

Appendix 1:

Central Lancashire Core Strategy Policy 22:

Biodiversity and Geodiversity

10.21 Biodiversity is the variety of life in all its forms; Geodiversity is the variety of rocks and landforms together with the processes that form them. It is important to recognise that the underlying geology affects the landscape of areas and the biological diversity that land can sustain. A wide range of sites important to wildlife habitats and species exist in Central Lancashire, and whilst some areas/sites are afforded greater protection through legislation, the Core Strategy recognises the ecological value of all levels.

10.22 Within Central Lancashire there exist elements of the entire hierarchy of designations. At the European level the Ribble and Alt Estuaries are designated as a Special Protection Area (SPA) for birds, a Ramsar International wetland, a National Nature Reserve and a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI). There are significant areas of European Directive Priority Habitats (mainly saltmarsh and active blanket bog). The area also contains many regional and locally designated sites including several hundred Biological Heritage Sites (BHSs) and a number of Local Nature Reserves. Central Lancashire is home to various protected animals and plant species; Biodiversity Action Plans set out management strategies for their conservation, maintenance and enhancement. There are also 17 Geological Heritage Sites in the plan area.

10.23 The Core Strategy will help ensure that areas/sites with international, national and local designations will not be adversely affected by new development.

Ecological Networks

10.24 Design of the natural environment is equally important when considering the protection, maintenance, restoration and re-establishment and favourable condition of biodiversity and geodiversity. This can help to nurture and conserve habitat and species colonisation, and prevent fragmentation.

10.25 Ecological networks were introduced through national planning policies as an opportunity to design for the future of ecology through spatial planning. Policy 22 conforms to national guidance and will be further developed in future planning documents

Policy 22: Biodiversity and Geodiversity

Conserve, protect and seek opportunities to enhance and manage the biological and geological assets of the area, through the following measures:

- (a) Promoting the conservation and enhancement of biological diversity, having particular regard to the favourable condition, restoration and re-establishment of priority habitats and species populations;**
- (b) Seeking opportunities to conserve, enhance and expand ecological networks;**
- (c) Safeguarding geological assets that are of strategic and local importance.**

Emerging Chorley Local Plan 2012 – 2026

Policy BNE9: Biodiversity and Nature Conservation

- 7.1** All sites with international, national and local environmental designations are recognised by the Core Strategy and are afforded a level of protection from any adverse impacts of development through Core Strategy Policy 22: Biodiversity and Geodiversity.
- 7.2** Chorley has an extensive network of sites important for biodiversity. These include Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) which are statutory sites of national conservation value. There are at present two SSSIs in Chorley Borough, at White Coppice and Charnock Richard. The locations of these sites are shown on the Policies Map.
- 7.3** Similarly, at the county and local level, sites that make a significant contribution to the natural diversity of the Plan area and are worthy of protection in their own right are Biological Heritage Sites (BHS), Geological Heritage Sites (GHS) and Wildlife Corridors. They form an important part of the nature conservation network and need to be protected from development that will cause fragmented networks or isolated habitats. Biological Heritage Sites (BHS) and Geological Heritage Sites (GHS) are identified on the Policies Map.
- 7.4** As well as the need to protect, conserve and enhance designated sites it is also important to protect, conserve and enhance nationally and locally important species that use a variety of sites/habitats as part of a nature conservation network. An Ecological Network for Lancashire is currently being identified, and this will include Chorley.
- 7.5** Biodiversity has many important roles and functions including protecting biodiversity for its own sake, adapting to climate change, recreation, health and wellbeing etc. As part of a changing climate it is important to allow habitats and species the opportunities to adapt, making provision where possible. Ecological networks form an important basis for this and it is the Council's view that these networks should be maintained and enhanced, where appropriate to allow habitats and species the best opportunity to adapt to a changing climate.
- 7.6** Priority species and habitats (as covered by Local Plan Policy BNE11) play an important role and are protected under European and National Law. Where species or habitats may come under threat, it is the developer's responsibility to carry out all necessary surveys. Ecology surveys need to be provided to assess the quality, quantity and value of biodiversity on site or near the site and how the development may affect biodiversity. In certain cases development will not be permitted and in other cases mitigation/ compensatory measures of equal area, quality and diversity, if not higher will apply to try and reduce or overcome the impacts and where possible provide net gains or enhancements to improve the Borough's nature conservation assets.
- 7.7** The Council will work with the other Central Lancashire authorities of Preston and South Ribble and the Wildlife Trust, with a view to agreeing a Central Lancashire approach to nature conservation. This may be in the form of a Supplementary Planning Document (SPD).

BNE9: Biodiversity and Nature Conservation

In Chorley, Biodiversity and Ecological Network resources will be protected, conserved, restored and enhanced:

Priority will be given to:

- i. Protecting and safeguarding all designated sites of international, national, regional, county and local level importance including all Ramsar sites, Special Protection Areas, Special Areas of Conservation, national nature reserves, sites of special scientific interest and biological heritage sites, geological heritage sites, local nature reserves and wildlife corridors together with any ecological network approved by the Council;**
- ii. Protecting, safeguarding and enhancing habitats for European, nationally and locally important species;**
- iii. The ecology of the site and the surrounding area (safeguarding existing habitats / features such as but not exclusive to trees, hedgerows, ponds and streams), unless justified otherwise.**
- iv. When considering applications for planning permission, protecting, conserving, restoring and enhancing Chorley's ecological network and providing links to the network from and/or through the proposed development site.**

In addition development must adhere to the provisions set out below:

- a) The production of a net gain in biodiversity where possible by designing in wildlife and by ensuring that any adverse impacts are avoided or if unavoidable are reduced or appropriately mitigated and/or compensated;**
- b) The provision of opportunities for habitats and species to adapt to climate change;**
- c) The support and encouragement of enhancements which contribute to habitat restoration;**
- d) Where there is reason to suspect that there may be protected habitats/species on or close to a proposed development site, the developer will be expected to carry out all necessary surveys in the first instance; planning applications must then be accompanied by a survey assessing the presence of such habitats/species and, where appropriate, make provision for their needs;**
- e) In exceptional cases where the need for development in that location is considered to significantly outweigh the impact on the natural environment, appropriate and proportionate mitigation measures or as a last resort compensatory habitat creation and/or restoration will be required through planning conditions and/or planning obligations.**

The following definition of what constitutes damage to natural environmental assets will be used in assessing applications potentially impacting upon assets:

- 1. Loss of the undeveloped open character of a part, parts or all of the ecological network;**
- 2. Reducing the width or causing direct or indirect severance of the ecological network or any part of it;**
- 3. Restricting the potential for lateral movement of wildlife;**
- 4. Causing the degradation of the ecological functions of the ecological network or any part of it;**

5. Directly or indirectly damaging or severing links between green spaces, wildlife corridors and the open countryside; and
6. Impeding links to ecological networks recognised by neighbouring planning authorities.
7. Significant adverse effect on the interest features of a designated nature conservation site.

Emerging South Ribble Site Allocations and Development Management Policies Development Plan Document

Policy G16 – Biodiversity and Nature Conservation

The borough's Biodiversity and Ecological Network resources will be protected, conserved and enhanced. The level of protection will be commensurate with the site's status and proposals will be assessed having regard to the site's importance and the contribution it makes to wider ecological networks:

Regard will be had to:

- Protecting and safeguarding all designated sites of international, national, regional, county and local level importance including all Ramsar, Special Protection Areas, Special Areas of Conservation, national nature reserves, sites of special scientific interest and biological heritage sites, geological heritage sites, local nature reserves, wildlife corridors together with any ecological network approved by the Council;
- Protecting, safeguarding and enhancing habitats for European, nationally and locally important species;
- When considering applications for planning permission protecting, conserving and enhancing the borough's ecological network and providing links to the network from and/or through a proposed development site.

In addition development should have regard to the provisions set out below:

- a) The need to minimise impacts on biodiversity and providing net gains in biodiversity where possible by designing in wildlife and by ensuring that significant harm is avoided or if unavoidable is reduced or appropriately mitigated and/or, as a last resort, compensated;
- b) The need to promote the preservation, restoration and re-creation of priority habitats, ecological networks and the protection and recovery of priority species populations;
- c) Where there is reason to suspect that there may be protected habitats/species on or close to a proposed development site planning applications must be accompanied by a survey undertaken by an appropriate qualified professional;
- d) Where the benefits for development in social or economic terms is considered to outweigh the impact on the natural environment, appropriate and proportionate mitigation measures and/or compensatory habitat creation of an equal or greater area will be required through planning conditions and/or planning obligations.

Emerging Preston Local Plan 2012 - 2026

Natural Environment

- 8.1** The Framework states that the planning system should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment. It requires that Local Planning Authorities set out criteria based policies against which proposals for any development on or affecting potential wildlife or geodiversity sites or landscape areas will be judged. It states that the planning system should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by protecting and enhancing valued landscapes, geological conservation interests and soils; recognising the wider benefits of ecosystem services; and minimising impacts on biodiversity and providing net gains in biodiversity where possible.
- 8.2** The Framework states that the planning system should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment. It requires that Local Planning Authorities set out criteria based policies which proposals for any development on or affecting potential wildlife or geodiversity sites or landscape areas will be judged. It states that the planning system should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by protecting and enhancing valued landscapes, geological conservation interests and soils; recognising the wider benefits of ecosystem services; and minimising impacts on biodiversity and providing net gains in biodiversity where possible.
- 8.3** Core Strategy Policy 18: Green Infrastructure seeks to manage and improve environmental resources. The important contribution landscape makes to an area's distinctiveness is also highlighted in Core Strategy Policy 21: Landscape Character Areas, and Policy 17: Design of New Buildings – which require new development to be well integrated into the landscape.

Biodiversity and Nature Conservation

- 8.4** All sites within international, national and local environmental designations are recognised by the Core Strategy and are afforded a level of protection from any adverse impacts of development through Core Strategy Policy 22: Biodiversity and Geodiversity.
- 8.5** Preston has an extensive network of sites important for biodiversity. These include Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), statutory sites of national conservation value. There is at present one SSSI, Red Scar and Tun Brook Woods SSSI, within Preston as shown on the Policies Map.
- 8.6** Similarly, at the county and local level sites that make a significant contribution to the natural diversity of the Plan area and are worthy of protection in their own right are Biological Heritage Sites (BHS), Geological Heritage Sites (GHS) and Wildlife Corridors. They form an important part of the nature conservation network and need to be protected from development that will cause fragmented networks or isolated habitats. Biological Heritage Sites (BHS) and Geological Heritage Sites (GHS) are identified on the Policies Map.
- 8.7** As well as the need to protect, conserve and enhance designated sites it is also important to protect, conserve and enhance nationally and locally important species that use a variety of sites/habitats as part of a nature conservation network. Lancashire County Council is producing an Ecological Network covering the County, and this includes Preston.

- 8.8 Biodiversity has many important roles and functions including protecting biodiversity for its own sake, adapting to climate change, recreation, health and wellbeing etc. As part of a changing climate it is important to allow habitats and species the opportunities to adapt, making provision where possible. Ecological networks form an important basis for this and it is the Council's view that these networks should be maintained and enhanced, where appropriate to allow habitats and species the best opportunity to adapt to a changing climate.
- 8.9 Priority species [*PC77*] **(as covered by Policy EN11)** and habitats (~~as covered by Policy EN11~~) play an important role and are protected under European and National Law. **The Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act came into force on 1st October 2006. Section 41 (S.41) of the Act requires the Secretary of State to publish a list of habitats and species which are of principle importance for the conservation of biodiversity in England. The list has been drawn up in consultation with Natural England, as required by the Act.**
- 8.10 **The S41 list is used to guide decision-makers such as public bodies, including local authorities, in implementing their duty under section 40 of the NERC Act to have regard to the conservation of biodiversity in England, when carrying out their normal functions.** Where species or habitats may come under threat, it is the developer's responsibility to carry out all necessary surveys. Ecology surveys need to be provided to assess the quality, quantity and value of biodiversity on site or near the site and how the development may affect biodiversity. In certain cases development will not be permitted and in other cases mitigation/compensatory measures of [*PC78*] **at least** equal area, quality and diversity, if not higher will **be required** apply to try and **in order to** reduce or overcome the impacts and where possible provide net gains or enhancements to improve the borough's **Preston's** nature conservation assets.
- 8.11 The Council will work with the other Central Lancashire authorities of Chorley and South Ribble and the Wildlife Trust, with a view to agreeing a Central Lancashire approach to nature conservation. This may be in the form of a Supplementary Planning Document (SPD)

Policy EN10 – Biodiversity and Nature Conservation

In Preston, Biodiversity and Ecological Network resources will be protected, conserved, restored and enhanced:

Priority will be given to:

- i. Protecting and safeguarding all designated sites of international, national, regional, county and local level importance including all Ramsar sites, Special Protection Areas, Special Areas of Conservation, national nature reserves, sites of special scientific interest and biological heritage sites, [PC79] **S41 Habitats of Principle Importance**, geological heritage sites, local nature reserves and wildlife corridors together with any ecological network approved by the Council;
- ii. Protecting, safeguarding and enhancing habitats for European, nationally and locally important species;
- iii. The ecology of the site and the surrounding area (safeguarding existing habitats/features such as but not exclusive to trees, hedgerows, ponds and streams), unless justified otherwise.
- iv. When considering applications for planning permission, protecting, conserving, restoring and enhancing Preston's ecological network and providing links to the network from and/or through the proposed development site.

In addition development must adhere to the provisions set out below:

- a. The production of a net gain in biodiversity where possible by designing in wildlife and by ensuring that any adverse impacts are avoided or if unavoidable are reduced or appropriately mitigated and/or compensated;
- b. The provision of opportunities for habitats and species to adapt to climate change;
- c. The support and encouragement of enhancements which contribute to habitat restoration;
- d. Where there is reason to suspect that there may be protected habitats/species on or close to a proposed development site, the developer will be expected to carry out all necessary surveys in the first instance; planning applications must then be accompanied by a survey assessing the presence of such habitats/species and, where appropriate, make provision for their needs;
- e. In exceptional cases, where the need for development in social or economic terms is considered to significantly outweigh the impact on the natural environment, appropriate and proportionate mitigation measures and/or compensatory habitat creation and/or restoration will be required through planning conditions and/or planning obligations.

The following definition of what constitutes damage to natural environment assets will be used in assessing applications potentially impacting upon assets:

1. Loss of the undeveloped open character of a part, parts or all of the ecological network;
2. Reducing the width or causing direct or indirect severance of the ecological network or any part of it;
3. Restricting the potential for lateral movement of wildlife;
4. Causing the degradation of the ecological functions of the ecological network or any part of it;
5. Directly or indirectly damaging or severing links between green spaces, wildlife corridors and the open countryside; and
6. Impeding links to ecological networks recognised by neighbouring planning authorities.