sites, and almost 20 Local Nature Reserves. These sites support important natural assets, such as ancient woodland, heathland, acid grassland and wetland.
- 9.14 Crowle Moor is part of Thorne Moor Special Area for Conservation (SAC), designated for degraded peat bog capable of regeneration. It is also part of the Thorne and Hatfield Moors Special Protection Area (SPA), designated for its breeding population of nightjars. The Humber Estuary is an internationally important wetland and is designated as an SAC, SPA and Ramsar site.
- 9.15 Sites that lie outside designated areas are not statutorily protected but can also provide valuable spaces and corridors for protected habitats and species. For example, waterways, can be valuable for biodiversity, providing green and blue corridors that link habitats and wildlife sites. Maintaining and enhancing a network of habitats, species and wildlife sites, and linkages between them is important to achieving the vision and aims of the Lincolnshire Biodiversity Action Plan (revised 2015).
- 9.16 The Nature Recovery Network is a major commitment in the UK Government's 25-Year Environment Plan and intends to improve, expand and connect habitats to address wildlife decline and provide wider environmental benefits for people. This will build on the success of previous initiatives such as Nature Improvement Areas (NIAs). NIAs are landscape-scale initiatives that aim to ensure land is used sustainably to achieve multiple benefits for people, wildlife and the local economy. The Humberhead Levels is a nationally selected NIA.
- 9.17 A Biodiversity Opportunity Mapping Study has been prepared for North Lincolnshire alongside the Greater Lincolnshire Nature Partnership and partners. The study map identifies the known areas of opportunity for local landscape-scale habitat improvement within North Lincolnshire, and as such represent strategic areas for biodiversity. It indicates where it is considered most important and feasible to target habitat protection, restoration and creation, including for heathland, grassland, woodland and wetlands. Major development should adopt an ecosystem approach, whilst large scale major development schemes should adopt a landscape scale approach in any masterplanning work that reflects the opportunities identified in the Biodiversity Opportunity Mapping Study (or any subsequent replacement). Taking a strategic landscape-scale approach to the planning, design and management of connected Green Infrastructure assets provides the framework within which species migration can more readily occur in response to environmental pressures such as climate change.
- 9.18 The baseline data on habitats and species that underpin local biodiversity strategy will be kept up to date by the Greater Lincolnshire Nature Partnership (GLNP) through the maintenance and management of any appropriate evidence documents published and hosted on their website.
- 9.19 In March 2019, the Government confirmed that new developments must deliver an overall increase in biodiversity. Following the consultation on mandating biodiversity net gain in development in 2018 the Chancellor confirmed that the government will use the forthcoming Environment Bill to mandate 'biodiversity net gain'. This will mean the delivery of much-needed infrastructure and housing is not at the expense of vital biodiversity.

- 9.20 Biodiversity net gain requires developers to ensure habitats for wildlife are enhanced and left in a measurably better state than they were pre-development. Developers must assess the type of habitat and its condition before submitting plans, and then demonstrate how they are improving biodiversity – for example, through the creation of green corridors, planting more trees, or forming local nature spaces.
- 9.21 The main document will include summary documents for each broad priority area, project summaries, and maps for each habitat type. The maps, project summaries and supporting evidence will be used in a variety of ways, for example: land use planners - inform growth plans, identify strategic linkages, inform planning decisions and direct Community Infrastructure Levy funding to best effect; developers - identify opportunities for enhancing place and quality in and around new developments and as such maintain market value and viability; landowners/farmers - demonstrate where activities under agri-environment schemes or the Water Framework Directive can be targeted to best effect in the landscape; environment / conservation organisations - identify where maximum benefit can be gained from investment in conservation action and by working with others. Green on-site improvements are encouraged, but in circumstances where they are not possible developers will need to pay a levy for habitat creation or improvement elsewhere. This new approach will improve habitats for wildlife and create healthier places to live and work and is central in the ambition to leave the environment in a better state for future generations.

Policy DQE3p: Biodiversity and Geodiversity

1. All schemes shall, as appropriate to their nature and scale:
 - a. protect, manage and enhance the network of habitats, species and sites of international, national and local importance (statutory and non-statutory), including sites that meet the criteria for selection as a Local Site*;
 - b. minimise and mitigate against impacts on biodiversity and geodiversity where adverse effects are unavoidable; and
 - c. deliver a net gain in biodiversity and/or geodiversity; and
 - d. retain and enhance existing landscape and natural features (e.g. trees, hedges, river banks, watercourses water bodies and important habitats); or
 - e. ensure an alternative corridor can be provided to ensure equivalent connectivity is maintained.
2. Proposals which may affect an SPA, SAC or Ramsar site will be assessed according to their implications for the site's conservation objectives. Proposals not directly connected with or necessary for the management of the site and which are likely to have a significant effect on the site (either individually or in combination with other plans or projects) shall be subject to an Appropriate Assessment. Development that is considered to adversely affect the integrity of a European Site will not be permitted unless it can be conclusively demonstrated that:
 - a. there is no alternative solution; and
 - b. there are imperative reasons of overriding public interest for the development.
3. Development proposals which are likely to have an adverse effect on a Site of Special Scientific Interest will not be permitted unless the reasons for the development clearly outweigh the nature conservation value of the site itself and the national policy to safeguard the national network of such sites.

4. Planning permission will be refused for development resulting in the loss, deterioration or fragmentation of irreplaceable habitats including ancient woodland and aged or veteran trees unless the need for, and benefits of, the development in that location clearly outweigh the loss or harm.
5. Priority habitats, where practicable, should be retained, enhanced or created within the development site or suitable alternative habitats should be provided elsewhere. If this is not feasible, contributions towards the provision of habitat creation or the improvement of habitats elsewhere shall be required. If, for reasons of viability, this is not possible the benefits of the development should be demonstrated to clearly outweigh the loss of the habitat concerned.
6. Development proposals should create new habitats and links between habitats in line with Biodiversity Opportunity Mapping evidence to maintain a network of wildlife sites and corridors to minimise habitat fragmentation and provide opportunities for species to respond and adapt to climate change. Biodiversity offsetting will be used where net gain cannot be achieved within the site boundary. Offsets will be sought towards enhancements of the wider ecological network in the area in line with local, regional and national priorities for nature conservation.
7. In all cases where development is permitted which may damage the nature conservation value of the site, such damage shall be kept to a minimum. Where development is permitted the use of conditions or planning obligations to ensure the protection and enhancement of the site's nature conservation value will be required.
8. In exceptional circumstances where adverse impacts are demonstrated to be unavoidable, developers will be required to ensure that impacts are appropriately mitigated, with compensation measures towards loss of habitat used only as a last resort where there is no alternative. Where any mitigation and compensation measures are required, they should be in place before development activities start that may disturb protected or important habitats and species.
9. Provision will be made for the creation of nature reserves and new wildlife habitats in both rural and urban areas. In granting planning permission, the creation of such areas will be required for the following types of development:
 - a. in association with the reclamation of former mineral workings and waste disposal sites;
 - b. in association with schemes for derelict land clearance;
 - c. on land which is no longer required for long-term agricultural use; and
 - d. where habitat creation is required in order to achieve mandatory biodiversity net gain.
10. Local designations including Local Sites*, sites that meet the criteria for designation as a Local Site, and Local Nature Reserves should be protected from significant adverse effects. Where adverse effects are likely, permission will only be granted where it can be demonstrated that the effects can be avoided and/or minimised to an acceptable level or, as a last resort, appropriate compensatory measures provided.

*a Local Site is Local Wildlife Site or Local Geological Site

- 9.22 The components of the ecological network within North Lincolnshire have been mapped and are available to view on the North Lincolnshire Council website on the interactive map. This will be updated annually incorporating data supplied by the GLNP.
- 9.23 Development proposals should ensure opportunities are taken to retain, protect and enhance biodiversity and geodiversity features proportionate to their scale, through site layout, design of new buildings and proposals for existing buildings.

- 9.24 Policy DQE3p - Biodiversity and Geodiversity sets out a strategic approach which positively plans for the creation, protection, enhancement and management of sites of biodiversity and geodiversity. It acknowledges the hierarchy of international, national and locally designated sites and refers specifically to the designation process for local sites, linked to processes of monitoring and review undertaken in partnership with the Greater Lincolnshire Nature Partnership.
- 9.25 NPPF emphasises that if harm resulting from development cannot be avoided (through locating development on an alternative site with less harmful impacts), adequately mitigated or, as a last resort, compensated for then planning permission should be refused.
- 9.26 Applicants are encouraged to contact North Lincolnshire Council prior to submitting a planning application if it is suspected the proposals may have an impact on priority habitats and protected species. To protect and enhance North Lincolnshire's natural environment, biodiversity and geodiversity, developers will be expected to submit an ecological survey where there is a reasonable likelihood of the presence of important habitats or species.

Alternatives Considered

No alternative options were considered through the consultation. There was overall support for including a Local Plan policy that positively plans for the creation, protection, enhancement and management of sites of biodiversity and geodiversity. It is felt that the policy creates an appropriate approach to protecting and enhancing biodiversity and geodiversity features proportionate to their scale.

Monitoring

Indicator	Target
Deliver a net gain in biodiversity and/or geodiversity across North Lincolnshire	No specific target
Number of Permissions granted contrary to this policy	No Permissions granted contrary to this policy
Number of Appeals upheld contrary to this policy	No Appeals upheld

LOCAL NATURE RESERVES, NATURE CONSERVATION AND RECREATIONAL LAND USES

- 9.27 Local Nature Reserves (LNRs) are a statutory designation made under Section 21 of the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949 by principal local authorities. Parish and town councils can also declare LNRs but they must have the powers to do so delegated to them by a principal local authority. LNRs are for people and wildlife and are places with wildlife or geological features that are of special interest locally. They offer people opportunities to study or learn about nature or simply to enjoy the area.

Currently Declared Local Nature Reserves

1. It is proposed that the following Currently Declared Local Nature Reserves are protected:
 - a. Ashbyville
 - b. Atkinson's Warren
 - c. Axholme Line, Haxey
 - d. Barton Wolds
 - e. Belshaw Heath
 - f. Brumby Wood
 - g. Conesby
 - h. Elsham Chalk Quarry
 - i. Far Ings
 - j. Frodingham
 - k. Kingsway
 - l. Owston Ferry Castle
 - m. Phoenix
 - n. Phoenix Parkway
 - o. Sawcliffe Hill
 - p. Silica Park
 - q. Waters' Edge
2. The Council currently has a target to declare and manage 2 hectares of Local Nature Reserve for every 1,000 people. Future LNRs will be selected by prioritising sites with high wildlife value, public accessibility and the ability to enter into management agreements.
3. Any development or land use change which is likely to have an adverse impact on a Local Nature Reserve will not be approved unless it can be clearly demonstrated that there are reasons for the proposal which outweigh the need to safeguard the intrinsic nature conservation value of the site or feature.
4. In all cases where development is permitted which may damage the nature conservation value of the site, such damage shall be kept to a minimum. Where development is permitted the use of conditions or planning obligations to ensure the protection and enhancement of the site's nature conservation value and other appropriate compensatory measures will be considered.

Alternatives Considered

No alternative options were considered through the consultation. Support was given for a policy that seeks to protect Local Nature Reserves.

Monitoring

Indicator	Target
Number of Local Nature Reserves protected by this policy	All Local Nature Reserves to be protected by this policy
Amount (hectares) of Local Nature Reserve to be declared and managed for every 1,000 people	2 hectares of Local Nature Reserve to be declared and managed for every 1,000 people
Number of Permissions granted contrary to this policy	No Permissions granted contrary to this policy
Number of Appeals upheld contrary to this policy	No Appeals upheld

9.28 The balance between nature conservation and recreation throughout the Clay Pits area is essential. The area of greatest nature conservation value is to the west of the Humber Bridge where precedence is given to protecting this asset. Therefore, quiet, relatively informal recreation such as fishing and nature study are seen as appropriate uses. Noisy sports as defined in the policy will prejudice nature conservation, particularly causing disturbance to wildfowl, and will not be permitted.

Policy DQE5p: Nature Conservation and Recreational Land Uses

1. Planning permission will not be granted for development which would result in the loss of, or do demonstrable harm to, existing nature conservation and recreational land uses in the following locations:
 - Barton and Barrow Clay Pits**
 - 2. However, planning permission for development related to nature conservation and, where appropriate, for quiet informal recreation will be allowed in the Barton and Barrow Clay Pits areas and immediate surroundings.
 - Humber Bridge to Chowder Ness**
 - 3. However, planning permission for development related to nature conservation and, where appropriate, for quiet informal recreation such as fishing and nature study, will be allowed to the west of the Humber Bridge, between the A15 and Chowder Ness, within the Barton and Barrow Clay Pits.
 - 4. Proposals will not be permitted if they would generate noise of a level and nature sufficient to be perceived as unacceptably intrusive beyond the site boundary.
 - Humber Bridge to New Holland Mere**
 - 5. However, planning permission for development related to nature conservation and general water-based recreation will be allowed to the east of the Humber Bridge between the A15 (T) and at New Holland Mere within the Barton and Barrow Clay Pits.

Alternatives Considered

No alternative options were considered through the consultation. However, support was given for the protection of existing nature conservation and recreational land uses.

Monitoring

Indicator	Target
The amount of loss of, or do demonstrable harm to, existing nature conservation and recreational land uses	No specific target but the amount of loss of, or demonstrable harm done to, existing nature conservation and recreational land uses to be minimised
Number of Permissions granted contrary to this policy	No Permissions granted contrary to this policy
Number of Appeals upheld contrary to this policy	No Appeals upheld

MANAGING FLOOD RISK & SUSTAINABLE URBAN DRAINAGE SYSTEMS

Flood Risk

- 9.29 The NPPF (2019) requires a risk based sequential approach to flood risk, to avoid high risk areas and steer development to areas at lower risk. As well as minimising risk to the development itself, development should not increase flood risk elsewhere, and opportunities should be taken to reduce risk downstream, such as by reducing run off rates.
- 9.30 The Environment Agency (EA) publishes a Flood Map for Planning on their website, which identifies areas with an annual likelihood of flooding greater than 1% in any year for fluvial inland flooding (equivalent to 1 flood event in 100 years). They do not take account of existing flood defences, but show where these are present.
- 9.31 Flood risk is a significant issue in North Lincolnshire with approximately 50% of land being located within high flood risk, and the main Rivers of the Humber, Trent and Ancholme and the Isle of Axholme all set in a low-lying landscape. The sources of flooding in North Lincolnshire include tidal (from the sea) fluvial (from rivers) and pluvial (rainfall). In recent years, surface water flooding has become an increasing concern because of more intensive rainfall events. Tidal flooding is also of concern in terms of higher tide levels and being vulnerable to North Sea tidal surges (as seen, for example, in December 2013).
- 9.32 North Lincolnshire Council is working closely with the EA on a 'Managed Adaptive Approach' (MAA) within river catchment areas between now and the current climate change predictions until 2115 in, for example, the Lincolnshire Lakes development area within the lower Trent floodplain. There is a requirement to comply with the new flood risk climate change guidance issued by the Government in February 2016, and the Humber Flood Risk Management Strategy (2008) is currently being reviewed and is programmed to be published during 2019. This strategy will set out a catchment wide approach and include projects to assist the management of the catchments.

- 9.33 Local Plans should be supported by Strategic Flood Risk Assessments and develop policies to manage flood risk from all sources. North Lincolnshire has a SFRA (2011) in place that is currently being updated as evidence for this new Local Plan. In addition, Local Plans should apply a sequential, risk-based approach to the location of development to avoid, where possible, the risk of flood to people and property. Exceptionally, it may be appropriate to develop land at risk of flooding for sustainability reasons or to avoid economic and social blight in an area. This sequential approach assessment will be carried out as sites for development come forward in the Plan process.
- 9.34 All development will be measured against a risk-based approach to flooding involving Sequential and Exception testing. The Sequential Test looks to steer new development away from areas at risk of flooding wherever possible. To pass the Sequential Test, anyone proposing development in areas at risk of flooding will need to show that reasonably available, acceptable sites are unsustainable in other ways in lower flood risk zones. If the Sequential Test is passed, the Exception Test may be necessary, depending on the vulnerability of the development and the level of flood risk.
- 9.35 The Exception test seeks to ensure that development:
- Provides benefits to the community that outweigh the risks of flooding;
 - Is located on previously developed land where possible; and
 - Is safe and does not increase the risk to others.
- 9.36 Once these tests have been passed, all development proposals in areas considered at risk of flooding will require a detailed Flood Risk Assessment that will demonstrate how it will make a positive contribution to reducing or managing flood risk. Whilst the approach to locating development should be to avoid developing in the high flood risk area (and not at all in the functional flood plain) it will be important to avoid “sterilising” the higher flood risk zoned areas by prohibiting necessary sustainable development in it. A better approach will be to integrate water management into areas that are needed for development in the high flood risk areas with people safety being at the top of the agenda as will be the case with the Lincolnshire Lakes Project Area. This will involve a number of measures including:
- Locating vulnerable types of development to avoid flood risk;
 - Raising floor and land levels and providing safe flow paths within and outside development and safe routes for people;
 - Improving capacity and effectiveness of drainage infrastructure;
 - Providing, enhancing and maintaining flood defences and flood warning systems; and
 - Designing and constructing buildings to be resilient and resistant to the effects of flooding, safe for human occupation and do not increase flood risk to others.

Policy DQE6p: Managing Flood Risk

1. The Council will support development proposals that avoid areas of current or future flood risk, and which do not increase the risk of flooding elsewhere. A risk based sequential approach will be taken to determine the suitability of land for development that uses the principle of locating development, where possible, on land that has a lower flood risk. Consideration will also be given towards the vulnerability of the land use with regard to the flood risk zone. Development in areas of high flood risk will only be permitted where it meets the following prerequisites:
 - a. It can be demonstrated that the development provides wider sustainability benefits to the community and the area that outweigh flood risk.
 - b. The development should be on previously used land. If not, there must be no reasonable alternative developable sites on previously developed land.
 - c. A flood risk assessment has demonstrated that the development will be safe, without increasing flood risk elsewhere by integrating water management methods into development.
2. Development within the Lincolnshire Lakes area will be required to comply with the flood management principles set out in the Western Scunthorpe Urban Extension Exception Test Strategy. Any further flood management proposals will have to be agreed by both the council and the Environment Agency. Development proposals in flood risk areas which come forward in North Lincolnshire shall be guided by the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment for North Lincolnshire and North East Lincolnshire and the Environment Agency's Standing Advice. This will ensure that proposals include site-specific flood risk assessments which take into account strategic flood management objectives and properly apply the Sequential and, where necessary, Exception Tests.
3. Development will be permitted providing it is demonstrated that:
 - a. the peak rate of run-off over the lifetime of the development, allowing for climate change, is no greater for the developed site than it was for the undeveloped site;
 - b. the post-development volume of run-off, allowing for climate change over the development lifetime, is no greater than it would have been for the undeveloped site. If this cannot be achieved then the maximum discharge from the site should not exceed the calculated greenfield run off rate for all rainfall events up to and including the 1 in 100 year event plus allowance for climate change;
 - c. the development is designed so that the flooding of property in and adjacent to the development, would not occur for a 1 in 100 year event, plus an allowance for climate change and exceedance flood flow paths are taken into account during the master plan stage;
 - d. the final discharge locations have the capacity to receive all foul and surface water flows from the development, including discharge by infiltration, into water bodies and into sewers;
 - e. there is a management and maintenance plan for the lifetime of the development, which shall include the arrangements for adoption by any public authority, statutory undertaker or management company and any other arrangements to secure the operation of the scheme throughout its lifetime; and
 - f. the final destination of the discharge complies with the following priority order:
 - i. firstly, to ground via infiltration;
 - ii. secondly, to a water body; and
 - iii. thirdly, to a surface water sewer.

9.37 This policy is needed to safeguard people and property from the risks of flooding. The risks of flooding in North Lincolnshire are forecasted to increase due to climate change.

Alternatives Considered

Four options for Flood Risk were proposed.

- Option A - No development should be allowed in areas of functional flood plain.
- Option B - Some development should be allowed in areas of high flood risk if the benefits outweigh the risk.
- Option C - Continue with the flood risk management approach set out in the North Lincolnshire Core Strategy.
- Option D - Develop a flexible policy approach in compliance with national and local policy (i.e., to not create flood risk on-site or elsewhere and to provide safe development) to development in flood risk areas bearing in mind we have many existing settlements within flood risk areas. Option D gained the most support so this option has been taken forward.

Monitoring

Indicator	Target
Number of Permissions granted contrary to this policy	No Permissions granted contrary to this policy
Number of Appeals upheld contrary to this policy	No Appeals upheld

SUSTAINABLE URBAN DRAINAGE SYSTEMS

9.38 Well planned and well-designed surface water management infrastructure is necessary for the creation and ongoing maintenance of sustainable communities. It provides a flood risk management function alongside benefits for amenity and biodiversity and can be linked to a network of green (and blue) open spaces. It can also conserve water resources and help improve the quality of water as it passes through the system. All these aspects make a significant contribution to climate change adaption.

9.39 The Government is committed to protecting people and property from flood risk and expects that SuDS will be provided in new developments wherever this is appropriate. However, there is still a risk that SuDS are seen as later additions to development, and do not fully realise their potential multifunctional benefits. They should be considered from the beginning of the design and masterplanning process, taking account of all opportunities and constraints, including heritage and wildlife assets.

9.40 There are a wide range of measures that can be implemented to find suitable solutions for all sites. Detailed guidance on developing proposals that include the use of SuDS that effectively manage water, are aesthetically pleasing, conserve, accommodate and enhance biodiversity, and provide amenity for local residents is provided in the SuDS and Flood Risk Guidance Document. This provides practical guidance on what type of SuDS are appropriate to the development depending on the size and location.

Policy DQE7p: Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems

1. Development proposals must incorporate appropriate sustainable surface water drainage systems (SuDS) appropriate to the nature of the site.
2. Development proposals will be required to demonstrate that:
 - a. Surface water drainage schemes comply with the Sustainable Drainage Systems and Flood Risk Guidance Document or successor documents;
 - b. Opportunities have been taken to integrate sustainable drainage with the development, create amenity, enhance biodiversity, and contribute to a network of green (and blue) open space;
 - c. Surface water is managed close to its source and on the surface where it is practicable to do so;
 - d. Maximum use has been made of low land take drainage measures, such as rain water recycling, green roofs, permeable surfaces and water butts;
 - e. Appropriate pollution control measures have been incorporated, including multiple component treatment trains; and
 - f. Arrangements have been established for the whole life management and maintenance of surface water drainage systems.

Alternatives Considered

No alternative options considered. Local planning authorities are now expected to ensure that sustainable drainage systems, for the management of runoff, are put in place on planning applications relating to major development, unless demonstrated to be inappropriate. Therefore, a policy was necessary.

Monitoring

Indicator	Target
Number of Permissions granted contrary to this policy	No Permissions granted contrary to this policy
Number of Appeals upheld contrary to this policy	No Appeals upheld

CLIMATE CHANGE & LOW CARBON LIVING

- 9.41 Meeting the challenge of climate change is a key role for the planning system by contributing to the delivery of the most sustainable development and by shaping communities that are resilient to the unavoidable consequences of a changing climate.
- 9.42 It is widely recognised that mankind's use of fossil fuels are contributing to climate change. Reducing greenhouse gas emissions is a key part of limiting climate change, and will require action from the global to the local level.

- 9.43 In 2008, the UK became the first country to introduce a long-term legally binding framework to reduce its impact on climate change. The Climate Change Act 2008 sets targets that require greenhouse gas emissions to be reduced by at least 80% by 2050 compared to 1990 levels, with a reduction of at least 34% by 2020 as an interim step.
- 9.44 'Low carbon living' means reducing our carbon footprint through changing lifestyles, both directly (such as not travelling by car) and indirectly (such as purchasing local grown food) and will require wide ranging changes across society and the economy to protect the environment. Spatial planning has an important role to play in meeting the climate change challenge through increasing the resilience of communities and infrastructure through influencing the location and design of development.
- 9.45 One of the key themes within the NPPF is to support the transition to a low carbon future in a changing climate and encourage the use of renewable and low carbon energy resources. The revised NPPF, published in February 2019, retains a link between local planning policy and the Climate Change Act 2008. This means all local plans must set a carbon dioxide emissions reduction target. North Lincolnshire has set a 25% CO₂ reduction target in the council's Carbon Management Strategy covering the period 2017-22. Increasing the amount of energy from renewable and low carbon technologies will also help to make sure the UK has a secure energy supply, reduce greenhouse gas emission to slow down climate change and stimulate investment in new jobs and businesses.
- 9.46 To contribute to meeting the climate change challenge and achieve our national and local carbon reduction targets, North Lincolnshire is seeking to cut carbon emissions locally. Our policy DQE7p sets out how development proposals should contribute to tackling climate change through mitigation and resilience measures, in addition to other policies contained within this plan.

Policy DQE8p: Climate Change & Low Carbon Living

1. Proposals for development should be designed to mitigate the impacts of climate change and reduce carbon emissions to meet the climate change challenge.
2. All development proposals should be resilient to climate change and decrease the negative impacts of climate change on neighbouring areas by:
 - a. Being designed to ensure that the development is resilient to climate change;
 - b. Incorporating design features and technologies to meet high water efficiency standards to support water recycling and the conservation of water resources;
 - c. Through their location, taking into account the risk of flooding from all sources of flooding;
 - d. Incorporating the use of sustainable drainage systems, where practicable, to minimise and control surface water run-off; and
 - e. Incorporating, where feasible, multi-functional green infrastructure, which can help species adapt to climate change through preventing fragmentation or isolation of habitats, reduce the heating of the urban environment, and manage flooding.

3. All development proposals should promote low carbon living through the reduction of carbon emissions by:
 - a. Through their location, layout and pattern of development, reduce the need to travel for both people and goods, and promote the use of sustainable modes of transport;
 - b. Being designed to reduce energy consumption through methods such as high standards of insulation, avoiding development in areas subject to significant effects from shadow, wind and frost, using natural lighting and ventilation and capturing the sun's heat where appropriate;
 - c. Utilising decentralised, renewable and low carbon energy;
 - d. Maximising the reuse or recycling of materials in new construction and making the best use of existing building and infrastructure;
 - e. Incorporating multi-functional green infrastructure, which can provide carbon storage and provide environments that encourage walking and cycling;
 - f. Protecting and enhancing habitats that provide important carbon sinks, including peat habitats and woodland; and
 - g. Incorporating electric vehicle charging facilities.
4. Current Building Regulations set out requirements concerning the conservation of fuel and power in buildings. However, to support the transition to a low carbon economy, and achieve the NPPF aim of moving to a low carbon future, zero carbon development, it is also necessary to encourage the greater use of renewable and low carbon energy in new development.
5. Proposals for major development should:
 - a. For residential development of 11 dwellings or more meet at least 10% of their energy needs from renewable and/or other low carbon energy source(s).
 - b. For non-domestic developments of 1,000 square metres of floor space and above, achieve "Very Good" in BREEAM assessments and negotiate for "Excellent" where viable and feasible.
 - c. Large-scale schemes that would generate a significant source or demand for heat should be supported by evidence considering the feasibility of serving the development by means of a district heating system.
6. Proposals which address one or more of the above principles (whether in relation to an existing development or as part of a wider new development scheme) which are poorly designed and/or located and which have a detrimental impact on the landscape, the amenity of residents, or the natural and built environment, will be refused.

9.47 This policy aims to reduce the size of North Lincolnshire's carbon footprint and mitigate the effects of climate change. It promotes resilience and efficiency measures for both construction and use which are often the most cost-efficient and effective means of achieving carbon reduction. In turn, this should bring about energy cost savings for future occupiers.

9.48 Technologies and best practice within the sustainable construction industry is moving at a fast pace. It is anticipated that during the life of the plan there will be changes to how optimal building performance is achieved. The Council will publish supplementary guidance to support the implementation of the policies in this chapter. This will be updated regularly to reflect these improvements. It will provide the latest guidance to support the national and regional direction towards a low carbon and climate resilient North Lincolnshire.

9.49 Moreover, the Clean Growth Strategy 2018 sets out fundamental changes to Government Energy policy that will also impact on policies set out in the Local Plan. Supplementary guidance will have to reflect the following key Government policies:

- The UK will phase out the installation of fossil fuel heating such as gas, in buildings from 2025.
- Supporting the building and extension of heat networks across the country.
- Converting the gas grid to a Hydrogen Grid by 2050 through the 'Hydrogen Pathway'.
- Ending the sale of new petrol and diesel cars by 2040 and developing 'one of the best electric vehicle charging networks in the World'.

Alternatives Considered

No alternative options were considered. National planning policy requires the planning system to support the transition to a low carbon future in a changing climate taking into account flood risk. Local policy should be in place to support the reduction of carbon emissions and improve resilience.

Monitoring

Indicator	Target
Percentage of residential schemes containing 11 dwellings or more meeting at least 10% of their energy needs from renewable and/or other low carbon energy source(s).	100% of residential schemes containing 11 dwellings or more meeting at least 10% of their energy needs from renewable and/or other low carbon energy source(s).
Percentage of non-domestic developments of 1,000 square metres of floor space and above, achieve "Very Good" in BREEAM assessments.	100% of non-domestic developments of 1,000 square metres of floor space and above, achieve "Very Good" in BREEAM assessments.
Number of large-scale schemes that would generate a significant source or demand for heat supported by evidence considering the feasibility of serving the development by means of a district heating system.	No specific target.
Number of appeals upheld contrary to this policy.	No appeals upheld contrary to this policy.

RENEWABLE ENERGY PROPOSALS

9.50 'Policy DQE9p - Renewable Energy Proposals' provides a positive framework for delivering sustainable energy supplies and will ensure that North Lincolnshire contributes to achieving national renewable energy generation. The policy applies to proposals for all types of renewable and low carbon energy infrastructure, including biomass and biofuels technologies, energy from waste, solar, geothermal energy, wind turbines (onshore and onshore facilities required for the manufacture, commissioning, installation and servicing of offshore windfarms) hydro-power and micro-generation.

- 9.51 The deployment of larger-scale renewable energy schemes can have a range of positive or negative effects on nearby communities. They can provide landowners with the opportunity for rural diversification, deliver local jobs and opportunities for community based schemes and benefits. However, proposals can have a range of impacts that will vary depending on the scale of development, type of area where the development is proposed and type of low carbon and renewable energy technology deployed.
- 9.52 When considering planning applications for renewable energy schemes, an assessment will need to take account of the impacts on landscape, townscape, natural, historical and cultural features, flood risk and areas of nature conservation interests. Proposals should also ensure that high quality design features are used to minimise the impacts on the amenity of the area in respect of visual intrusion, noise, dust and odour and traffic generation.
- 9.53 In determining the character and sensitivity of the landscape to accommodate development, the impact of the development on the historic character, sense of place, tranquillity and remoteness of the landscape should be considered. Energy development can occasionally appear to be 'industrial' in nature, and where there are proposals in rural areas it will be important to ensure that any cumulative effects do not lead to a perception of industrialisation, either within a particular landscape or in the wider area. In assessing the capacity of the landscape to accept energy development, it will be important to consider 'Policy DQE1p - Protection of Landscape, Townscape and Views' in conjunction with the North Lincolnshire Landscape Character Assessment.
- 9.54 Development can impact on biodiversity at construction, operation and decommissioning stages. This can be due to emissions, waste products and physical alterations to the environment arising from the development's footprint/structure and impacts on soil, hydrology and water quality. Proposals should, therefore, also be considered against 'Policy BG1 - Biodiversity and Geodiversity' and, where possible, mitigation measures should be used to compensate and improve biodiversity.
- 9.55 The council will give particular consideration to the potential for any proposal to disturb or displace SPA birds caused by the loss of suitable feeding, roosting and loafing sites or have the potential for damage or distance to the Humber Estuary Special Area of Conservation (SAC).
- 9.56 The Council has undertaken a Renewable Energy Opportunity Mapping Study to identify broad areas which are potentially suitable for wind energy and ground mounted solar PV development. This study analysed the main constraints which would affect such development, and included consideration of:
1. Landscape character and sensitivity;
 2. Proximity to vulnerable receptors (settlements);
 3. Natural and historic designations; and
 4. Proximity to grid connections.

Policy DQE9p: Renewable Energy Proposals

1. North Lincolnshire Council will support opportunities to maximise renewable energy capacity within North Lincolnshire.
2. Proposals for renewable energy development will be supported where any significant adverse impacts are satisfactorily minimised and the residual harm is outweighed by the public benefits of the proposal. Development and their associated infrastructure will be assessed on their merits and subject to the following impact considerations, taking account of individual and cumulative effects:
 - a. the scale and nature of the impacts on landscape and townscape, particularly having regard to the North Lincolnshire Landscape Character Assessment and impact on the setting and scenic beauty of the Proposed Extension to the Lincolnshire Wolds Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB);
 - b. local amenity including noise, air quality, traffic, vibration, dust and visual impact;
 - c. ecology, geology or hydrology, including impacts of the development on deep peat areas, nature conservation features, biodiversity and geodiversity including habitats and species;
 - d. the historic environment, including individual and groups of heritage assets;
 - e. telecommunications and other networks including the need for additional cabling to connect to the National Grid, electromagnetic production and interference, and aeronautical impacts such as on radar systems;
 - f. Public Rights of Way including access tracks through the site, of supporting infrastructure, associated cables and operational equipment; highway safety and network capacity;
 - g. the risk of flooding; and
 - h. land stability, contamination, soils resources, and loss of agricultural land.
3. Where a development proposal would have a landscape impact the planning application should be accompanied by a detailed Landscape Impact Assessment undertaken by a suitably qualified and experienced person.
4. Where appropriate, proposals should include provision for decommissioning at the end of their operational life. Where decommissioning is necessary, the site should be restored with minimal adverse impact on amenity, landscape and biodiversity, and opportunities should be taken to enhance these features.
5. Proposals for wind and solar energy development will be permitted if:
 - a. the development is located in one of the following broad areas as identified on the Policies Map:
 - i. Industrial landscape – at the South Humber Bank strategic employment site;
 - ii. Northern Lincolnshire Edge – to the east and north of the Scunthorpe & Bottesford Urban Area.
 - b. it is located in an area that is identified as potentially suitable for wind energy development in an adopted Neighbourhood Plan.

9.57 The UK has committed to meeting a greater proportion of its future demand for energy through renewables, and this is reflected in recent legislation. EU Directive 2009/28/EC requires the UK to source 15% of its energy from renewable sources by 2020.

- 9.58 The energy sector in North Lincolnshire is not only important to both the UK and local economy, but also plays a significant role in ensuring the UK’s fuel security. The presence of the South Humber Bank ports, combined with North Lincolnshire's infrastructure network associated with a long history of industry and energy production provides excellent foundations for a range of onshore renewable energy technologies to continue to be developed.

- 9.59 The ‘Low Carbon and Renewable Energy Capacity in Yorkshire and Humber Study’ (2011) specifically recognises the potential for wind power development in North Lincolnshire (however the area has taken its fair share of wind farms and will only consider schemes in appropriate locations), biomass energy generation and biogas generation into the grid.

- 9.60 Other renewable energy technologies such as solar/photovoltaics and heat pumps, are expected to become more affordable and popular over the plan period and community schemes have the potential to play an increasing role in delivering renewable energy.

Alternatives Considered

Consideration for possible wind and solar energy development was given to broad areas identified in the North Lincolnshire Landscape Character Assessment, but it is felt that the policy directs development to the area’s most appropriate landscapes. Support was given for the policy which is considered to provide a positive framework for delivering sustainable energy supplies.

Monitoring

Indicator	Target
Amount of renewable energy capacity within North Lincolnshire	No specific target, but maximise renewable energy capacity within North Lincolnshire
Number of Renewable Energy Proposal Permissions granted in accordance with this policy	All Renewable Energy Proposal Permissions granted in accordance with this policy
Number of Renewable Energy Proposal Permissions granted contrary to this policy	No Renewable Energy Proposals Permissions granted contrary to this policy
Number of Renewable Energy Proposal Appeals upheld contrary to this policy	No Renewable Energy Proposal Appeals upheld contrary to this policy

LOCAL GREEN SPACE

- 9.61 Local Green Space is a national designation as referenced in NPPF. It aims to protect green areas or spaces which are demonstrably special to a local community and hold a particular local significance. Local Green Space designation can be used where the green space is: in reasonably close proximity to the community it serves; and demonstrably special to a local community and holds a particular local significance, for example because of its beauty, historic significance, recreational value (including playing fields), tranquillity or richness of its wildlife; and local in character and is not an extensive tract of land.

9.62 Communities can identify green spaces of particular local significance for special protection. This local significance can be because of the green space’s beauty, historic importance, recreational value, tranquillity or richness of its wildlife. The designation of land as Local Green Space through local and neighbourhood plans allows communities to identify and protect green areas of particular importance to them. All designated Local Green Space sites are shown on the Policies Map.

Policy DQE10p: Local Green Space

1. Local Green Spaces identified on the Policies Map will be protected from development in line with NPPF. This will exclude any new development on these sites other than in very special circumstances. Only proposals that will protect and enhance Local Green Spaces and are demonstrably supported by the local community will be permitted.
2. North Lincolnshire Council will encourage local communities to promote Local Green Spaces through the development of a Neighbourhood Plan, where appropriate.

9.63 Local Green Spaces identify areas of particular importance and should be protected. Development proposals will be permitted only where these areas will not be adversely affected, and planning permission will only be granted for development proposals in very special circumstances. These exceptions are set out in the NPPF.

9.64 Account should be taken of the intrinsic character and beauty of the area and the need to support thriving rural communities within it, in the context of a presumption in favour of sustainable development. Development that detracts from the unique nature of the local landscape will not be encouraged.

Alternatives Considered

No alternative options were considered through the consultation. However, support was given for the policy which will enable local communities to promote green areas or spaces which are demonstrably special.

Monitoring

Indicator	Target
Number of Local Green Spaces that are protected from development	All Local Green Spaces to be protected from development
Number of Permissions granted in accordance with this policy	All Permissions granted in accordance with this policy
Number of Permissions granted contrary to this policy	No Permissions granted contrary to this policy
Number of Appeals upheld contrary to this policy	No Appeals upheld contrary to this policy

IMPORTANT OPEN SPACE

- 9.65 In addition to Local Green Space designations this Local Plan also protects other existing Important Open Spaces (IOS). These open spaces are different from Local Green Spaces in that Local Green Spaces have been identified by local communities, whereas Important Open Spaces have been identified by North Lincolnshire Council as spaces important to the settlement in which they are located.
- 9.66 North Lincolnshire has a wide variety of IOS which performs a range of functions and delivers a wealth of benefits to local people and wildlife. Parks and gardens, amenity space, play space for children/teenagers, outdoor sports facilities and allotments are all examples of publicly accessible IOS valued for their recreational and social functions, but they also contribute to the visual amenity and character of a settlement, providing relief from the built up area.
- 9.67 It is important to note that public or private open spaces with limited or no public access can also perform an important role in contributing to the local community and quality of life. Open, undeveloped spaces within a settlement can be as important as the built environment in giving a settlement its unique character and form. Some open spaces, especially towards the edge of a settlement, are important in preserving the setting of that settlement. Other open spaces, including those not publicly accessible, provide breaks in the street scene and may allow views of the surrounding countryside to be enjoyed from within the settlement.
- 9.68 There are numerous important amenity areas within North Lincolnshire. Such areas include not only public open space and recreational land, but also a multitude of areas in private ownership. Many areas are accessible for enjoyment by the public but others are identified purely for landscape or nature conservation reasons. These areas help to improve the image of North Lincolnshire and contribute to our local distinctiveness. They also assist greatly in promoting the health and welfare of the community and can include, for example, orchards or groups of heritage varieties of fruit trees, ridge and furrow grassland, semi-improved grassland, informal play areas, and areas with historic associations (parish pump, Haxey Hood, etc.).

Policy DQE11p: Important Open Space

1. An area identified as Important Open Space on the Policies Map will be safeguarded from development unless it can be demonstrated that:
 - a. in the case of publicly accessible open space there is an identified over-provision of that particular type of open space in the community area;
 - b. in the case of publicly accessible open space the site is not required for alternative recreational uses or suitable alternative open space can be provided on a replacement site or by enhancing existing open space serving the community area;
 - c. there are no significant detrimental impacts on the character and appearance of the surrounding area, ecology and any heritage assets;
 - d. the proposal is for appropriate recreational, community and nature conservation uses where any building and structures do not undermine the fundamental purpose and nature of the open space concerned; and
 - e. the area would be enhanced for the recreational, amenity, biodiversity or other benefits it provides.
2. Development on an area of Important Open Space will only be permitted where it would not adversely affect its open character, visual amenity or wildlife value or compromise the gap between conflicting land uses.
3. Where development is permitted, measures shall be taken to minimise its impact or, where necessary, make a positive contribution to such areas.

9.69 There are many areas of landscape which make a significant contribution to the character and amenity of settlements. In larger settlements they provide breaks between built up areas and often serve as important buffers between conflicting land uses such as housing and industry. They are not necessarily open to public access and can, for example, create a 'green lung' within what would otherwise be a predominantly built-up area. Within settlements they can also provide valuable havens and corridors for the establishment and movement of a variety of wildlife.

9.70 Within smaller settlements they provide open areas important to their character and setting and may also contain interesting plants and animals. These important amenity areas are defined on the Policies Map and should be protected from development which would adversely affect them. It is, therefore, essential that such areas are retained and enhanced, wherever possible. This could be promoted via the development of neighbourhood plans, parish appraisals, etc.

Alternatives Considered

No alternative options were considered through the consultation. However, support was given for the policy which has updated and adapted sites in Saved NLLP Policy LC11 and which seeks to safeguard sites identified by North Lincolnshire Council as spaces important to the settlement in which they are located.

Monitoring

Indicator	Target
Amount of development allowed on areas of Important Open Space contrary to this policy	No development to be allowed on areas of Important Open Space contrary to this policy
Number of Permissions granted in accordance with this policy	All Permissions granted in accordance with this policy
Number of Permissions granted contrary to this policy	No Permissions granted contrary to this policy
Number of Appeals upheld contrary to this policy	No Appeals upheld contrary to this policy

PROVISION OF GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE

- 9.71 Green Infrastructure (or 'GI' as it is often referred) is a strategic network of multifunctional green and blue spaces and the connections between them in both urban and rural areas. Green infrastructure is capable of delivering a range of environmental, economic, health and quality of life benefits for local communities, and the GI network may comprise of spaces in public or private ownership, with or without public access. The elements that make up green infrastructure include parks, playing fields, gardens, agricultural fields, wildlife corridors and woodlands. Blue infrastructure includes the estuary and wetlands, water bodies, rivers, streams, and sustainable drainage systems.
- 9.72 Historically, green and blue spaces have generally been valued for single uses; for example, for recreation and ecological value or simply for their aesthetic appeal. In reality, though, these spaces can deliver a number of different functions.
- 9.73 Green infrastructure offers a range of direct and indirect benefits including addressing climate change adaptation and mitigation, improving quality of place, improving physical and mental health and social wellbeing, sustaining economic growth and investment, protecting and enhancing biodiversity, providing opportunities for local food production, and protecting and enhancing landscape character and the setting of heritage assets. These benefits have been termed 'ecosystem services'.
- 9.74 Applying a green infrastructure approach (using the term to encompass both green and blue space) can recognise different functions and, importantly, can meet numerous wider objectives. NPPF February 2019 states that green infrastructure is: "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".
- 9.75 Individual elements of the green infrastructure network can serve a useful purpose without being connected. However, connectivity between different green infrastructure assets can maximise the benefits they generate. For example, well-connected green infrastructure assets can create a network that allows and encourages movement by people and wildlife, helping to maximise their benefits and support adaptation and resilience to a changing climate, such as potentially dramatic increases in rainfall.

- 9.76 In 2019, the Council and GLNP produced a Green Infrastructure Network in partnership with local wildlife organisations. This highlights areas of existing habitats and areas where there are deficiencies in green infrastructure at the strategic level across North Lincolnshire and will identify opportunities to enhance the network.
- 9.77 The GI network is likely to come under increasing pressure from new development as part of North Lincolnshire's planned growth, particularly within and around the main urban settlements. However, exciting new development across that area also brings opportunities to enhance the GI network and deliver new green infrastructure that will benefit everyone in North Lincolnshire.
- 9.78 New development should contribute to the extension of the green infrastructure network and by doing so help to address deficiencies in its provision and provide good quality connections to the network and throughout the development. Green infrastructure should be designed and managed as a multifunctional resource capable of delivering a wide range of environmental and quality of life benefits for local communities.

Policy DQE12p: Green Infrastructure Network

1. The Council aims to maintain and improve the green infrastructure network by enhancing, creating and managing multifunctional green space within and around settlements that are well connected to each other and the wider countryside.
2. Development proposals which are consistent with and assist delivery of the opportunities, priorities and initiatives identified in the latest North Lincolnshire Green Infrastructure Network will be supported.
3. Proposals that cause loss or harm to this network will not be permitted unless the need for and benefits of the development demonstrably outweigh any adverse impacts. Where adverse impacts on green infrastructure are unavoidable, development will only be permitted if suitable mitigation measures for the network are provided.
4. Development proposals should ensure that existing and new green infrastructure is considered and integrated into scheme design from the outset. Where new green infrastructure is proposed, the design should maximise the delivery of ecosystem services and support healthy and active lifestyles.
5. Development proposals must protect the linear features of the green infrastructure network that provides connectivity between green infrastructure assets, including public rights of way, bridleways, cycleways and waterways, and take opportunities to improve such features.
6. Contributions will be expected from new development towards the establishment, enhancement and ongoing management of green infrastructure by contributing to the development of the existing green infrastructure network in accordance with the Developer Contributions SPD.

- 9.79 Policy DQE12p acknowledges the value of promoting a green infrastructure network, providing accessible green corridors, forming healthy traffic-free links, connecting formal and informal green space, softening development edges, and maintaining the independent status and character of individual settlements.
- 9.80 In order to identify opportunities for protecting, enhancing and connecting green infrastructure assets as part of new development, the green infrastructure network should be viewed and considered alongside other relevant policies in this Local Plan.

Alternatives Considered

No alternative options were considered through the consultation. However, support was given for the policy which acknowledges the value of promoting a green infrastructure network throughout North Lincolnshire. It is felt the policy will create environmental and quality of life benefits.

Monitoring

Indicator	Target
The amount of green space in North Lincolnshire enhanced, created and managed	Maximise the amount of green space that is enhanced, created and managed
The amount of contributions from new development towards the establishment, enhancement and ongoing management of green infrastructure	No specific target, but maximise the amount of contributions from new development towards the establishment, enhancement and ongoing management of green infrastructure

TREES, WOODLAND AND HEDGEROWS

- 9.81 North Lincolnshire's trees and woodland are of particular importance in contributing to the character of the countryside. Similarly, hedgerows are important to the character of the area, including historic character, particularly in relation to the scale and pattern of the landscape and as a wildlife resource. In order to maintain and enhance North Lincolnshire's attractiveness and character these features should be protected through the control of development.
- 9.82 Farmers and landowners should be encouraged to increase tree and hedgerow planting, where appropriate, to the local landscape character and improve the management of such valuable features, including the retention of older trees where these are not prejudicial to public safety.

Policy DQE13p: Protection of Trees, Woodland and Hedgerows

- Proposals for all new development will, wherever possible, ensure the retention of trees, woodland and hedgerows. Particular regard will be given to the protection of:
 - the amenity value of trees, woodland and hedgerows within settlements; and
 - ancient woodlands and historic hedgerows.
- Planning permission will be refused for development that results in the loss, deterioration or fragmentation of irreplaceable habitats including ancient woodland and aged or veteran trees unless the need for, and benefits of, the development in that location clearly outweighs the loss or harm.
- Where trees which contribute to local amenity or local landscape character are at risk the Council will be proactive in protecting such features through the use of Tree Preservation Orders or other applications of its powers.
- Landscaping and tree and hedgerow planting schemes will be required to accompany applications for new development, where appropriate.

Alternatives Considered

No alternative options were considered through the consultation. However, support was given for the policy which values the importance of North Lincolnshire's trees, woodland and hedgerows.

Monitoring

Indicator	Target
Number of trees and amount of woodland and hedgerows retained and protected	All trees, woodland and hedgerows to be retained and protected
Number of Permissions granted in accordance with this policy	All Permissions granted in accordance with this policy
Number of Permissions granted contrary to this policy	No Permissions granted contrary to this policy
Number of Appeals upheld contrary to this policy	No Appeals upheld contrary to this policy