





# Measuring the Health of Planning Policies for Green Infrastructure

Prof Alister Scott BA PhD MRTPI



### National Planning Policy Framework

Presented to Parliament by the Secretary of State for Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government by Command of Her Majesty GONONIC GROWTH

A Green Future: Our 25 Year Plan to Improve the Environment





### Plan

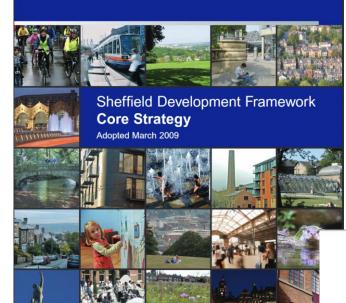


- Are built environment policies currently delivering: what is the problem?
- Placemaking and Living / Green infrastructure:
   can they be the solution?
- The opportunity spaces of new national policies: how well is new policy performing?
- The opportunity spaces of local plans: how well is Sheffield currently doing
- How to improve mainstreaming : exploring new NERC tools
- Future challenges for research and practice



# Key role of planning policies in a plan led system

- Neglected component of research and environment practice
- Yet provides the statutory basis for key decisions about future land use
- NPPF sets the "framework" within which local plans operate
- Research can often neglect key importance of planning policies and decision making machinery.





### National Planning Policy Framework

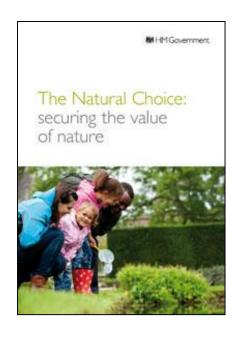
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July 2018





# Why we need to improve planning policy and decision making?



The Natural Choice: securing the value of nature (Natural Environment White Paper) HM Government, 2010

"The Government expects the planning system to deliver the homes, business, infrastructure and thriving local places that the country needs, while protecting and enhancing the natural and historic environment. Planning has a key role in securing a sustainable future. However, the current system [...] is failing to achieve the kind of integrated and informed decision-making that is needed to support sustainable land use."





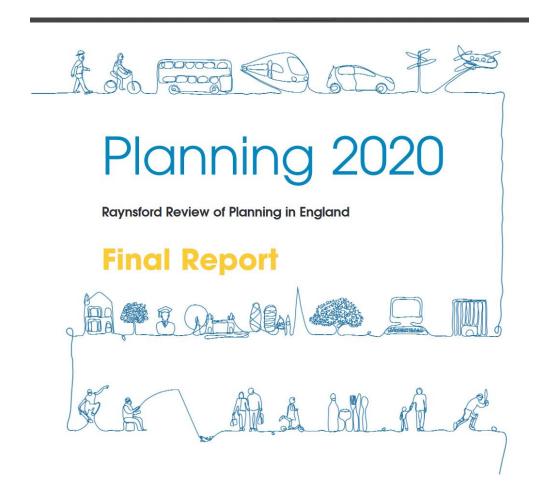


### Raynsford Review 2018



- Planning system not fit for purpose.
- 'We believe that planning should be a visionary, creative and inclusive process, enabling the delivery of high-quality architecture and great places for people to live, work and play. However, in recent decades the system has become increasingly reactive, devalued and under-resourced.

RIBA submission to the Review



























# Metric fallacies: delivering unhealthy outcomes

- Tick box metrics
- Metrics based on quantity (300,000 11 million) not quality
- Metrics based on acceptability not excellence (planning permissions)
- Metrics that are imposed rather than coproduced
- Target driven metrics in silos
- Re-Invent new metrics rather than build on good practice







# "Breaking the silos: searching for more integrative concepts





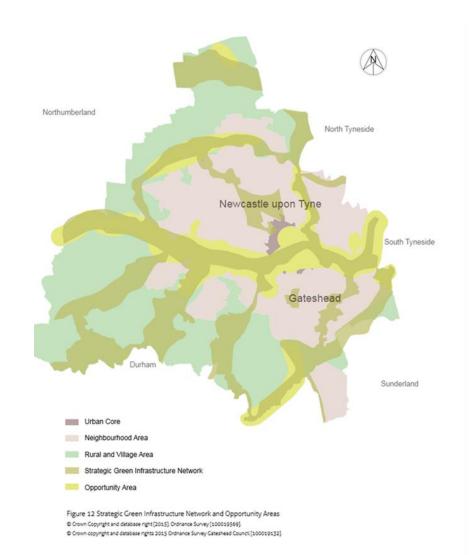




# An integrated and managed: Iiving, grey, green and blue network







Northumbria

University

NEWCASTLE





# Green Infrastructure demystified

 "Green infrastructure is a strategically planned network (multiple scales) of natural and semi-natural areas with other environmental features designed and managed to deliver a wide range of ecosystem services such as water purification, air quality, space for recreation and climate mitigation and adaptation.



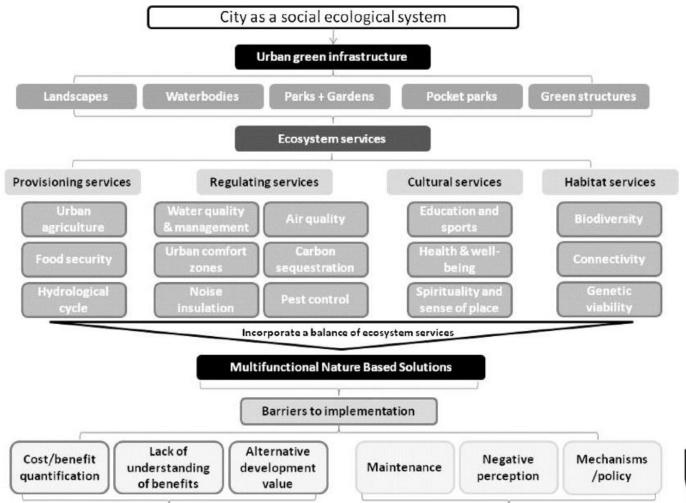
• This network of green (land) and blue (water) spaces can improve environmental conditions and therefore citizens' health and quality of life. It also supports a green economy, creates job opportunities and enhances biodiversity".

#### Source:

<a href="http://ec.europa.eu/environment/">http://ec.europa.eu/environment/</a> nature/ecosystems/index en.htm

# Multifunctional Green Infrastructure (Connop et al 2016)

Science/planning gap related barriers



Capacity related barriers









# What is the Green Infrastructure Problem/Opportunity?

- GI is not readily understood within a wider ecosystem science and natural capital vocabulary
- GI is often bolted on to development
- GI is the first casualty of budget overspends and cuts
- GI is readily trumped by economic considerations
- Research has shown benefits of GI through multiple tools but not effectively translated into delivery mechanisms
- Lack of current statutory and regulatory policy context for GI





# (New) National Policy Guidance





A Green Future: Our 25 Year Plan to

Improve the Environment

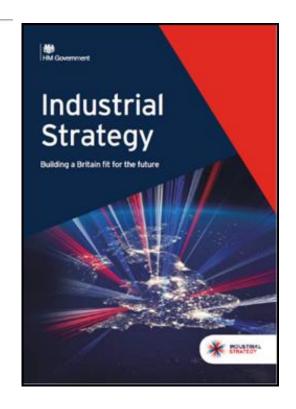




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### 25YEP



 25YEP Page 16 "A healthier environment also helps deliver social justice and a country that works for everyone. For example, pollution affects us all but it is the most disadvantaged in society who suffer more. ... We want to ensure an equal distribution of environmental benefits, resources and opportunities".

 "develop a Nature Recovery Network providing 500,000 hectares of additional wildlife habitat, more effectively linking existing protected sites and landscapes, as well as urban green and blue infrastructure".



### 25YEP

 25YEP Page 33 "We will seek to embed a 'net environmental gain' principle for development to deliver environmental improvements locally and nationally. 25YEP Page 34 "Making sure that existing requirements for net gain for biodiversity in national planning policy are strengthened, including consulting on whether they should be mandated"

 25YEP Page 20 "Over the next 25 years, our policy choices will be better-informed with a natural capital approach".



### The NPPF lens



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### NPPF Chapter 15



170 Planning policies and decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by:

 b) recognising the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside, and the wider benefits from natural capital and ecosystem services

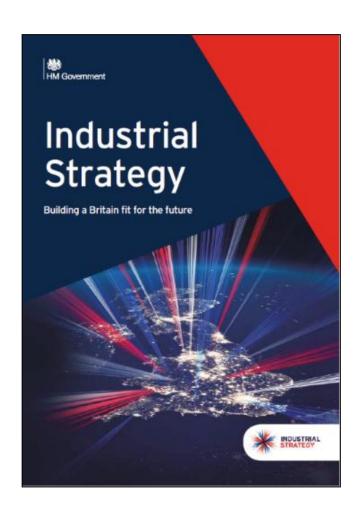
#### 171. Plans should:

 take a strategic approach to maintaining and enhancing networks of habitats and green infrastructure; and plan for the enhancement of natural capital at a catchment or landscape scale across local authority boundaries.

- 118. Planning policies and decisions should:
- a) encourage multiple benefits from both urban and rural land, ....taking opportunities to achieve net environmental gains;
- b) recognise that some undeveloped land can perform many functions, such as for wildlife, recreation, flood risk mitigation, cooling/shading, carbon storage or food production;



#### **BEIS Industrial Strategy**



Industrial Strategy: building a Britain fit for the future (HM Government 2017)

"We will work not just to preserve, but to enhance our natural capital — the air, water, soil and ecosystems that support all forms of life — since this is an essential basis for economic growth and productivity over the long term."

"Our measures to achieve this [moving towards a more circular economy] will include: an approach to infrastructure investment that aims to regenerate natural capital..."



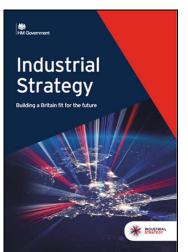
# NPPF vs 25 YEP vs Industrial Strategy A disintegrating policy landscape?



- HM Government Environment plan
- Role of industrial strategy and clean growth strategy mentioned in 25 YEP but only mention of NPPF is for SuDs and net gain.
- Lowest common denominator in all plans = natural capital (key hook)

A Green Future: Our 25 Year Plan to Improve the Environment







#### National Planning Policy Framework

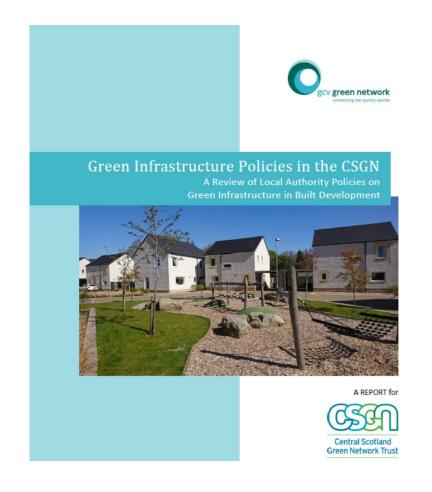
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# What does good GI policy look like? Creating a GI evaluation framework

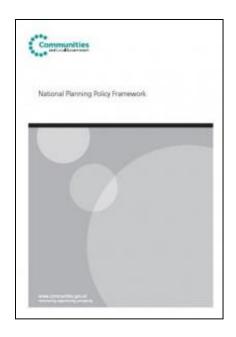






#### NPPF 2012 and 2018





#### **National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)**

Department for Communities and Local Government (MHCLG), 2018

How well does the NPPF cover green infrastructure?



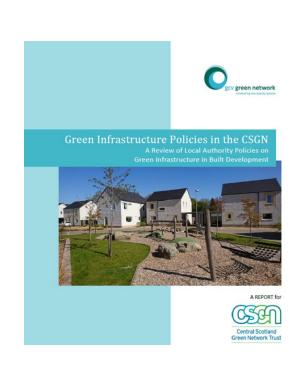
# Creating the A-Z policy tool (Hislop and Scott)



- Built to address definitional and functional components of GI
- Drawing on several different strands of GI research and practice work
  - Building with nature NERC GI project (Gerome et al 2017)
  - IGI GCVGN project (Hislop et al 2015: 2018)
  - Mainstreaming GI work NERC (AJ Scott)













- Read whole document to capture GI narrative(s)
- Word searches across NPPF on GI terms and concepts.
  - Eg GI, GI network Greenspace, SuDs, Net gains, natural capital

Paragraph(s) are analysed with respect to criteria A-Z with scores given for

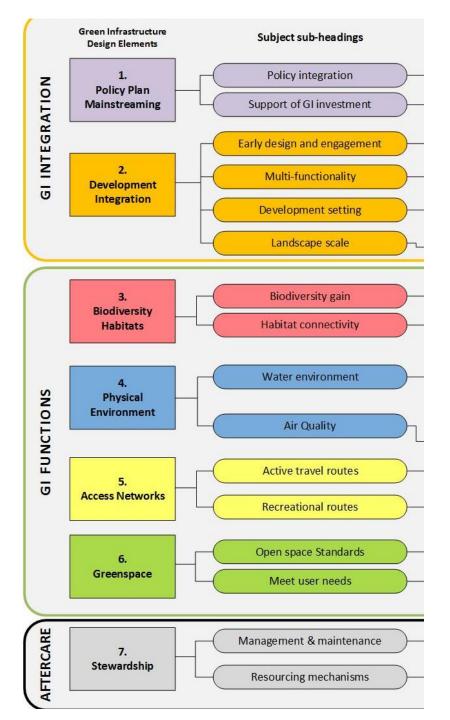
GI Coverage A-Z

Policy wording strength

Coverage	None	Some	Most or	Full
			dispersed	
Strength	None	Weak	Mid	Strong
Score	0	1	2	3

Present in a summary matrix revealing highest scores.

# GI Coverage





# Policy wording

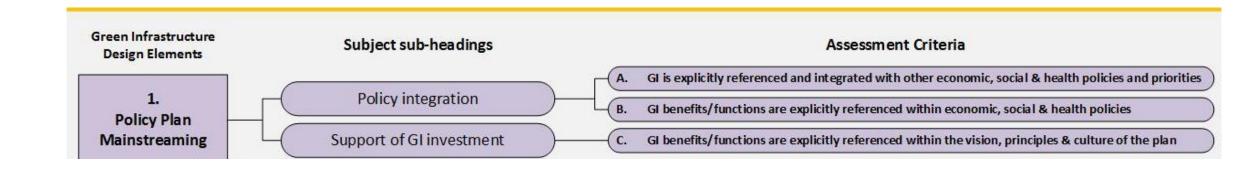


Strong phrases	Weak phrases
"all new developments will provide"	"should incorporate"
"meet the needs of"	"when appropriate"
"must be designed to meet needs"	"where appropriate"
"the Council will not accept"	"the Council will negotiate provision"
"proposals must demonstrate"	"should be well designed"
"any new development must protect"	"the Council will encourage"
<ul> <li>"proposals will be expected to demonstrate compatibility with"</li> </ul>	<ul> <li>"the Council will expect development proposals to have regard to"</li> </ul>
<ul> <li>"planning conditions will be applied and, where necessary, legal agreements sought"</li> </ul>	"the council does not favour the use of"
<ul> <li>"all new development must comply with the Council's standards"</li> </ul>	"development that helps will be supported"
"the Council will expect"	"the Council will seek to develop"
"the Council expects that all development proposals shall be"	





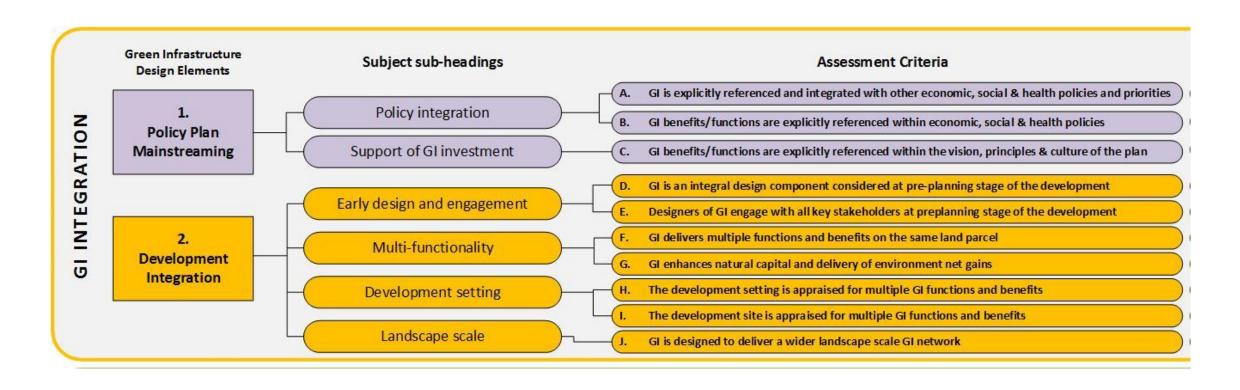
# Integration: Mainstreaming







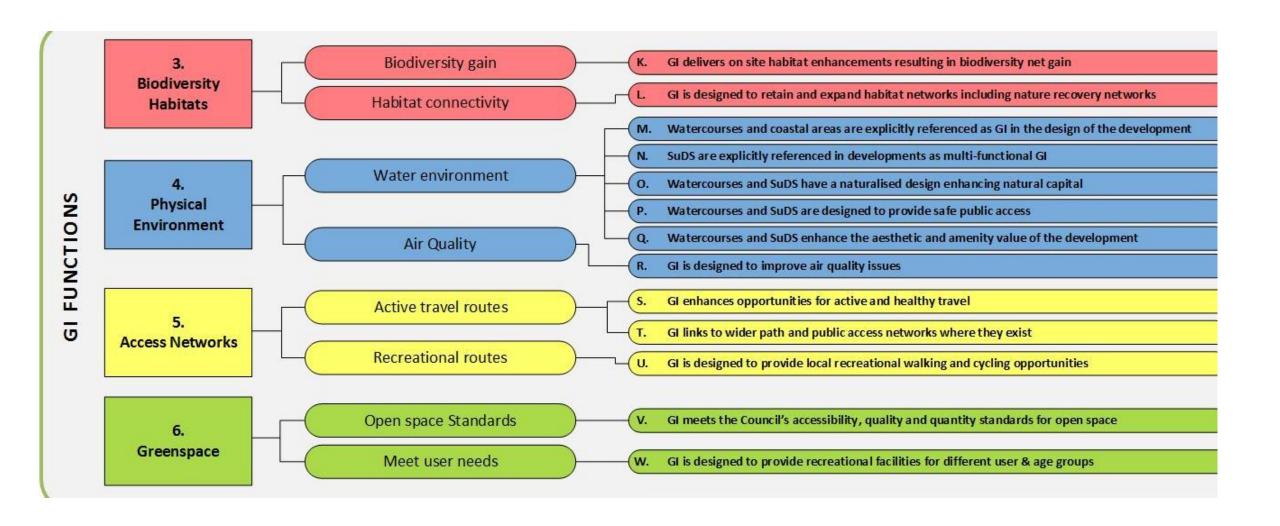
## Integration: Development





### **Functions**

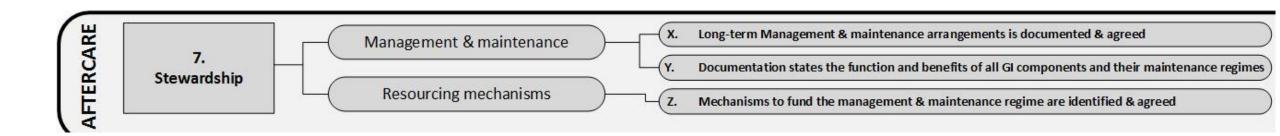






# Stewardship









# Relevant NPPF Chapter Bundles

#### **Chapter 2:**

**Achieving Sustainable Development** 

Paragraph 8 & 9

Chapter 3:

Plan-making

Paragraph 20d & 34

Chapter 4:

**Decision-making** 

Paragraph 39, 41, 42 & 43

Chapter 8:

Promoting healthy & safe communities

Paragraph 91a, 92a, 92e, 96, 98

Chapter 9:

**Promoting sustainable transport** 

Paragraph 102c, 104d, 110c

Chapter 11:

Making effective use of land

Paragraph 117, 118a/b



Achieving well-designed places

Paragraph 127b/c/e, 128

Chapter 14:

Meeting the challenge of climate change,

flooding and coastal change

Paragraph 150a, 163, 165d

**Chapter 15** 

Conserving and enhancing the natural

environment

Paragraph 170a/b/d, 171, 174a/b, 175b, 181

Annex 2:

Glossary

**Green Infrastructure** 





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# Revised Example NPPF2 Northumbria University

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# **NEWCASTLE**



# Assessment Traceability



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6	Paragraph 8 & 9	Strength																											
7	Chapter 3: Plan-making	Coverage			8. Achieving sustainable development means that the planning system has three overarching objectives, which are interdependent and need to be pursued in mutually supportive ways (so that opportunities can be taken to secure net gains across each of the different objectives):																								
8	Paragraph 20d & 34	Strength																					mes cai						
9	Chapter 4: Decision-making	Coverage				servic c) <b>an</b>	es and : <b>enviro</b>	open sp nment	aces that	at reflec	t curren to contr	it and fu ibute to	ture ned protect	<u>eds</u> and ing and	suppor enhanc	t commu cing our	unities' ĥ natural,	nealth, s . built an	ocial an d histori	nd dultur id <u>envir</u> a	al well-l nment:	being; a includii	ind ng makir	ng					
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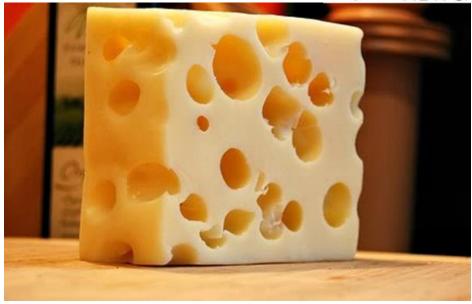
# A Cheesy Evaluation

 GI Coverage (Emmenthal) holey and a little mouldy

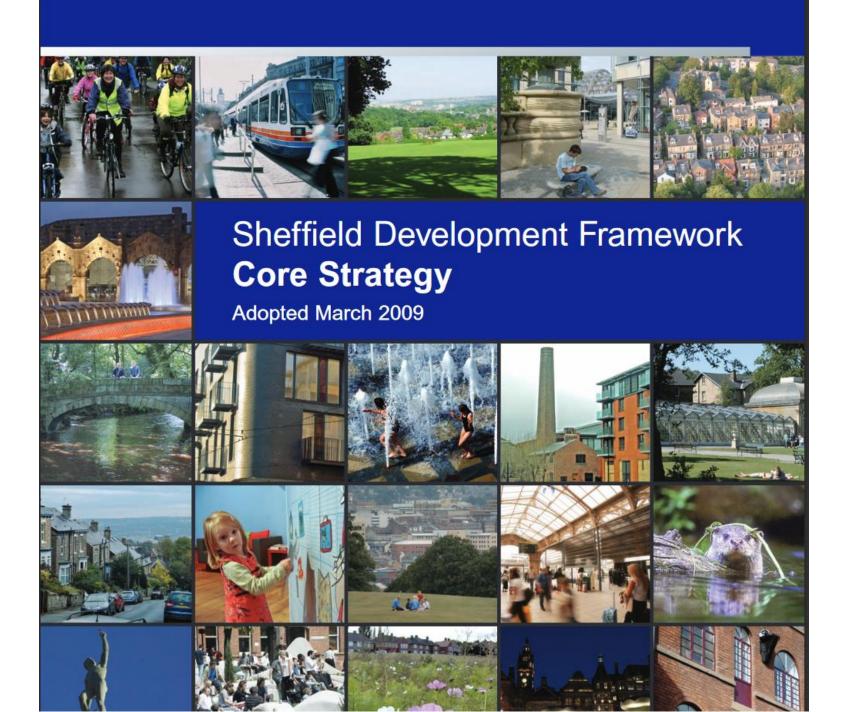
Policy wording (Lancashire)

- No green scores at all creates vulnerability when set against other planning priorities.
- Mainstreaming challenge.











## Policy CS 67

## Flood Risk Management

The extent and impact of flooding will be reduced by:

- requiring that all developments significantly limit surface water run-off;
- requiring the use of Sustainable Drainage Systems or sustainable drainage techniques on all sites where feasible and practicable;
- c. promoting sustainable drainage management, particularly in rural areas;
- d. not culverting and not building over watercourses wherever practicable;
- e. encouraging the removal of existing culverting;



#### Policy CS 73

#### The Strategic Green Network

Within and close to the urban areas, a Strategic Green Network will be maintained and where possible enhanced, which will follow the rivers and streams of the main valleys:

- a. Upper Don
- b. Loxley
- c. Rivelin
- d. Porter
- e. Sheaf
- f. Rother
- g. Lower Don/Canal;

and include other strategic corridors through:

- h. Oakes Park to the Limb Valley
- i. Gleadless Valley
- Ochre Dike Valley
- k. Shire Brook Valley
- Shirtcliffe Brook Valley
- m. Blackburn Brook Valley and its tributaries
- n. Birley Edge.

These Green Corridors will be complemented by a network of more local Green Links and Desired Green Links.





### Policy CS 74

#### **Design Principles**

High-quality development will be expected, which would respect, take advantage of and enhance the distinctive features of the city, its districts and neighbourhoods, including:

- a. the topography, landforms, river corridors, Green Network, important habitats, waterways, woodlands, other natural features and open spaces;
- views and vistas to landmarks and skylines into and out of the City Centre and across the city to the surrounding countryside;
- the townscape and landscape character of the city's districts, neighbourhoods and quarters, with their associated scale, layout and built form, building styles and materials;
- d. the distinctive heritage of the city, particularly the buildings and settlement forms associated with:
  - i. the metal trades (including workshops, mills and board schools)
  - ii. the City Centre
  - iii. Victorian, Edwardian and Garden City suburbs
  - iv. historic village centres and the city's rural setting.

#### Development should also:

e. contribute to place-making, be of a high quality, that contributes to a healthy, safe and sustainable environment, that promotes the city's transformation;



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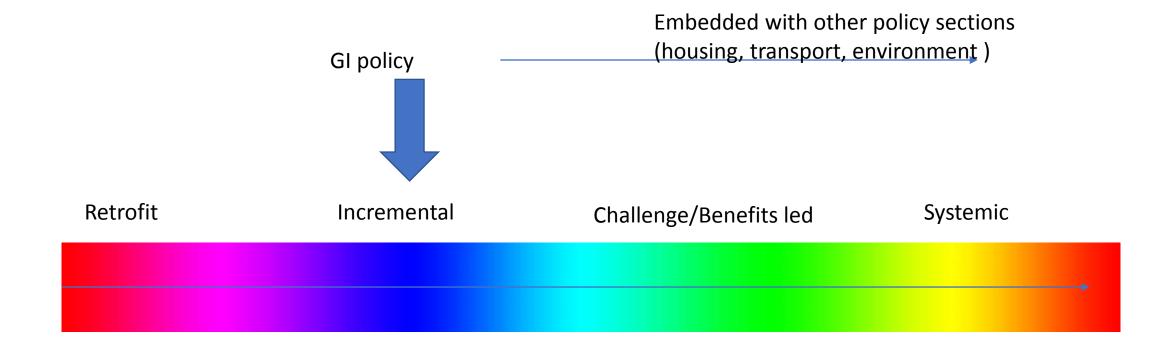


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# GI mainstreaming continuum



## How: Using the hooks of NPPF

#### Chapter 2:

Achieving Sustainable Development Paragraph 8 & 9

#### Chapter 3:

Plan-making

Paragraph 20d & 34

#### Chapter 4:

**Decision-making** 

Paragraph 39, 41, 42 & 43

#### Chapter 8:

Promoting healthy & safe communities Paragraph 91a, 92a, 92e, 96, 98

#### Chapter 9:

Promoting sustainable transport

Paragraph 102c, 104d, 110c

#### Chapter 11:

Making effective use of land

Paragraph 117, 118a/b

## Chapter 12:

Achieving well-designed places

**Paragraph 127b/c/e, 128** 

## Chapter 14:

Meeting the challenge of climate change,

flooding and coastal change

Paragraph 150a, 163, 165d

## Chapter 15

Conserving and enhancing the natural

environment

Paragraph 170a/b/d, 171, 174a/b, 175b, 181

#### Annex 2:

**Glossary** 

**Green Infrastructure** 

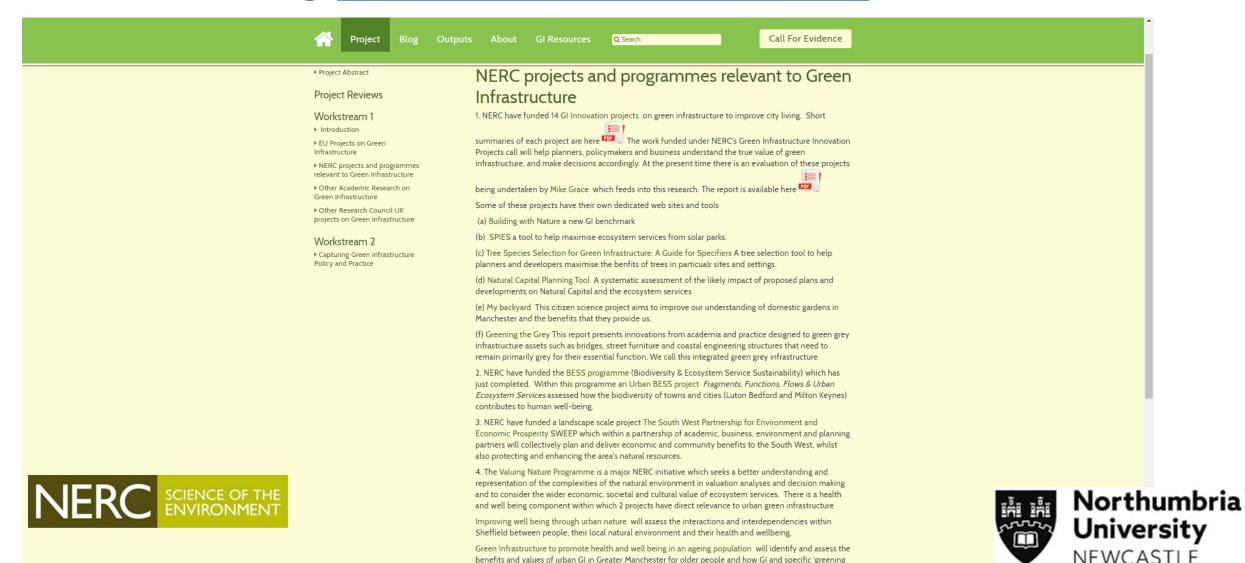




# How: Using hooks of NPPF

В	С	D	E	F	G	Н	1	J	K	L	М	N	0	Р	Q	R	S	Т	U	V	W	Х	Υ	Z	AA	AB	AC
3		Integration other policies	Economics & Social benefits	Support for GI investment	Early/integral design	Early engagement	Multi-functional land use	Natural Capital & ES	Off-site analysis	On-site survey	GI Network	Enhance biodiversity	Habitat networks	Integrated into GI	SUDS designed as GI	Naturalised SUDS	Access to waterbodies	Aesthetic of waterbodies	Ameliorate air quality	Active travel links	Links to wider networks	Recreational routes	Open space standards	Multi-user design	Agreed management	Functional maintenance	Resourcing mechanisms
Achieving Sustainable Development	Coverage	А	В	С	D	E	F	G	н		J	K	L	M	N	0	P	Q	R	S	Т	U	V	W	Х	Y	Z
	Strength													_													
Chapter 3: Plan-making	Coverage				8. Achieving sustainable development means that the planning system has three overarching objectives, which are interdependent and need to be pursued in mutually supportive ways (so that opportunities can be taken to secure net gains across each of the different objectives):																						
Paragraph 20d & 34	Strength									strong, u nt and fu																	
Chapter 4: Decision-making	Coverage				servic c) <b>an</b>	es and, <b>envir</b> o	open sp onment	paces that	nat refler ective:	ct currer to conti	nt and fu ribute to	ture ned protect	<u>eds</u> and ing and	suppor enhanc	t commi	unities' k natural,	nealth, s , built ar	ocial an d histori	id cultur c <u>envir</u> c	al well-l nment:	peing; a includir	nd ng makir	ng				
Paragraph 39, 41, 42 & 43	Strength									ove biod ig movin					s prude	ntly, min	imising	waste a	nd pollu	tion, an	d mitiga	ting and	i				
Chapter 8:	Coverage				theya	are not c	riteria a	igainst v	vhich ev	ery deci	ision ca	n or sho	uld be ju	ıdged. F	Planning	g policie	s and d	ecisions	should	play an	active r	ole in gu					
Promoting healthy & safe communities Paragraph 91a, 92a, 92e, 96, 98	Strength					lopment rtunities			nable so	lutions,	but in d	oing so s	should t	ake loca	al circur	nstance	s into a	ecount,	to reflec	ot the ch	naracter	, needs	and				
NPPF2 (+)																: 4											
Cell D5 commented by Max Hislop																								$\blacksquare$		Ш	-

# How using NERC science research







# Building with Nature



#### Core standards

Distinguish green infrastructure from a more conventional approach to provision for open and green space.

- 1. Multi-functional network
- 2. Contextual
- 3. Policy-responsive
- 4. Climate-resilient
- 5. Future-proof





#### Wellbeing standards

Secure health and wellbeing benefits through the delivery of green infrastructure features close to where people live.

- 1. Accessible
- 2. Inclusive
- 3. Seasonal enjoyment
- 4. Locally relevant
- 5. Socially sustainable
- 6. Distinctive



#### Candidate Status

Candidate status recognises that a development or document has met the Building with Nature standards, subject to sign off post-completion/publication.



#### Achieved

Building with Nature Achieved recognises that your development or document has met all of the core standards and nine standards across the standards, plus six additional standards three themes.



#### Excellent

Building with Nature Excellent recognises that your development or document has met all Achieved across the three themes.





\*subject to post-construction sign-off





Gloucestershire Gateway Trust and Westmorland Limited

#### **Scheme**

A north and south bound motorway service area on the M5 motorway, incorporating café and amenity buildings, a tourist information point, and green infrastructure including an outdoor picnic area, play facilities and habitat provision

#### Location

M5, Gloucester

**Building with Nature award** 



## Why has Gloucester Services been certified with Building with Nature?

Gloucester Services has been the subject of numerous building and design awards. Completed in 2014, it was designed to achieve BREEAM 'excellent' and was endorsed by the South West Design Review Panel. The overarching ambition of the scheme is to have minimal impact on its surrounds, reflecting the sensitivity of the wider environment and proximity to the Cotswold Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.

The development has been awarded Building with Nature 'achieved' to highlight successful implementation of ambitious design credentials. In situ, Gloucester Services is sensitive to the landscape character and green infrastructure is utilised to maximum effect to contribute a unique sense of place. Individual features are linked to improve ecological connectivity, and SuDS features provide wildlife habitat and manage surface water within the boundary of the scheme.

The applicant found the process of Building with Nature certification helpful in refining plans for enhancing the wetland habitat, and identifying improvements to the long term management and maintenance of green infrastructure features.



RICS project of the year 2017 BREEAM excellent. Building with Nature Achieved





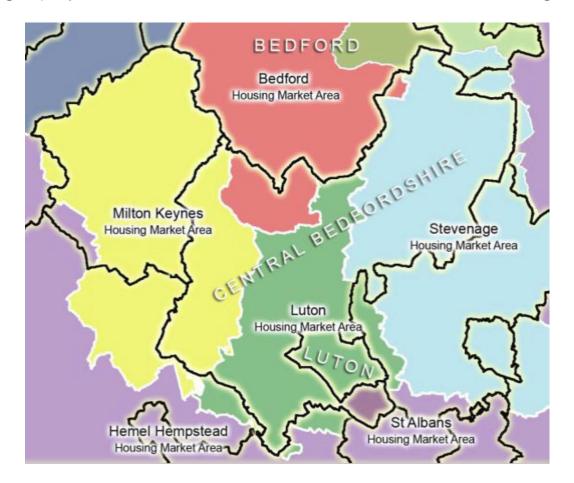
# Sustainable design in the built environment: The Natural Capital Planning Tool (NCPT)





## **Context for the Local Plan:**

Local geography and location of CBC in relation to housing market areas

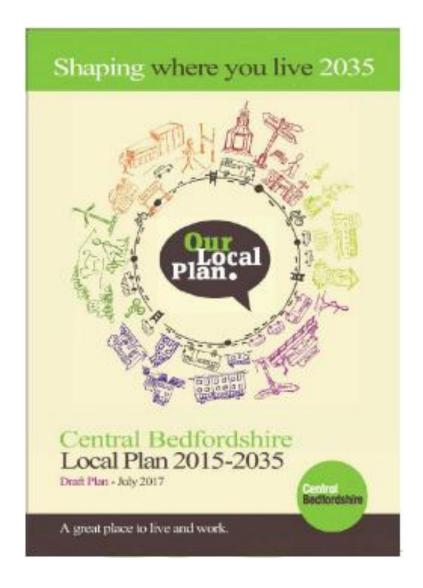










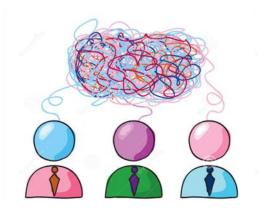


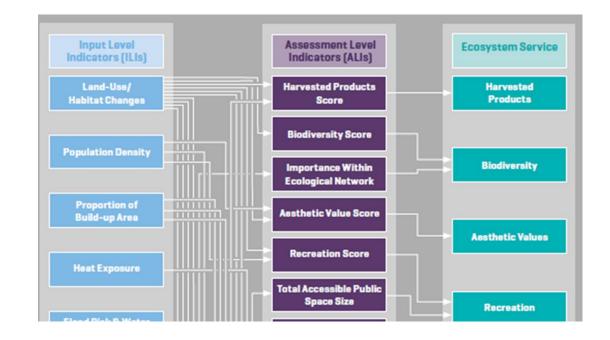
- Plan covers vision for development in general
  - Scale of growth
  - Location of growth
  - Policies relating to requirements for development
- Natural capital thinking has influenced the location of growth and the sections on environmental enhancement, climate change and sustainability
- Key focus on environmental enhancement – looking for a net gain



## Northumbria University NEWCASTLE

- Values assessed across a range of ecosystem services (before and after)
- Expert panels' assessments multi criteria analysis
- Tool only as dialogue to support decision making









## **Development Impact Score**

**Average Per-Hectare** 

Aveiage			
Ecosystem Service	M ax Possible	Adjusted Scores	Min Possible
1. Harvested Products	+0.4	-1.95	-3.0
2. Biodiversity	+4.6	+0.22	-0.4
3. Aesthetic Values	+2.6	+0.11	-1.4
4. Recreation	+4.0	+1.48	+0.0
5. Water Quality Regulation	+2.0	-0.21	-2.1
6. Flood Risk Regulation	+6.0	+1.63	-0.0
7. Air Quality Regulation	+2.4	+0.45	-1.2
8. Local Climate Regulation	+3.6	+0.66	-1.8
9. Global Climate Regulation	+4.0	-0.37	-1.0
10. Soil Contamination		+0.00	
Development Impact Score		+2.02	

## Test 1: Is it a good site?

- Could development significantly harm/benefit natural capital?
- Looking at theoretical min/max possible scores gives an indication of the potential of the site

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10. Soil Contamination		+0.00	
Development Impact Score		+2.02	

# Test 2: Is it a good design?

- Is the masterplan working as hard as it could for natural capital?
- Look at the actual scores and where they fall within the range
- Case study: Net positive impact but could do a lot more for some ecosystem services





What CBC found from using the NCPT:

Design, design, design!

(Not 'location, location, location!' on which national policy direction is very focussed)



## Mainstreaming



- GI recognised as a valuable asset across other policy areas
  - GI is identified as a mechanism for economic benefit (high streets/regeneration)
  - GI is explicitly identified in housing, transport and economic policies
  - Retrofit and New developments.

## AND/OR

 Mandatory requirement eg Gl assessments PPW10 Wales

## OR

Mandatory net environmental gains



# EU Perfect: West Carglaze demo project

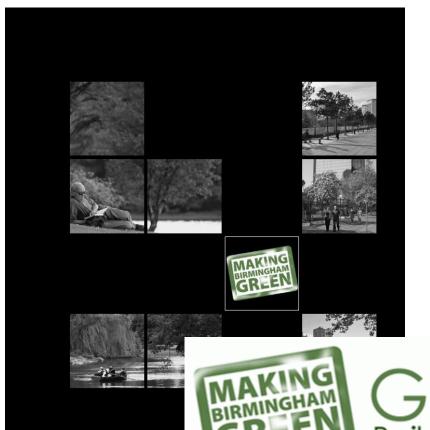


- Show what good looks like on the ground
- Inclusive process by which masterplan is produced
- Use that exemplar to revise existing policies.



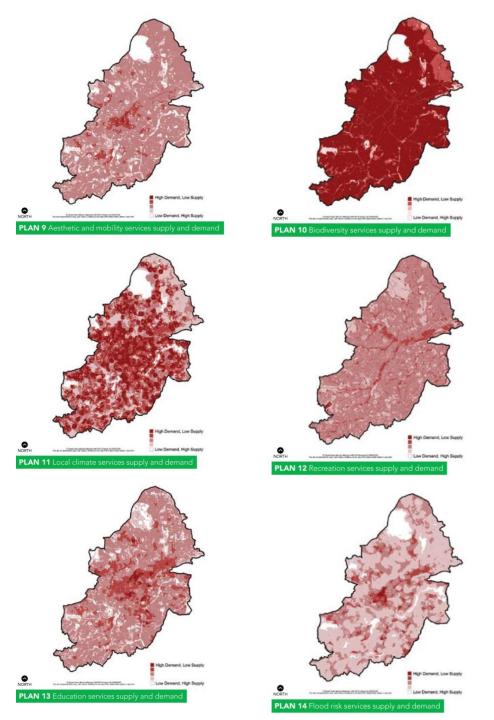
# Health meets planning



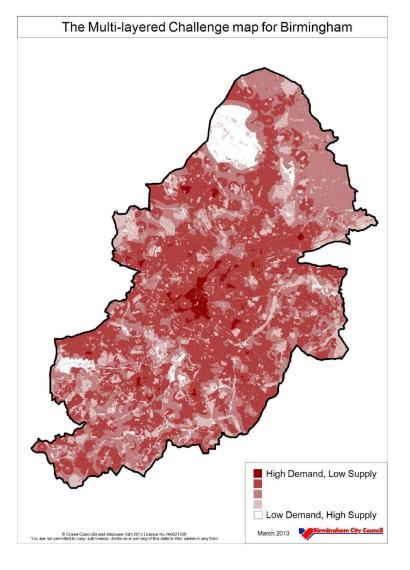


**Ecosystem mapping** 

- 1 Aesthetics & mobility
- 2 Flood risk
- 3 Local climate
- 4 Education
- 5 Recreation
- 6 Biodiversity



## **Green Living Spaces Plan**



ES demand & supply mapping

# Challenges/Opportunities for Research and Practice

## Research

- More Interdisciplinary projects fuelled by industry needs/challenges.
- Use research findings to influence revised national Planning Practice Guidance to support GI
- Feed into consultation on net environmental gains
- More research on design/use of policy in decisions; role of councillors and PINS.
- Role of how existing planning tools can help to deliver better policy outcomes.

## **Practice**

- Use finalised policy matrix to support local plan production and reviews
- Use hooks of NPPF to help mainstream GI in other policy chapters
- Improve links between health and planning as strong political support (national and local)
- Working with universities on your challenges.









# Thank you



## Key questions underpinning this fellowship:

- What does good green infrastructure actually look like in planning policy and decision-making processes?
- How can we translate existing NERC and other research science associated with GI cumulatively into additional pathways to impact to address key policy and practice challenges and opportunities?
- 3. How can we demonstrate and evaluate the added value of GI in planning policies and interventions?
- 4. How can we change/influence behaviour(s) of key actors in the planning arena regarding their valuation and use of GI in policy

## My role as a NERC Knowledge Exchange Fellow

As a knowledge exchange fellow I see my role as a catalyst integrating multiple planning policy and practice viewpoints across key stakeholders who use/shape the planning system.

These participants will co-produce the project's outputs within a managed process that is developmental, pragmatic and peer reviewed; delivering a suite of guidance, tools and resources that mainstream GI in policy and decision making thereby embracing the government's economic growth and quality of life agendas.

- Alister.scott@northumbria.ac.uk
- @profalister (twitter)
- NERC fellow <u>https://mainstreaminggreeninfrastructure.com/index.php</u>