

Green Infrastructure, Open Space Sport and Recreation Background Paper

September 2017

1. Introduction

- 1.1. This paper sets out the evidence and information that has been used to inform the green infrastructure related policies contained within the Publication Draft Wyre Local Plan. The aim of green infrastructure planning is to ensure that a network of multifunctional green space is provided both in and around urban areas, to strengthen the relationship between towns, villages and the surrounding countryside.
- 1.2. It is important to first appreciate what the term green infrastructure means. Green Infrastructure, as defined in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), 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'.
- 1.3. Green infrastructure planning policies should ensure that future strategic development delivers, protects, improves and enhances the green infrastructure network, as well as seeks to contribute to the creation of sustainable communities through the provision of a wide range of ecosystem services and quality of life and health benefits for both future and existing residents.

2. Evidence Summary

- 2.1. Wyre Borough Council commissioned consultants to produce a Green Infrastructure Study in support of the Local Plan. The Green Infrastructure Study is made up of a number of documents:
 - A Green Infrastructure Strategy
 - An Open Space Audit and Needs Assessment Evidence Base Report
 - A Playing Pitch Strategy
- 2.2. The Green Infrastructure Strategy is a broad reaching strategy for GI and greenspace management in Wyre; it is not just a planning policy evidence document. It will be used by a range of different audiences and delivered by a number of partners beyond planning policy. It seeks to ensure that new built development within Wyre protects and enhances the Green Infrastructure.
- 2.3. To assist in this it carried out an in-depth study of current provision on all types of GI. It found that GI represents over 94% of Wyre's total surface area. The breakdown of green infrastructure coverage by type is as follows:

	Area (Ha)	% of total land area	% of total GI
Cultivated land	18531.8	51.22%	54.23%
Agricultural land	18514.5	51.17%	54.18%
Allotment, community garden or urban farm	2.0	0.01%	0.01%
Orchard	15.3	0.04%	0.04%
Recreational and other amenity grounds	2309.1	6.38%	6.76%
Cemetery, churchyard or burial ground	21.1	0.06%	0.06%
General amenity space	355.0	0.98%	1.04%
Institutional grounds	183.7	0.51%	0.54%
Outdoor sports facility	329.9	0.91%	0.97%
Park or public garden	41.4	0.11%	0.12%
Private domestic garden	1378.0	3.81%	4.03%
Natural and semi-natural space	13201.9	36.49%	38.63%
Coastal habitat	7607.7	21.03%	22.26%
Grassland, heathland, moorland or scrubland	3020.3	8.35%	8.84%
Water body	228.8	0.63%	0.67%
Water course	833.2	2.30%	2.44%
Wetland	375.3	1.04%	1.10%
Woodland	1136.6	3.14%	3.33%
Other green infrastructure	128.6	0.36%	0.38%
Derelict land	128.6	0.36%	0.38%
Green roof	0.0	0.00%	0.00%
Street trees	No data available	No data available	No data available
Total	34171.4	94.45%	100.00%

2.4. Appendix 1 to the Green Infrastructure Strategy provides a more local GI profile for each of the nine sub-areas of the Borough. These profiles show a snap-shot of current coverage and provision of GI at a more detailed scale. These profiles can be used by policy makers and developers to provide context for decisions on new development.

2.5. The Green Infrastructure Strategy also identifies a number of key strategic green infrastructure assets. These sites are the top performing sites in the Borough which should be protected and retained as green infrastructure. These are:

- Forest of Bowland AONB;
- Morecambe Bay Limestone and Wetlands NIA;
- River Wyre and tributaries;
- Sands and coastal habitats;
- Green corridor trails including the Lancaster Canal, Wyre Way and North West Coastal Trail (the latter linking into the Fylde Coast sub-region);
- Key urban sites which coincide with key parks and open spaces under the control of Wyre Council (Open Space Sites: FL38 Marine Gardens, FL39 Mount Gardens, FL28 Memorial Park, CLE4 The Towers, CLE37 North Drive, CLE11 Jubilee Gardens, TH27 Pheasant Wood, TH43/44 Hawthorne Park, TH4 Kenyon Gardens, PLF1 Tithebarn Park, PLF10 Cottam Hall and PLF24 Vicarage Park & Jean Stansfield Memorial Park);
- Key countryside sites namely: TH5 Wyre Estuary Country Park, MY3 Myerscough College, WM1 Winmarleigh Moss, BB1 Brock Bottom and GAR5 Garstang Millennium Green.

2.6. One of the critical interventions identified in the Green Infrastructure Strategy is the need to include a Green Infrastructure Policy in the Wyre Local Plan. The inclusion of a Green Infrastructure policy is considered necessary in the Strategy to maintain

the momentum of delivery and directly impact on the application of policy through development management.

- 2.7. The other two documents that make up the Green Infrastructure Study are the Open Space Audit and Needs Assessment Evidence Base Report and the Playing Pitch Strategy.
- 2.8. The Open Space Audit and Needs Assessment Evidence Base Report was produced as an update to the 2010 Open Space Audit. It collates data on each of the open space typologies below:
 - Parks and gardens
 - Amenity green space
 - Natural and semi natural green space
 - Designated play spaces for children and young people
 - Allotments
 - Green corridors
 - Playing pitches.
- 2.9. The study sets a quantity standard for the provision of each of these types of open space. The standards were set after a benchmarking exercise of similar local authorities drawn from ONS (Office of National Statistics) data and the Wyre Great Outdoors Survey (2013).
- 2.10. The study analyses the current provision of open space of each of these types against the standard in sub areas across the Borough. It shows that the quantitative standards are being met to varying degrees across the Borough with some areas showing significant surplus and others significant deficit. Therefore, when considering policy implications emphasis should be placed on protecting existing provision in areas where the standards are met whilst seeking to increase provision in areas where the standards are not being achieved.
- 2.11. The study also contains access and quality standards that development should aim to achieve.
- 2.12. The Playing Pitch Strategy has been produced in accordance with the Playing Pitch Guidance (Sport England 2013). It assesses the current provision of sports pitches across the borough. An Addendum note seeks to combine information on demand and supply in a balancing exercise to assess if there is a need for further pitches in an area or sub area. The findings of the Playing Pitch Strategy are intended to be (and have been) fed into the planning policy within the Local Plan.
- 2.13. The PPS is consistent with the Wyre Green Infrastructure Strategy (GIS) as it considers each sport by the following eight sub-areas: Fleetwood, Thornton, Cleveleys, Poulton-le-Fylde, Rural Plain, Mosslands, Central Corridor and Rural East and Uplands.
- 2.14. The PPS contains action plans corresponding to each of the above areas with short, medium and long term actions for each playing pitch location. There is also an overall Wyre Strategy, a Planning and Investment Strategy as well as individual strategies for each sport. These strategies and action plans enable delivery of recommendations as there are no playing pitch standards (provision per head of population) in the PPS because Sport England has moved away from this approach.

- 2.15. The PPS indicates that there is a general need to protect existing playing pitches with some key facilities such as council owned football pitches currently being overplayed. This means that the current usage of a pitch exceeds the recommended weekly carrying capacity, based on the quality of the pitch
- 2.16. In order to consider the future demand for pitches the PPS considers team generation rates (TGRs) based upon future sports participation and population alongside responses from clubs indicating their future plans. The club data is normally greater than the population based data due to aspirations of increased participation from the clubs; however the TGRs themselves indicate little change to existing demands. This means that with the exception of crown green bowls there is limited identified surplus pitch / green capacity.
- 2.17. The Plan will protect existing pitched and support the delivery of additional capacity where required in accordance with the PPS.

3. Local Plan Policies

3.1. The Proposed submission Wyre Local Plan contains many references to the green infrastructure of the Borough; indeed it is to be seen as a golden thread running throughout the Plan (as advocated in the Wyre GI Strategy).

Strategic policies (SP2 & SP6)

3.2. The Strategic Policies of the Borough refer to GI in SP2 and SP6. The Green Infrastructure Strategy provides robust evidence base support for the inclusion of GI as key aspect of SP2 which defines sustainable development in Wyre and SP6 which identifies key infrastructure.

3.3. The policies map identifies the key GI assets of the Borough where they fall within settlement boundaries. The assets include:

- All sites contained within the Open Space Audit and Needs Assessment Evidence Base Report¹
- All Sites of Special Scientific Interest
- All Local Nature Reserves
- All County Wildlife Sites
- All Biological Heritage Sites

3.4. The policies map only shows the areas listed above where they fall within settlement boundaries. All land outside of settlement boundaries is classed as countryside, which is considered to be part of the GI and is protected under policy SP4.

3.5. The Policies Map does not show general green corridors which are included in the OSNA as these are generally small linear paths within settlements. They form part of a much wider PROW network which is protected under CDMP6 Accessibility and Transport.

3.6. The GI layer as identified on the policies map related to policy CDMP4.

CDMP4 Environmental Assets

3.7. This policy seeks to ensure that development proposals provide enhancements in relation to the environmental assets listed in the policy and that they seek to minimise or eliminate net environmental impact.

3.8. The policy lists a number of environmental assets including but not limited to green infrastructure, habitats, species, soils, water quality & resources and trees and hedgerows. The policy indicates that mitigation will be required where proposals are likely to have an impact on environmental assets.

3.9. The policy also links to the GI layer shown on the policies map. The policy protects this land and sets criteria which must be met if development is to be permitted within it.

HP9 Green Infrastructure in new residential developments

3.10. This policy seeks to ensure that all new residential developments resulting in a net gain of dwellings make appropriate provision of sufficient high quality green infrastructure for its residents on site.

¹ See section 4 which provides further detail on the contents of the GI layer taken from the Open Space Audit and Needs Assessment Evidence Base Report

- 3.11. It provides standards derived from the Open Space Audit and Needs Assessment Evidence Base Report which developments will be expected to meet onsite. The policy makes provision for offsite contributions to be accepted in lieu of onsite provision where appropriate. The policy also requires ongoing maintenance to be considered and provided.
- 3.12. The policy makes reference to the Playing Pitch Strategy and where appropriate contributions towards playing pitches will be levied.
- 3.13. It is anticipated that a future Supplementary Planning Document may be produced that would set out further detail on the application of the GI policies within the Plan. The contents of the SPD would include the appropriate application of the standards, when offsite contributions may be acceptable, updates to reflect changes in CIL pooling restrictions and updates to reflect future needs assessments.
- 3.14. The below example shows how the policy would be implemented.

Worked Example – Theoretical Site of 49 dwellings in the Poulton le Fylde Area

The following table is based on figures provided in a document entitled: “Technical Housing Standards”, published by the Department for Communities and Local Government (CLG) in 2015, and uses the lower end of the range of number of persons per dwelling size.

Residential capacity rates

Size of Dwelling	Number of Persons
Studio / 1 bedroom	2
2 bedrooms	3
3 bedrooms	4
4+ bedrooms	5

Our example site has 49 dwellings consisting of 10 two bed units; 25 three bed units; and 14 four bed units

Total persons in the development equals:

$$10 \times 3 \text{ (2 bed units)} + 25 \times 4 \text{ (3 bed units)} + 14 \times 5 \text{ (4 bed units)} = 200 \text{ persons}$$

Therefore under the proposed policy requirements there is an expectation that the site would deliver the following:

Typology Provision	Quantity Standard per 1000 population (ha)	Requirement (Ha)
Parks and gardens	0.40	0.08
Amenity greenspace	0.40	0.08
Natural and semi natural greenspace	1.50	0.3
Children and young people play area	0.18	0.036
Allotments	0.25	0.05
TOTAL		0.546

- 3.15. The GI Area Profile for Poulton-le-Fylde identifies that there is a surplus of amenity green space amounting to +0.135 Ha which could suggest there is no need for the development to contribute to this aspect as it required to deliver 0.08Ha, but that would need to take account of the cumulative impact of development proposals in the Poulton-le-Fylde area which may suggest the continued need for the site to contribute to amenity green space.
- 3.16. All other types of GI are in deficit and as such the development would be expected to provide GI to meet these needs. The exact make up of GI to be delivered by the development would be subject to negotiation with Wyre Council.

4. The GI Layer on the policies map

4.1. As explained above the GI layer on the policies map includes:

- All sites contained within the Open Space Audit and Needs Assessment Evidence Base Report
- All Sites of Special Scientific Interest
- All Local Nature Reserves
- All County Wildlife Sites
- All Biological Heritage Sites

4.2. The GI layer shown on the policies map reflects the Open Space Audit and Needs Assessment Evidence Base Report. Due to the lapse in time between the publication of the Open Space Report and the publication draft Local Plan a number of the sites included as open space have since changed land use. The Council considers that these sites should no longer form part of the GI network and should be removed from the GI layer.

4.3. Although it has not been possible to carry out a full review of the Open Space evidence prior to submission of the Plan, the council has sought to amend the GI layer to reflect the most up to date position.

4.4. The tables below illustrate where amendments have been made on the Policies Map against sites identified in the Open Space Assessment. There are also some additional sites shown on the Policies Map which have arisen since 2013.

- Table 1 identifies sites which are not shown on the Polices Map,
- Table 2 identifies additional sites on the Polices Map,
- Table 3 identifies amendments to existing sites on the Polices Map, and
- Table 4 identifies major permitted planning applications that incorporate an element of green infrastructure.

4.5. Amendments are only shown within settlement boundaries to reflect the fact that the GI layer on the policies map only covers the areas within settlements (any land outside is classed as countryside and therefore regarded as GI and protected under the countryside policy).

4.6. The sites listed in the tables below are anomalies and changes known to the planning policy team without doing a full review/update of the Green Infrastructure Study. Other amendments may be required but won't be included until a full review/update of the Green Infrastructure Study has been undertaken.

4.7. It should be noted that the Open Space Audit and Needs Assessment 2013 reviewed all the open space categories within Wyre's Open Space Audit 2010 and should be read in conjunction with the 2010 Audit.

Table 1: GI Open Space Audit and Needs Assessment 2013 sites which are not shown on the Policies Map

Site Reference/Name	Justification
CLE31 - Cleveleys Park Club Former Court Area	Site identified as abandoned in the GI OSANA 2013. The site is now being used as a car park.

Site Reference/Name	Justification
FL30 - Highbury Gardens	Site identified as abandoned in the GI OSANA 2013. Lancashire County Council (LCC) submitted the site (CFS2012_20) through the Wyre Call for Sites exercise in 2012 for disposal. Site to become white land as under the allocation threshold. The site (IO_12) also formed part of the Wyre Local Plan Issues and Options 2015 document.
FL55 – Freeport	Site identified as Civic Space in the GI OSANA 2013 although the site is a private retail park and not formal open space.
FL56 - Freeport	Play area included in the GI OSANA 2013 although the site is a private retail park.
PLF15 - Holts Lane	Site identified as abandoned in the GI OSANA 2013. The site is now being used by United Utilities as a pumping station.
PIL7 - Taylor's Lane pitch	The site has planning permission (14/00631/FULMAJ) for residential development and is currently under construction.
PIL12 - Taylor's Lane play area	The site has planning permission (14/00631/FULMAJ) for residential development and is currently under construction.

Table 2: Additional GI sites which have been added to the Policies Map*

Site	Source	Justification
Allotments at Lower Dolphinholme	Planning Policy Team	Private allotments. Site was not included in the GI OSANA 2013 as Lower Dolphinholme was not recognised as a settlement when the study was undertaken. Lower Dolphinholme now has a settlement boundary and green infrastructure within settlements is included on the Policies Map.
Amenity greenspace, the Parklands, Catterall	Planning Policy Team	Site should have been included in the GI OSANA 2013.
Fleetwood Football Club Training Ground at Pool Foot Farm, Thornton	Major planning application	14/00016/LMAJ (complete) - New community complex and training ground for Fleetwood Town Football Club. Site incorporates previous GI OSANA 2013 sites TH25 and TH29, see table 3 for details.
River Wyre, River Brock and River Calder	Planning Policy Team	Include river sections which pass through settlements as identified as strategic assets in the Green Infrastructure Study 2013. River Wyre; Garstang and St Michaels. River Brock; Bilsborrow. River Calder; Calder Vale

***The sites listed are sites not included in the Green Infrastructure Study 2013 and will be fully assessed in future GI evidence base documents.**

Table 3: GI sites which have been amended on the Policies Map

Site	Source	Justification
Biological Heritage Sites	Lancashire County Council (LCC)	Biological Heritage Sites are only shown within settlement boundaries. Therefore some sites/designations might not show the whole site, e.g. where they cross in to the countryside designation. However, the entire sites will be referred to when determining planning applications.
CLE28 - Rossall Promenade – Fleetwood	GI OSANA 2013*	Site in the GI OSANA 2013 includes the entire promenade. Only areas within the settlement boundaries of Cleveleys and Fleetwood are shown on the Policies Map. Full site area shown in the GI OSANA 2013 and will be referred to when determining planning applications.
FL23 – Former High School Fields	GI OSANA 2013* LCC	Site has been split. Southern area of site to become a housing allocation. LCC want to keep northern area for adj. school use and will remain as GI. The site (IO_11) also formed part of the Wyre Local Plan Issues and Options 2015 document.
FL54 – Fleetwood Marina	GI OSANA 2013* Planning Policy Team	Designation now includes the whole marina which should have been included in the GI OSANA 2013.
PLF14 - Linderbeck Lane	GI OSANA 2013* Planning application	Site previously contained two parcels in the GI OSANA 2013. The eastern parcel had planning permission (10/00629/FUL - complete) permitted for change of use of land from Open Space to domestic curtilage and has been excluded from the Polices Map. The western parcel remains as GI.
TH25 – Gamble Road	GI OSANA 2013* Planning application	Sites TH25 and TH29 are still shown as GI but are shown as one large site incorporated in to Fleetwood Football Club Training Ground at Pool Foot Farm, Thornton. See table 2 for details.
TH26 – Bourne Road	GI OSANA 2013* Planning application	Site previously contained two parcels (North and South of Bourne Rd) in the GI OSANA 2013. Most of the southern site has permission (14/00131/LMAJ) for residential development and is under construction and the application boundary has been excluded from the Polices Map. The northern site remains as GI. The site (IO_21) also formed part of the Wyre Local Plan Issues and Options 2015.
TH29 - Gamble Road Sports Field	GI OSANA 2013* Planning application	Sites TH25 and TH29 are still shown as GI but are shown as one large site incorporated in to Fleetwood Football Club Training Ground at Pool Foot Farm, Thornton. See table 2 for details.
TH40 - Land south of Marsh Mill	GI OSANA 2013* Planning	Part of the site now has planning permission (14/00772/FULMAJ) for residential development and is under construction. The application boundary has been

	application	excluded from the Polices Map.
GAR41 - Garstang Golf & Country Club	GI OSANA 2013* Planning application	Part of the site now has planning permission (15/00891/OUTMAJ) which has been removed from the site. The area is to become a housing allocation.
SCO2 – Playing Field	GI OSANA 2013* Planning Policy Team	The site has been extended as the original boundary was incorrect.

***The amended GI OSANA 2013 sites will be fully assessed in future GI evidence base documents.**

Table 4 below identifies major planning applications between 1st April 2011 and 31st March 2017 which include additional areas of recreational open space and/or green infrastructure. The sites are not shown on the Polices Map as they have either not commenced or were not complete at 31st March 2017. If the sites are completed, they will be fully assessed in future GI evidence base documents.

Table 4: Major permitted planning applications (2011-2017) which incorporate GI

Planning permission	Site Address/Name	Proposal	Decision Issued Date
10/00215/FULMAJ (under construction)	Land Off Bourne Road, Thornton	Erection of 267 dwellings with associated access, parking, public open space and landscaping	14 Oct 2010
10/00402/RELMAJ (under construction)	Land At Fleetwood Docks, Fleetwood	Reserved matters application for phase 1 development incorporating 158 dwellings, all public open space and highway infrastructure.	22 Jul 2010
10/00855/REMMAJ (under construction)	Land At Station Road, Poulton-le-Fylde	Reserved matters application for residential development comprising of 81 dwellings with associated roads, parking and open space (relevant outline application 07/00599/OUTMAJ)	03 Jun 2011
13/00800/REMMAJ (under construction)	The Toppings, Garstang	Reserved matters application for a residential development comprising of 64 dwellings with associated access (outline ref: 13/00376/OUTMAJ)	06 Feb 2014
14/00642/FULMAJ (under construction)	Taylor Lane, Pilling	Full planning application for the erection of a new Pilling Memorial Hall with car parking, formation of new pedestrian and vehicular access from Taylor Lane and landscape planting, together with change of use of agricultural land for associated creation	06 Jan 2015

Planning permission	Site Address/Name	Proposal	Decision Issued Date
		of recreational open space to include replacement sports pitch and children's play area.	
15/00500/FULMAJ (under construction)	Land East Of Carr Lane, Hambleton	Erection of 51 dwellings (including 15 affordable dwellings) with associated access off Carr Lane, landscaping and public open space	22 Jan 2016
16/00973/REMAJ	Land Off Copp Lane, Great Eccleston	Reserved matters application for the access, layout, scale, appearance and landscaping for 90 dwellings, provision of a public car park, and associated open space and landscaping following on from planning permission for 15/00576/OUTMAJ	17 Feb 2017