

# Green Infrastructure Study

## Proposals for the Creation of a Green Network for Gainsborough



July 2018



Produced in 2018 by BRCC as supporting evidence for the  
Gainsborough Neighbourhood Plan

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## **Executive Summary**

This report was commissioned to provide the emerging Gainsborough Neighbourhood Plan with a robust summary of existing Green Infrastructure (GI) provision within the town; and to propose GI enhancements to inform Neighbourhood Plan policies.

The report summarises plans and proposals identified in a range of local, district and national-level policy documents and draws them together through the authors' own site surveys. The report identifies the potential for new and existing GI assets to be created, enhanced and linked to form an accessible corridor around the town served by linked sites and routes through the settlement.

The 'Gainsborough Green Network' is the principle proposal of the report, supported by proposed policy areas to be included within the Gainsborough Neighbourhood Plan.

The long term vision for the Gainsborough Green Network is that as the town grows over the next 20 years an off-road multi-user corridor around the town, taking users through and beside areas of rich biodiversity, heritage and landscape value. Existing and new local residents - together with visitors to the area - will have greater opportunities to explore and enjoy the local area, giving a sense of pride in the town. Outdoor activity - including walking, running and cycling – has significant physical and mental health and wellbeing benefits.

## **1.0 Introduction**

**Gainsborough Town Council have commissioned BRCC to undertake local Green Infrastructure (GI) Planning work.**

**This GI Study is intended to inform the Gainsborough Neighbourhood Plan and embed GI provision within the development of the town, making it a desirable place to live, work and visit.**

Background research for this report has identified many plans, strategies and policies which relate to Gainsborough's green infrastructure. As such, this plan does not propose brand new concepts, but rather seeks to bring together existing ideas. This plan identifies general principles as to how routes and spaces can be enhanced and linked to create a valued asset for the community. The specific details for implementing individual components will require detailed and costed project plans.

## **2.0 Neighbourhood Plan Context**

The Draft Gainsborough Neighbourhood Development Plan has as its vision:

### **Community Vision**

**The Gainsborough Neighbourhood Development Plan will take a positive approach to development so long as it brings forward a balance of housing, employment, retail, community and leisure development on sites within the town (as well as on the edge) to ensure Gainsborough becomes a more attractive, vibrant place, providing all the amenities you would expect in a desirable town.**

**All development within the Plan period will maximise the environmental assets in and around Gainsborough, particularly the river, access to the countryside and the parks and green spaces so that people can cycle or walk around the town, making the most of the town's natural features and enabling a healthier lifestyle for all.**

**The riverside and the significant historic buildings and spaces will be a focus for regeneration within the town and the market place will be a focal point for retail, commercial and social uses.**

**Gainsborough will be a growing visitor destination - the improved fabric of the town (historic, retail and social) will see an increase in tourism spending in the town.**

**Businesses of all sizes in Gainsborough will grow as the town thrives, benefiting from the improvements made to the quality of the town, road and rail network and the access to a growing workforce of local people happy to live, work and play in the town.**

This GI Study should be used to underpin objectives and policies in the Gainsborough Neighbourhood Plan. The Gainsborough Neighbourhood Plan has 11 Objectives. This GI Study directly links to Objectives 1 and 8:

Community Objective 1: The regeneration of the riverside is a priority to provide leisure and recreation for local people and to make the town more attractive.

Community Objective 8: To improve walking and cycling access to the countryside, the riverside and routes within the town to the local green spaces by improving and extending routes that create green connections, whilst supporting nature conservation.

Policies linked to objective 8 should refer directly to the implementation of the Gainsborough Green Network proposals.

### **3.0 Links with other Strategies:**

A number of existing strategies and policies are of relevance to the proposals for a Green Network for Gainsborough. They are listed and summarised below.

#### **3.1 Green Infrastructure Strategies**

##### West Lindsey District Council Green Infrastructure Audit, 2012

At a District level, this report also links to the West Lindsey District Council Green Infrastructure Audit, 2012 which defines GI as:

*“... the umbrella term used to describe all the different elements that form the network of natural and semi-natural spaces within and around our towns and villages, and in the open countryside...”*

*...GI covers a variety of types of spaces, including (but by no means exclusively) woodland, parks and gardens, green lanes, public rights of way, churchyards, sports facilities, water courses and beaches and dunes.”*

This definition is narrower than others, focussing primarily on ‘spaces’ and their ‘linkages’. The consultant commissioned to produce this GI Study and Gainsborough Green Network Proposal uses a definition which bases GI on the 5 overlapping themes of:

- Open Space
- Access
- Biodiversity
- Historic Environment
- Landscape

These themes are identified within the definition of GI approved by the Natural England Board: “A strategically planned and delivered network comprising the broadest range of high quality green spaces and other environmental features, designed and managed as a multi-functional resource capable of delivering those ecological services and quality of life benefits required by the communities it serves and needed to underpin sustainability. Its design and management should also

respect and enhance the character and distinctiveness of an area with regards to habitats and landscape types.”

### Central Lincolnshire GI Study, 2011

The overall objective of this study is “to improve and provide new Green Infrastructure in Central Lincolnshire by enhancing, developing and providing a multi-functional network of greenspaces, parks, rivers and other corridors within and around settlements that connect them to each other and the wider countryside, improving access, environmental quality and biodiversity”.

A specific objective within this study is the Gainsborough Green Grid. This initiative seeks to create a multi-functional network of interlinked high quality green spaces that connects Gainsborough’s town centre, public transport hubs, the River Trent and the surrounding countryside with employment and residential uses in growth areas. The initiative is to have a particular emphasis on accessible natural green space, enhancing biodiversity and providing local green links.

### 3.2 Other Local Strategies

Invest Gainsborough is a public and private sector initiative - launched in 2016 - to attract inward investment was created as part of West Lindsey District Council’s pledge to invest £18 million to boost regeneration and housing led economic growth in the town:

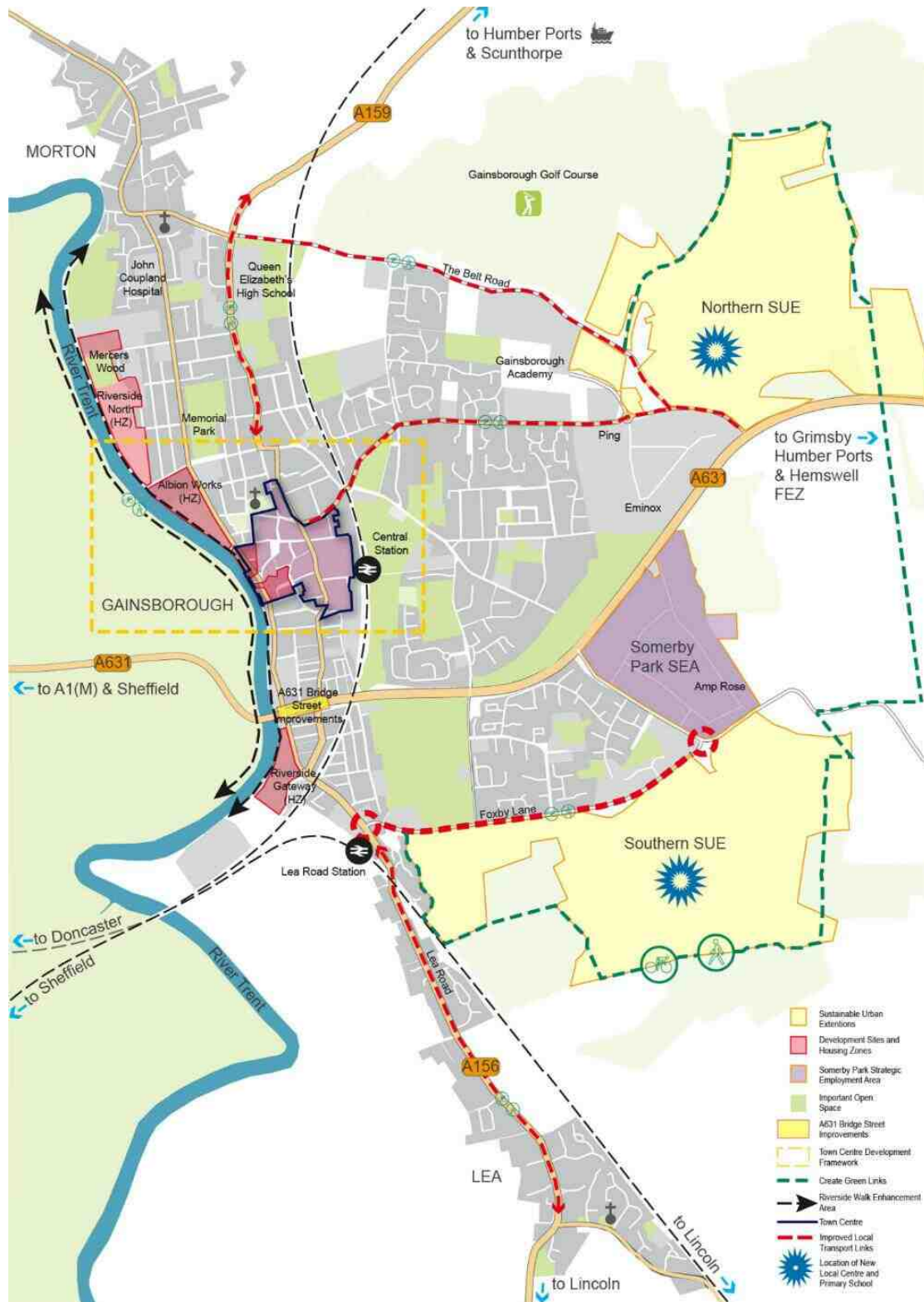
Invest Gainsborough’s vision for the town:

Gainsborough is a thriving Lincolnshire market town with major growth ambitions. The expansion of the population will go hand-in-hand with the provision of more jobs, improved education, more and better services and facilities, an improved town centre and a generally better quality of life for all.

In twenty years Gainsborough will have:

- A well planned and vibrant town centre, which has a variety of high quality shops, services and leisure uses.
- Developed our heritage assets creating unique landmark attractions, building on the success of Marshall’s Yard and Whittons Mill.
- Enhanced network of green spaces.
- Delivered Gainsborough’s first sustainable Urban Extension, with range of high quality housing and employment provision.
- A strong and connected economy providing a wide range of jobs to serve an expanded workforce.
- An improved transport network with enhanced rail provision which has capitalised on the links to the Humber Bank, Doncaster and Sheffield.
- A town which has fully embraced green technologies.

The Invest Gainsborough website hosts the following Gainsborough Spatial Strategy map.



The proposed 'Create Green Links' routes identified above are well matched to the proposed Green Network routes identified in this report. It should be noted that the above map identifies some sites as 'Important Open Space' which have been identified elsewhere for development.

## Central Lincolnshire Local Plan, 2017

The aim of the Local Plan is to set out plans and policies that help create places that are sustainable and attractive to live in. The Local Plan works together with other plans and policies, such as economic, housing and environmental strategies.

Objective G within the Local plan is 'Biodiversity and Green Infrastructure': To conserve and enhance biodiversity across Central Lincolnshire and provide opportunities for people to access and appreciate wildlife and the natural environment. To create and improve high quality green and blue spaces that are multifunctional, (including opportunities for sport, recreation and play), accessible to all and which form part of and are connected to the green infrastructure network.

The Local Plan has a number of generic policies of relevance to this report:

- Policy LP9: Health and Wellbeing
- Policy LP17: Landscape, Townscape and Views
- Policy LP20: Green Infrastructure Network
- Policy LP21: Biodiversity and Geodiversity
- Policy LP22: Green Wedges
- Policy LP23: Local Green Space and other Important Open Space

More specifically, the Local Plan has policies of direct relevance to this report. The planning and implementation of the Gainsborough Green Network proposals in this report should seek to demonstrate how they are supported by, and contribute towards these policies:

- Policy LP24: Creation of New Open Space, Sports and Recreation Facilities
- Policy LP38: Protecting Gainsborough's Setting and Character
- Policy LP39: Gainsborough Sustainable Urban Extensions
- Policy LP40: Gainsborough Riverside
- Policy LP41: Regeneration of Gainsborough

These policies of specific relevance to the proposed Gainsborough Green Network are detailed below:

### LP24: Creation of New Open Space, Sports and Recreation Facilities

The Central Lincolnshire Authorities will seek to:

reduce public open space, sports and recreational facilities deficiency; ensure development provides an appropriate amount of new open space, sports and recreation facilities; and improve the quality of, and access to, existing open spaces, sports and recreation facilities. Residential development will be required to provide new or enhanced provision of public open space, sports and recreation facilities in accordance with the standards set out in Appendix C and in compliance with the latest Central Lincolnshire Developer Contributions Supplementary Planning Document (or similar subsequent document).

Open space, sports and recreation provision requirements should:

- a. as first preference be provided on-site in a suitable location. Where on site provision is not feasible or suitable within a local context, consideration of a financial contribution to the creation of a new facility or the upgrading and improvement of an existing usable facility will be considered as per the criteria set out in the Developer Contribution SPD and in accordance with national legislation;
- b. be multifunctional, fit for purpose and support health and outdoor recreation;
- c. consider the context of any existing provision and maximise any opportunities for improvement within the wider area where these are relevant to the development of the site;



d. when new provision is provided, have appropriate mechanisms secured which will ensure the future satisfactory maintenance and management of the open space, sports and recreational facility.

A holistic approach to the design of new open space should be taken including considering the contribution to place making, the green network and protecting and enhancing nature conservation and the water environment. New provision should also aim to protect, enhance and manage integrated paths for active travel and/or recreation, including new and existing links to the wider countryside.

#### Policy LP38: Protecting Gainsborough's Setting and Character

Proposals for development should seek to make a positive contribution to the built and natural environment and quality of life in Gainsborough. All development proposals should contribute to the realisation of the following key principles, as applicable, taking into account the Gainsborough Masterplan:

- a. Protect, conserve and, where appropriate, enhance the benefits of heritage assets, key landmarks and their settings to local distinctiveness and sense of place, through sensitive development and environmental improvement;
- b. Protect important local views from both within and outside the town;
- c. Deliver improvements to the public realm that will enhance Gainsborough's attractiveness as a destination;
- d. Support the development of art, cultural, social and leisure assets and facilities within or close to the town centre, and improve access to such assets and facilities;
- e. Protect and enhance the landscape character and setting of Gainsborough and the surrounding villages by ensuring key gateways are landscaped to enhance the setting of the town, minimise impact upon the open character of the countryside and to maintain the setting and integrity of surrounding villages.

#### Policy LP39: Gainsborough Sustainable Urban Extensions

In addition to the generic requirements for SUEs in Policy LP28, development will be required to meet the following specific requirements:

Gainsborough Southern Neighbourhood SUE - The Gainsborough Southern Neighbourhood SUE, as identified on the Policies Map, is allocated for approximately 2,500 dwellings, of which 1,400 dwellings are anticipated to come forward in the plan period to 2036.

Development of this SUE is likely to come forward in accordance with the Outline Planning Consent for the site granted in 2011. However, should an alternative permission be sought for the site then in addition to the generic requirements for SUEs in Policy LP28, development will be required to meet the following specific requirements:

Approximately 4ha of land for employment (B1/B2 Use Classes) to accommodate uses such as small offices, start up business premises and other small scale industry compatible with a residential area and the location; Open Space and 'green corridors' to integrate the development with the surrounding countryside and woodland; A new Local Centre of an appropriate scale and nature, providing for retail (Class A) uses, community uses and services, including for health and community policing; and Additional retail provision is of a very limited scale and at a maximum of two further locations within the SUE.

Gainsborough Northern Neighbourhood SUE: The Gainsborough Northern Neighbourhood SUE, as identified on the Policies Map, is allocated for approximately 2,500 dwellings, of which 750 dwellings are anticipated to come forward in the plan period to 2036. In addition to the generic requirements for SUEs in Policy LP28, development will be required to meet the following specific requirements:

Approximately 7ha of land for employment (B1/B2/B8 Use Classes). Employment premises provided must include start-up and small business premises, and an overall

emphasis on B1 uses; Open Space and 'green corridors' to integrate the development with the surrounding countryside and woodland; and A new Local Centre of an appropriate scale, providing for retail, services and community uses of a local nature.

#### Policy LP40: Gainsborough Riverside

All relevant development proposals on sites adjacent to the River Trent must assist in the delivery of the long term aim of creating an uninterrupted and attractive pedestrian and cycle corridor connecting Gainsborough's riverside area with the settlements of Lea to the south and Morton to the north. Proposals should also seek to improve connectivity between the riverside and other parts of the town, including the new urban extensions.

Where relevant, proposals for sites adjacent to the River Trent must seek to extend and enhance the existing public realm improvements and deliver an enhanced pedestrian and cycle network. Proposals should take account of the need to provide an easement strip behind the flood defences to facilitate ongoing access for future maintenance and repair. In addition to the above, all development proposals adjacent to the river will be expected demonstrate that the requirements of the Water Framework Directive have been duly considered and must ensure that there will be no deterioration to the river as a result of the development.

#### Policy LP41: Regeneration of Gainsborough

Development proposals should assist, where possible, in meeting wider regeneration and investment objectives for Gainsborough, including the most up to date Gainsborough Masterplan. In particular, development proposals will be supported which:

Enhance linkages to / from Marshall's Yard, Market Place, Market Street, the Riverside and any other key heritage assets;

Strengthen the existing retail area of the town centre, through increased and/or improved retail offer, together with some complementary uses as appropriate;

Deliver mixed use regeneration of the Riverside Area, including high quality public realm provision; and / or

Deliver improved public transport facilities and connections.

#### OnTrent Initiative

The OnTrent Initiative is a broad-ranging scheme managed by the Nottinghamshire, Lincolnshire, Derbyshire and Staffordshire Wildlife Trusts, to conserve and enhance the rich natural and historic heritage along the River Trent – making a better habitat for wildlife and a better environment for people to enjoy.

The initiative aims to:

- Create a rich diversity of linked wetland habitats along the Trent and its tributaries.
- Encourage the adoption of sustainable practices in agriculture, forestry, mineral extraction, building development, water management and energy.
- Enable people to connect with, understand and benefit from rivers and wetlands.
- Conserve, interpret and research the historic environment of the river valley.
- Encourage sustainable recreation and tourism.
- Work with organisations and land managers to promote the value of wetlands and where appropriate the re-establishment of natural processes in floodplains.

**A single overall strategy for the growth and enhancement of the town would be beneficial to ensure that the many plans and strategies reference above can be brought together in a coherent and complimentary way.**

### **3.3 National Strategy**

#### **National Planning Policy Framework**

Paragraphs 109-125 in the NPPF relate to conserving & enhancing the Natural environment.

Paragraph 77 enables local communities, through Neighbourhood Plans to protect important sites by designating them as Local Green Spaces (LGS). The LGS designation is not appropriate for many green areas or open spaces; and the designation should only be used:

- where the green space is in reasonably close proximity to the community it serves
- where the green area is demonstrably special to a local community and holds a particular local significance, for example because of its beauty, historic significance, recreational value (including as a playing field), tranquility or richness of its wildlife
- where the green area concerned is local in character and is not an extensive tract of land

The author of this report proposes that Gainsborough Town Council and the Gainsborough Neighbourhood Plan Group undertake an assessment of local green spaces – in particular those highlighted in the report as being components of the Green Network – with the intention of designating those which meet the LGS criteria. The table in Section 9.3 of this report highlights those sites which the author believes could meet LGS designation criteria; however a comprehensive site assessment will be required to provide evidence for designation.

## **4.0 Existing GI Provision**

To inform the production of this report, site visits were undertaken by BRCC in November 2017. These visits enabled the identification of existing and potential GI assets and how these could be linked to create a coherent GI 'network'. The creation of this network over the coming years, in parallel with further anticipated housing development, will result in Gainsborough becoming a thriving community, served by and caring for its local environment.

### **4.1 ACCESS**

Compared to other areas of the country, Gainsborough has relatively few Public Rights of Way.

To the west of the town, on the western bank of the River Trent in Nottinghamshire, a Public Footpath carries the Trent Valley Way long distance walk. However, this recreational route does not appear to be well known or used. Given the absence of any crossings of the river other than the A631 bridge on The Flood Road there is insufficient connectivity to incorporate this route within a Gainsborough Green Network proposal.



Public footpath heading north along the western bank of the River Trent, from the A631 bridge. The small way marker disc in the bottom right hand corner identifies this as the route of the Trent Valley Way.

The Gainsborough Riverside Walk, along the eastern bank of the River Trent is a major asset to the town; and will become even more valuable as plans to rectify a missing link; and to extend the access southward to the proposed marina via a pontoon, are implemented

A number of paths and roadside cycleways exist within the town, some of which are Public Footpaths. However, many of these lack connectivity with other off-road routes, and /or currently cater for only pedestrians (due to their status or the physical conditions (gradient) of the paths). Notwithstanding, some of these routes have the potential to be linked and form part of the Green Network.

The following link shows a map of walking and cycling routes within Gainsborough:  
<https://www.lincolnshire.gov.uk/searchResults.aspx?qsearch=1&keywords=cycling+and+walking+gainsborough&x=42&y=21>  
(Gainsborough and surrounding area Cycle Map)



Cycleway along the northern side of Corringham Road, facing westwards towards the town.

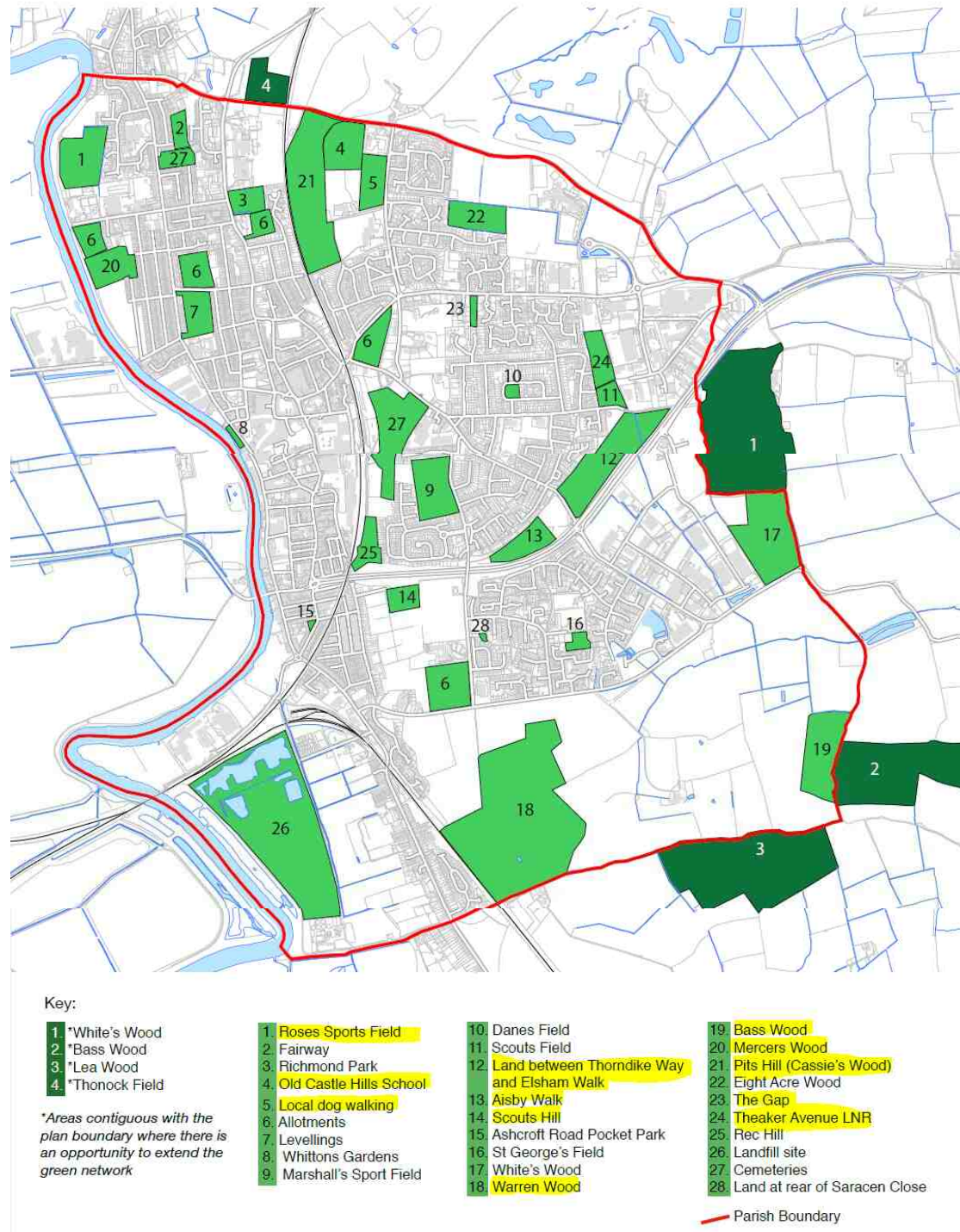
Gainsborough is not on the National Cycle Network. (The closest part of the NCN is Route 647, from Lincoln to Worksop, approx. 10 miles to the south).



## 4.2 GREEN SPACE

The main existing GI assets for green space which link to the proposals of this report are highlighted on the map below.

### Gainsborough Existing Green Spaces



Many of the above sites are also highlighted in The Gainsborough Spatial Strategy, cited by Invest Gainsborough, as Important Open Spaces.

If the River Trent – Gainsborough's largest and most significant GI asset, is considered a green (blue) space; green space provision within the town can be identified in 3 distinct corridors:

1 – The River Trent Corridor, to the west of the town



2 – The Escarpment Corridor, running north-south through the town



3 – The Woodland Corridor, the east and south east of the town; including Wharton Wood, Beech Wood, White's Wood, Bass Wood, Lee Wood and Warren Wood.

### **4.3 BIODIVERSITY**

Gainsborough has one Local Nature Reserve/ Local Wildlife Site: Theaker Avenue. Local Wildlife Sites are defined by West Lindsey DC as: areas identified and selected locally for their substantive nature conservation value.

Many of the woodlands which form a dispersed corridor around the south, east and north of the town are on the National Forest Inventory

The River Trent is a major biodiversity asset, most obviously for aquatic species but it is also a major migratory corridor for many bird species. The built environment of the town creates a hard eastern bank to the river, but to the west, in north Nottinghamshire, are important wet grassland habitats, including the RSPB's Beckingham Marshes nature reserve (1 mile west of Gainsborough).

WLDC are developing plans and seeking funding for a 'Gainsborough Green Corridor' project. This project would lead to improvements to the town's green spaces, public access provision and biodiversity. Subject to funding being secured the project aims to:

- Improve accessibility to the River Trent and implement ecological improvements to the River and associated Riverside Walk through the provision of a floating pontoon and other habitat-creation measures. This will also link the Gainsborough South West Ward to the rest of the town through an extended Riverside Walkway. Ecological enhancements include the provision of bat boxes, fish baskets, commuting features for bats and the creation of a bat-friendly 'dark corridor' across the River Trent.
- Implement woodland management plans, habitat creation measures and judicious afforestation at a range of woodland sites across Gainsborough – The sites to be incorporated within this aspect of the project are Pitt Hills Wood, Mercer's Wood, Eight Acre Wood.
- Implement full ecological enhancement strategies and habitat creation measures at a range of locally designated nature reserves and community open spaces, including Middlefield Lane Park, Theaker Avenue nature reserve and Whittons Garden, ensuring that their contribution to the town's ecosystem is maximised. The combination of all the sites chosen encircle the town and in so doing, create a 'Green Corridor' around Gainsborough.

All of these above aims of the Gainsborough Green Corridor project proposal are included within, or compliment the Gainsborough Green Network proposal.



#### **4.4 HERITAGE**

As with biodiversity, the River Trent is a major heritage feature within the town. The presence of the river as a source of food and water as well as transport corridor will have attracted early settlers.

The river frontage in the town is lined with warehouses, that were once used when the town was an inland port, many of which have been renovated for modern use.

Evidence of the establishment of the town during the Medieval period can be seen in the streets and market square; and most notably with the Grade I listed Old Hall. Dating from circa 1460, the Old Hall is owned by English heritage and operated by Lincolnshire County Council/

Castle Hills is an earth and timber ringwork and baileys fortress, located just to the north of The Little Belt road, between Gainsborough Golf Course and the railway line. The fortress (rather than a 'castle' as such) probably dates from the late 11th to the mid 12th century and is located at the top of a steep escarpment, looking west over the Trent valley. Now within woodland, evidence can be seen of the roughly circular banked and ditched ringwork, protected by a semi-circular bailey to the north and a large kidney-shaped bailey to the south and east.

#### **4.5 LANDSCAPE**

Landscape, the 5<sup>th</sup> thematic component of GI, is in essence the product of the other themes when viewed as whole.

The predominant landscape features of Gainsborough mirror the 3 GI corridors identified earlier in this report, namely are:

- The River Trent and its flat floodplain – predominantly to the west of the town
- The escarpment running north-south through the town
- The dispersed line of woodlands to the southeast and east of the town

The National Character Area (NCA) is a natural subdivision of England based on a combination of landscape, biodiversity, geodiversity and economic activity. There are 159 National Character Areas and they follow natural, rather than administrative, boundaries. Gainsborough lies in the boundary of two NCA's: 45 and 48.

##### **45 Northern Lincolnshire Edge with Coversands**

The Northern Lincolnshire Edge with Coversands National Character Area (NCA) comprises a ridge of Jurassic limestone running north from Lincoln to the Humber Estuary. The scarp slope rises prominently from adjacent low-lying land, forming the Edge or Cliff, and giving panoramic views out, in particular to the west

##### **48 Trent and Belvoir Vales**

The Trent and Belvoir Vales National Character Area (NCA) is characterised by undulating, strongly rural and predominantly arable farmland, centred on the River Trent. A low-lying rural landscape with relatively little woodland cover, the NCA offers long, open views. Newark-on-Trent (generally referred to as Newark) lies at the centre with Grantham, Nottingham, Lincoln and Gainsborough on the peripheries. The southern and eastern edges of the Vales are defined by the adjoining escarpments of the Lincolnshire Edge and the Leicestershire and Nottinghamshire Wolds NCA. To the west, the escarpment of a broad ridge of rolling landscape defines the boundary with the neighbouring Sherwood and Humberhead Levels

NCA's. The area's generally fertile soils and good quality agricultural land have supported a diversity of farming over a long period but, because of this, little semi-natural habitat remains. The powerful River Trent and its flood plain provide a strong feature running through the landscape. It is the greatest biodiversity resource, being a major corridor for wildlife moving through the area and supporting a variety of wetland habitats. It also provides flood storage as well as large amounts of cooling water for local power stations.

The full details, including maps, of the above NCA's can be viewed at:

<http://publications.naturalengland.org.uk/category/587130>

## **5.0 Concept of a 'Green Network' for Gainsborough**

The Gainsborough Green Network is a concept for the long term linking of publicly accessible green spaces and routes around the Town to create an attractive network of open spaces and connecting routes which are rich in biodiversity, heritage and landscape value. The outer route will be served by a network of smaller local routes leading from the community, to the outer edge; and where appropriate to the wider countryside beyond.

Fig 1 shows the main routes forming the proposed Green Network.

The Network is considered 'green' due to both the natural and historic environment components forming it; and the promotion of recreational trips using healthy, non-motorised forms of sustainable 'transport'.

The Network will circle the town, creating a continuous accessible corridor. Ultimately it should be freely available to walkers and cyclists, while also providing appropriate routes for horse riders. The Network should cater for users of limited mobility, providing easy access to the GI network through appropriately surfaced paths and designed structures. Green spaces and associated features forming the Green Network may both be trip destinations in their own right; or may be corridors to other attractions further afield.

Although primarily delivering enhanced public access, the Green Network should also protect, manage, enhance, and promote other Green Infrastructure thematic assets, including biodiversity, landscape and heritage. Where possible, new habitats, landscape features and accessible green spaces should be created to link and extend the existing features to add to the network and contribute to such a Green Network.

Gainsborough will see major changes in the coming years as existing and potential allocated sites come forward for development. Although some of this development may have an adverse impact upon existing GI features, there is great potential for the creation of new and embedding of other existing GI assets into these developments. These developments should contribute towards the delivery of this Green Network, through financial contributions via S106 and/ or CIL; and also through direct creation of GI corridors and features within the development areas.

It is important that the Green Network caters for the needs of both existing and future residents of this growing town.

**Fig 1** shows the main routes forming the proposed Gainsborough Green Network

### Gainsborough Green Network Map



## **6.0 Green Network Principles**

The proposed principles below have been developed through extensive consultation elsewhere in the country on similar GI projects. Local consideration should be given as to whether they are all appropriate for Gainsborough, and whether any additional principles reflecting the local area should be added.

Where possible, linear routes should:

- Be traffic free
- Be safe and inspire confidence in visitors
- Offer 'easy access' i.e. be reasonably easy to use for users with a wide range of mobility levels, including pushchairs and walking aids
- Have the potential for future upgrading to use by cyclists (where not already possible)
- Have designated, safe crossing points over motorised routes
- Provide connections between where people live and where they want to travel (for recreational or employment purposes)
- Be clearly signed and easy to follow
- Be well maintained
- Provide enhanced user enjoyment through the provision of information boards and benches in attractive locations
- Where appropriate provide access for horses, particularly links to existing bridleways
- Be protected from future development. Where future development does occur, any existing sections of the Green Network should remain as inner route options and new outer sections created.
- Cause no damage to archaeological sites and their setting
- Provide safe passing places on those paths with shared vehicular use including appropriate management of vegetation to the sides

Accessible green spaces should:

- Be safe spaces that inspire confidence in visitors
- Cater for a wide range of user-types (dog walkers, playing children, joggers, family groups, older people)
- Provide attractive landscapes
- Provide opportunities for wildlife, heritage conservation and interpretation
- Provide informal recreation opportunities (including playing, bird watching, etc)
- Provide interactive interpretation through information boards, play structures/ environments and art features to encourage more people and a wider audience into the countryside
- Be well maintained

The wider landscape should:

- Protect, enhance and create aesthetically pleasing views
- Have well maintained hedges
- Enable interconnectivity of habitats
- Protect, manage and enhance the historic environment

## **7.0 Standards / Specifications**

To support the creation of the route within the above basic principles, a series of standards based on national guidance are proposed below. The proposed standards and specifications have been developed through extensive consultation elsewhere in the country on similar GI projects. Consideration should be given as to whether they are all appropriate for Gainsborough, and whether any local standards required by West Lindsey District Council should replace these.

### **Widths**

For an un-segregated, shared use path, guidance generally points towards a preferred minimum width of 3m, although a minimum width of 2m may be acceptable where usage is low, provided there are no side constraints (i.e., there should be space to the side of the path to use to allow passing). A greater width will provide an improved level of service.

	Standard	Minimum	Where width is physically restricted*
Shared use path	3m	2.5m	2m
Footpath links	2.5m	2m	1.5m

\*Restricted access will usually be where all or part of the route is using a pre-existing alley way or where there are other significant structures which physically prevent the allocation of a greater width. Paths should conform to the general policy in as far as possible. Where there are localised intrusions and/or short lengths over which the path would be less than 2m wide this may be acceptable depending on the circumstances.

In keeping with the Green Network principles, where possible the route should be set within a landscape and wildlife corridor; and not be limited to the width of a path.

### **Surfacing standards for new paths:**

It is anticipated that the Green Network routes will have a range of surfacing types. This range of surfacing will form a hierarchy of standards based on the level of expected use, landscape sensitivity and other factors. The optimum level of surface should always be sought for the expected level of use:

Level 1: Bound surface – e.g. Bit Mac Tar/Mac

Level 2: Unbound surface – e.g. road planings and granite dust blinding

Level 3: a) Re-enforced grass

b) Well maintained farm track

Level 4: Rolled/consolidated grass or compacted suitable ground

Routes which are more urban in setting and expected to have high levels of use should be Level 1 (Level 2 minimum). Routes which are more rural in setting and expected to have lower levels of use could be Levels 3 and 4.

### **Structures**

Structures will be required at many locations for a range of purposes including, stock control, limiting unauthorised/ vehicular access and safety (to reduce speed at junctions with roads).

With the exceptions of highway safety, barriers, including motor cycle/ staggered/ kissing gates, should only be a last resort. They should only be used to address actual problems, not to alleviate fears of future potential problems. They should only be installed when other methods have been considered or trialled and been discounted, or have proved to be ineffective. Even when a barrier is installed, it should ideally only be in place for a limited period until the problem has stopped or considerably reduced.

Design solutions should minimise the obstacle to legitimate users as barriers which stop motorcyclists are likely to also exclude wheelchair / scooter users, parents with prams and pushchairs, some users with mobility impairments (for example, sticks and crutches) and some visually impaired people.

### **Gradients**

Green Network routes should be designed to achieve a maximum gradient of 3% with the absolute maximum 5% for lengths up to 100m. On the approach to priority junctions this should not exceed 3%. Where steeper slopes are unavoidable the limiting gradient is 7% for lengths up to 30m.

### **Junctions and road crossings**

Where Green Network routes meet or cross the public highway, extra consideration to safety must be given; and Road Safety Officers consulted. Clear signage must be provided, for both users of the Green Network and the public highway. Dependent upon sight lines, gradients and other local factors, structures may be required to reduce the speed of users of the Green Network on approaches to roads and pavements.

Dropped kerbs at road crossings should be used to improve ease of use and safety, improving comfort for all users, especially cyclists and pushchair/ wheelchair users.

### **Signage, way marking and mapping**

Signage for the Green Network should be clear, informative and consistent. A Green Network symbol/ logo and colour scheme will be utilised.

Signposts should be used at all junctions and access points to the outer route of the Green Network. Destinations and distances, both into town along key inner links and around the outer route will be identified.

Waymarking should be used to supplement the main signage and should provide directional information. Waymarking should be undertaken in accordance with West Lindsey District Council waymarking policies.

Additional information about the Green Network, including a map of all the routes, will be provided at key access points.

The issues of signage, waymarking and mapping, along with identity, marketing, promotion and information provision should be the subject of a separate study.

## **Fencing and hedges**

The route of the Green Network should be aesthetically pleasing, wherever possible maintaining a 'green' setting through appropriate planting and landscaping.

Planting and landscaping requirements will vary greatly around the Green Network, influenced primarily by available space and degree of rural/ urban setting.

All planting along the outer route and the more rural linking routes should be of native, locally distinctive species. Planting within more urban settings should be decided with robustness and maintenance as key factors.

Wherever possible, Green Network routes should not be 'fenced-in', with users having a feeling of being contained or funnelled. However, at certain access points and other areas, such as where stock is grazing or for safety, fencing will be required (although the route and adjacent land should provide a corridor feel).

Fencing specifications should be robust and in keeping with their immediate setting. In general, rural settings should have timber fencing which should be of a similar design to any adjacent existing fencing. Where no existing fencing is present, posts should measure a minimum 125mm x 75mm and rails 100 x 50mm.

Fencing specifications in more urban settings will be determined by primary function (safety, security, etc), but in all cases should be as attractive as possible and in-keeping with surrounding structures.

## **Green Space standards**

Green spaces forming the Green Network will range from linear paths and corridors, through amenity green spaces to natural and semi-natural open spaces in the wider countryside. All components of the Green Network should deliver multiple green infrastructure benefits – linking and maximising the quality and value of access, landscape, biodiversity and heritage. Sites forming the Green Network will:

- be clearly signposted to and from the Green Network and the wider network
- be welcoming and clean and safe.
- may incorporate public realm features (e.g. sculptures)
- will provide seating, in both sunny and shaded areas
- have a naturalistic appearance
- have attractive views out of or across the site
- make good use of topography, space and planting
- protect, manage and provide opportunities for interpreting the historic environment
- provide informal and engaging activities for people of all ages
- seek to maximise ecological value and opportunities

New green spaces will be identified where they extend, buffer or link existing sites (particularly those with high biodiversity or heritage value); or where they contribute to creating an accessible corridor.

## **Wider landscape**

As part of this project we are seeking to increase the quality of the environment surrounding the town. It is critical that this masterplan acts as a challenge to all land managers to seek to maintain and develop the quality of the land they manage through the restoration and creation of interconnecting habitats, including pollarded willows, hedges, and woodlands;



wetlands and ponds. Derelict and urban fringe sites should be explored for enhancement opportunities.

### **Maintenance**

To guarantee maximum value, use and longevity of the Green Network once it is developed, it will need to be maintained to a proper standard and to encourage people to use it.

Ongoing maintenance work will have to include verge cutting and surface spraying for which revenue funding will be required.

Careful consideration should be given, when any planting or landscaping is proposed, to ensure that it will not become a problem in the future. Where appropriate, a sealed surface should be considered at the development stage to reduce maintenance liabilities in the future.

### **Impacts and Constraints**

It is acknowledged that the implementation of any of these above standards have the potential to have a negative impact upon features of ecological, heritage or landscape value. Such features may be both assets and constraints on an individual site basis and the application of standards for the creation and maintenance of the Green Network infrastructure may need to be amended accordingly.

## **8.0 Key Components of the Green Network**

The Green Network will utilise existing and create new GI features. This section of the report outlines the main features (existing and proposed) which will form the Green Network; and focusses on the GI themes of access and green space, making reference to significant points of heritage, biodiversity and landscape where appropriate.

To enable the Green Network to be considered, planned and delivered in manageable lengths, the route of the outer rim should be divided into a number of sections. Taking into account the existing features and GI corridors, three sections have been identified as:

- North: River Trent (Morton) – A631
- East / South: A631 – Lea Road
- West: River Trent (Lea Road – Morton)

Each of these 3 sections are approximately 6km / 3.75miles in length; giving an overall distance for the outer rim of the Green Wheel of approximately 18km / 11miles.

### **8.1 Section 1 - North: River Trent (Morton) – A631**

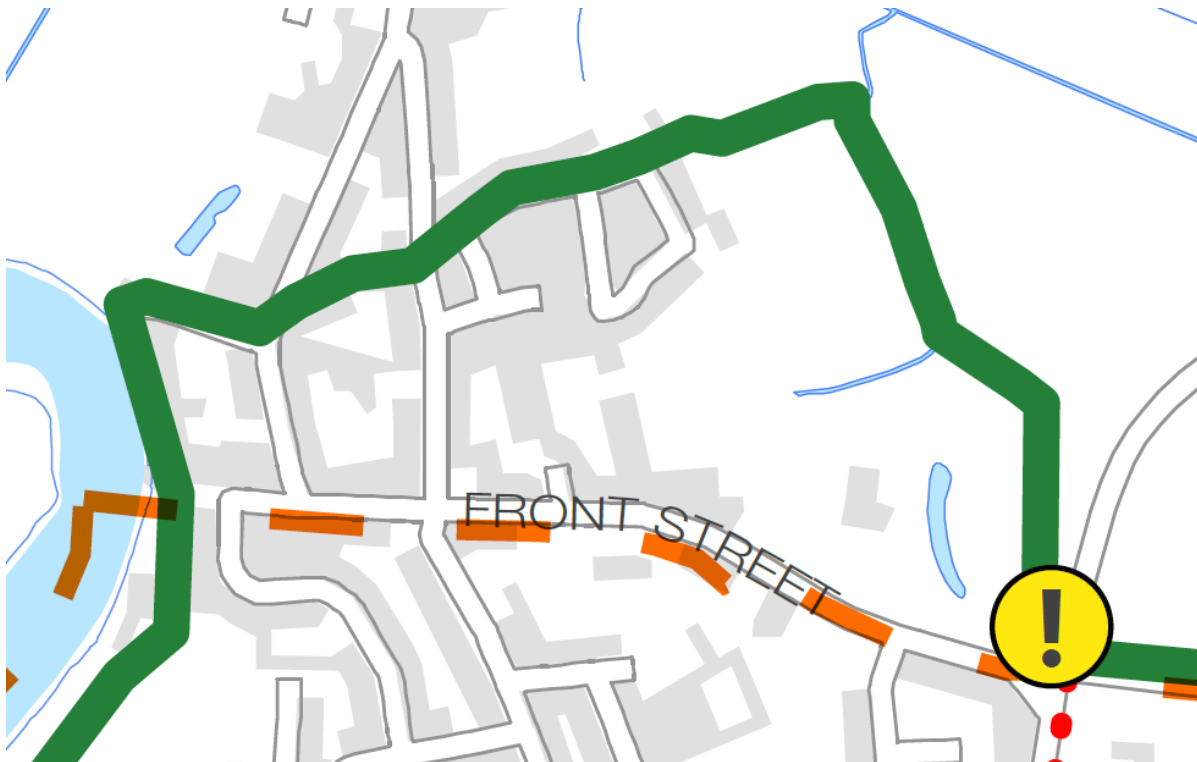
6km / 3.75miles

This section starts on the eastern bank of the River Trent at Trentside, Morton. *The 3 maps over the next pages form Section 1, moving west to east.*



View south, from Trentside

The most direct route eastwards would utilise the pavement and road of Front Street, to the junction with the A159 (Morton Road). The grass verges along the eastern portion of this route have the potential for pavement/ cycleway widening. However, a quieter and 'greener' route is desired to enable the route to more fully adhere to the Green Network principles. Accordingly, a route has been identified using a short section of Crooked Billet St, a Public Footpath and North St. A new Public Right of Way is proposed to be created and surfaced between North St and the Front St / A159 (Morton Road) junction. The parcel of land closed to the junction has been the subject of a previous planning application. Should planning consent ever be permitted for this site, consideration should be given to incorporating this Green Network link within the development design / conditions.



Preferred main Green Network outer route (solid line). Alternative / interim route to follow Front Street.

East of the A159 (Morton Road) junction, a shared pavement/ cycleway runs alongside The Little Belt and The Belt Road (initially on the north side of the road, then switching to the south side. The route is steep, rising up the escarpment slope, and will be challenging for many users.

East of the railway line, the northern side of The Belt Road is lined by woodland which provides the setting for the Medieval Castle Hill earthwork and Gainsborough Golf Club. Consideration should be given to creating a 'rest area' in the woodland edge between The Belt Road and Castle Hill, including seating and an information board detailing the history of the earthwork. It is proposed that a new Public right of Way permitting walking and cycling (as a minimum) is created and surfaced within this woodland corridor, through to East Lodge.



Preferred main Green Network outer route (solid green line). Proposed inner link routes (dotted red lines).

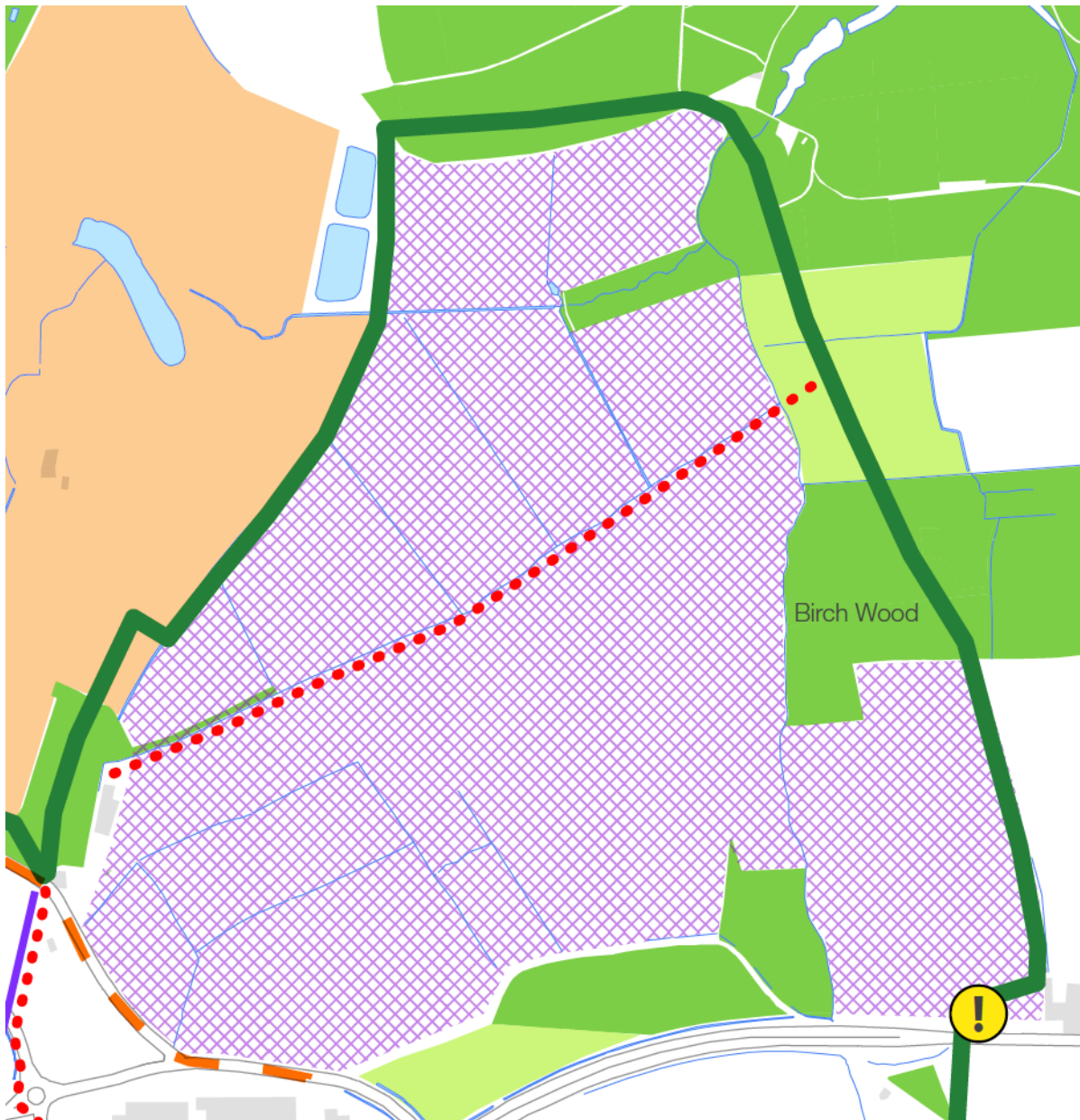
East of East Lodge is a large area of land allocated as Gainsborough's northern Sustainable Urban Extension (SUE). This proposed development is expected to deliver 750 dwellings in the period to 2036, and 2,500 dwellings in total.

As the Green Network is to cater for existing and future residents of the growing town, an indicative route for the Green Network is proposed around the perimeter of the SUE. The western side of this proposal follows an existing lane and farm track; with the northern and eastern sections being set within existing, and proposed woodland areas on the fringes of the SUE.

Exact route alignments, for both the main outer and inner link routes should be agreed and embedded within the detailed planning and delivery of the SUE.

It is proposed that the existing woodland compartments of Wharton Wood/ Scroggs and Birch Wood are linked via new woodland extension planting, to create a continuous habitat and landscape corridor. Such a corridor would also serve as an attractive setting for the Green Network.

This section ends at the A361 / Corringham Road, to the west side of Woodhouse Farm.



Preferred main Green Network outer route (solid green line). Proposed inner link routes (dotted red lines).

The need to improve the safety of crossing the A361 / Corringham Road (exclamation mark) will need to be addressed. A full range of interventions from signage and road markings, through lighting to the provision of bridge or underpass will need to be considered.

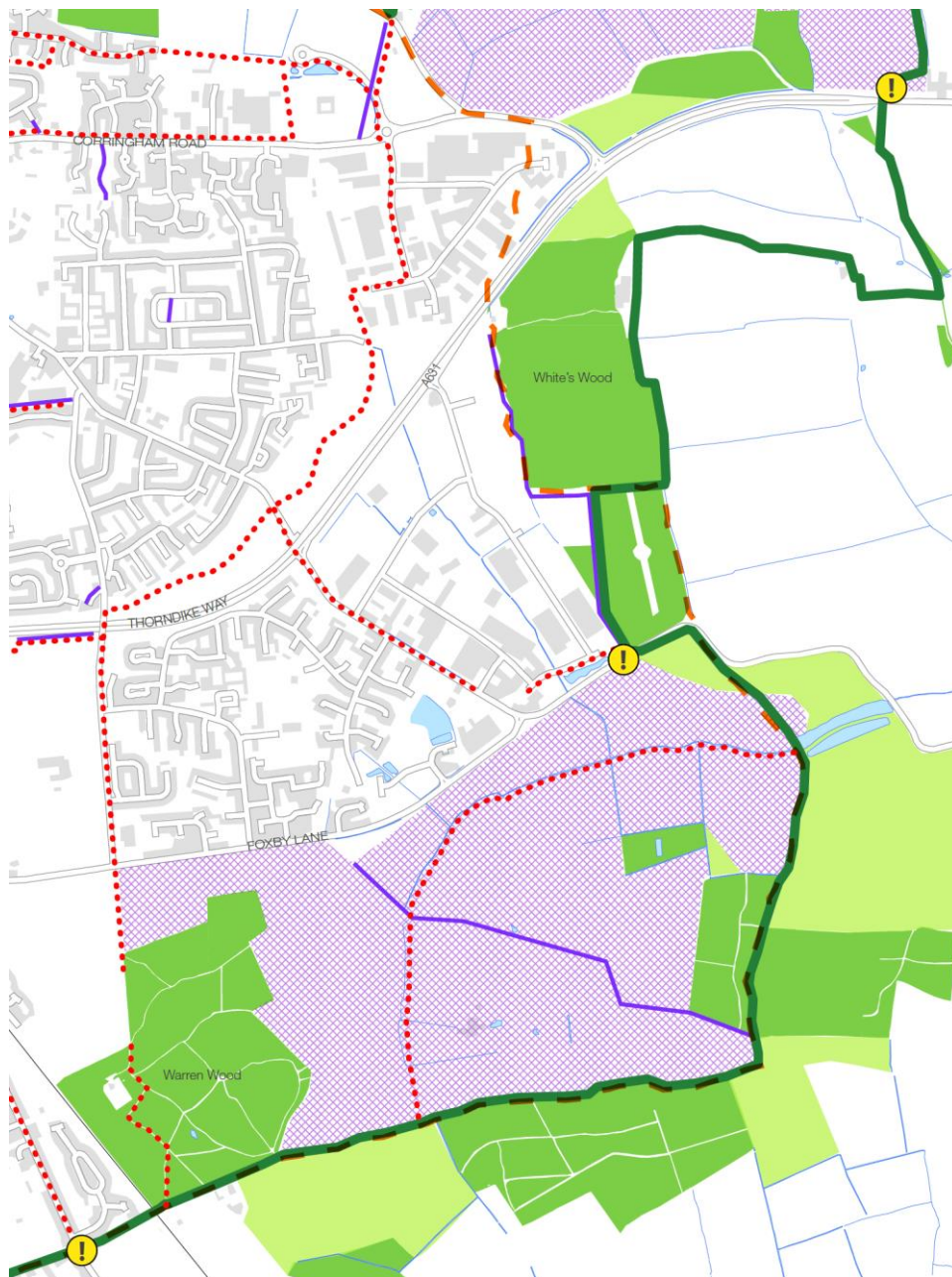


## **8.2 Section 2 - East / South: A631 – Lea Road**

6.25km / 3.9miles

This section starts by heading south from the A631/ Corringham Rd along a Public Footpath, linking to another Public footpath leading north from Heapham Rd, South. However, a lack of connectivity within the local Public Rights of Way network, requires new paths to be created, both to link these two Footpaths, and to continue the Green Network southwards.

The map extract below identifies an indicative route for the Green Network in this area, along those existing tracks and field boundaries which seem appropriate. It should be noted that the final route of the Green Network will be determined by what is able to be delivered on the ground following landowner negotiations.



Preferred main Green Network outer route (solid green line). Proposed inner link routes (dotted red lines).

There are a number of potential Green network inner link routes within this section, as indicated by the dashed line on the map extract. As per the main proposed 'rim' some section of these exist (as off-road paths, or roadside cycle ways); while those to the south of Foxby Lane/ Heapham Road South will require new paths to be created.

A combination of signage, structures and lighting should be considered to provide a safe crossing point of Heapham Rd South. This crossing point will need to be a safe distance from the tight bends in the road to the east.

The land south of Heapham Rd South / Foxby Lane is allocated as Gainsborough's southern Sustainable Urban Extension (SUE). This proposed development has consent for 1,400 dwellings in the period to 2036, and 2,500 dwellings in total. As the Green Network is to cater for existing and future residents of the growing town, an indicative route for the Green Network is proposed around the perimeter of the SUE.

The indicative route proposals follow an existing tracks and field boundaries; being set within existing, and proposed woodland areas on the fringes of the SUE. Exact route alignments, for both the main 'rim' and any 'spoke' routes should be agreed and embedded within the detailed planning and delivery of the SUE.

It is proposed that the existing woodland compartments of Bass Wood, Lea Wood and Warren Wood are linked via new woodland extension planting, to create a continuous habitat and landscape corridor. Such a corridor would also serve as an attractive setting for the Green Network.

This section ends by utilising an existing track - Causeway Lane, which uses a bridge over the Gainsborough – Lincoln railway to lead to Lea Road.

### **8.3 Section 3 - West: River Trent (Lea Road – Morton)**

5.8km / 3.6miles

This section starts by heading west from Lea Road, along Causeway Lane; and then northwards, parallel to the River Trent to the west. Both of these routes utilise existing Public Footpaths which would need to be upgraded to allow for cycling and horse riding, as appropriate.

The existing Public Footpath terminates as a dead end on reaching the Gainsborough – Retford railway line. Although no existing public access routes exist to enable crossing of the railway line, two options are apparent on the ground:

- The western option utilises a single existing underpass close to the River Trent; and in turn then gives x2 options to link eastwards (Carr Lane, or the track leading to the west and north of the Carr Lane industrial unit). The land within the meander of the River Trent at this point is owned by the Environment Agency and leased to the Gainsborough & District Wildfowling Association for game and wildfowl hunting. Given the nature of this land-use,

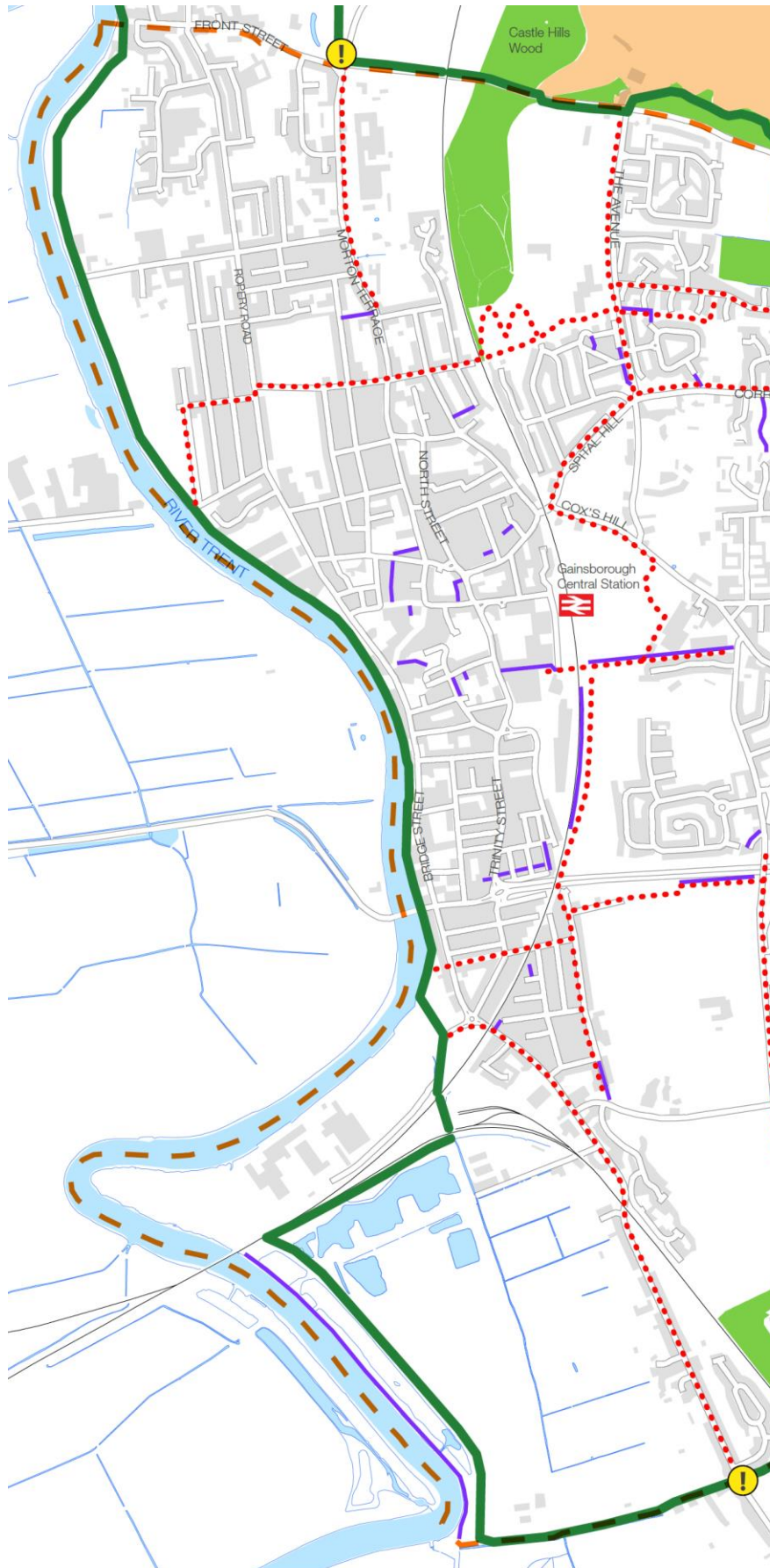
appropriate signage, fencing etc would be required should the Green Network follow this option.

- The eastern option utilises two existing underpasses and a track beneath the two branches of the railway line and link with the western end of Carr Lane.

The Gainsborough Landfill Site between Lea Road and the River Trent has a restoration plan which includes the restoration of hedgerow and woodland areas. With this planting on the elevated land of the capped landfill site, the site will become an attractive landscape feature within the flatter river valley of west Gainsborough. Public access is not part of the current restoration plans for the site due to the health and safety implications and infrastructure associated with landfill gas management. However, in the longer term once environmental permitting timescales are passed; opportunities for providing public access should be explored.

The land between Carr Lane and the River Trent has been identified as the potential Gainsborough Marina and Riverside Gateway. The Marina is an ambitious transformation project incorporating residential, commercial and leisure developments. Embedding a multi-user Green Network route through the site, and along a proposed floating pontoon beneath The Flood Road bridge, will be vital for providing a continuous Green Network.





Preferred main Green Network outer route (solid green line). Proposed inner link routes (dotted red lines).

Between The Flood Road bridge and Morton there is an almost continuous riverside path which will form the western section of the Green network Outer route. The only gap in this route is associated with the current Albion Works industrial site north of Lidl and south of Bowling Green Road.

The Albion Works site is due to be redeveloped for commercial, retail, housing and recreation. A multi-user riverside path is to be provided as part of this development, completing a continuous riverside route for the Green Network.

A riverside path between the River Trent and the houses of Riverside Approach has already been created, but is currently fenced off until a continuous route southwards is available.

A Public Footpath leads northwards from Bowling Green Lane to Front Street at Morton. The status of this path will need to be upgraded to legally permit cycling, and if desired, horse-riding.

A riverside Public Footpath links Front Street to Trentside, although a narrow, blind corner may not be able to be adapted to make it safe for cycle use. If this cannot be modified, walkers can use the riverside footpath while riders would need to use Front Street and Crooked Billet Street.

Many spokes exist within this section' comprised of existing roadside pavements/ cycleways and footpaths. The steepness of the footpaths on the scarp slope east of the railway line means that they are unsuitable for riding and should only be promoted as walkers' routes. A possible exception to this lies west of the West Lindsey Leisure Centre where there is sufficient open space to create a new 'zig-zag' path across the slope, reducing path gradients to an acceptable level.

## **9.0 Principal Delivery Issues**

Each section of the Green Network will have many individual elements which will require detailed proposals to be developed. This part of the report summarises the most significant of those elements.

### **9.1 Principle Delivery Issues – Green Network outer route**

#### **Road crossings**

The proposed main route for the Green Network requires roads to be crossed at eight locations.

9.1.2 Many of these locations (Morton Road/ A519, the Little Belt, Belt Road and Lea Road) are where pedestrians, and in places cyclists, already cross the roads. These crossing points could be enhanced with additional signage and road markings, to benefit both Green Network users and motorists.

9.1.2 A major issue to be addressed is the provision of a safe multi-user crossing of the Corringham Road/ A631 dual carriageway near Woodhouse Farm. A full range of interventions from signage and road markings, through lighting to the provision of a bridge or underpass will need to be considered. It is proposed that the provision of such a crossing is linked to – and funded through – the development of the northern SUE, which may itself require the creation of a new junction at this location.

9.1.3 A road crossing required is at The Flood Road bridge. A pontoon walkway associated with the proposed marina will provide a safe and attractive ‘crossing’ beneath this road; and should be designed to incorporate cycle access.

#### **Signage**

9.1.4 It is proposed that the Green Network has a bespoke identity/ branding which is included in all signage and waymarking around the route. Through liaison with the local Public Rights of Way and Highways officers, a signage strategy should be developed and implemented.

9.1.5 Signpost arms with the Green Network identity/ branding and local destination/ distance information should be provided at all road crossings and access points to the main outer route of the Green Network.

9.1.6 The signposts should be supplemented by regular waymarkers around the route, also carrying the Green Network identify/ branding.

9.1.7 Information boards should be located at key access points around the rim, including generic information about the Green Network, a route map and information on the history and wildlife of that specific location.

#### **Path Creation**

9.1.8 While much of the western half of the Green Network uses existing public access routes, significant lengths of the rest of the Green Network will require the creation of new routes.

9.1.9 Where the Green Network is proposed to pass around the outside of the northern and southern SUE's, it is proposed that the creation of these routes – both as legal Public Rights of Way and through construction on the ground – is a requirement of planning consent.

9.1.10 In other areas – particularly alongside Belt Road and south of Corringham Road/ A631 – new paths will need to be created. Some of these new paths may be able to follow existing farm tracks; others will require the creation of brand new routes.

9.1.11 To the west new paths need to be created to link the Gainsborough Landfill Site area to the proposed riverside path / pontoon, via the proposed marina site.

#### Status upgrades

9.1.12 Where the proposed Green Network uses existing Public Footpaths, an upgrade in path status will be required to allow cycling (and where appropriate, horse riding).

9.1.13 Public Footpaths only permit access on foot; whereas Public Bridleways also allow horse riding and cycling. Where local conditions – including the will of the landowner – will enable the path to be upgraded to allow all uses, a Public Bridleway should be designated. Where only walking and cycling are possible, the path could be upgraded to a cycleway; or a Public Footpath with Rights to Cycle.

9.1.14 Status upgrades will be required at:

- The Public Footpath leading north from Heapham Road South
- The Public Footpaths along Causeway Lane and alongside the River Trent to the west of Gainsborough Landfill Site

9.1.15 The status of the various sections of the 'riverside walk' along the River Trent to the west of the town is unclear. The whole route should be available to cyclists as well as walkers; with any necessary path status changes implemented.

## **9.2 Principle Delivery Issues – Green Network inner link routes**

### Road crossings

9.2.1 The proposed inner link routes for the Green Network include many road crossings. Many of these are within the town and utilise existing crossing points which have dropped kerbs, user-operated traffic lights or utilise bridges/ underpasses. Where there are no identified crossing points, the roads are quieter and have good sight lines.

9.2.2 New safe crossing points, incorporating signage and road markings, will be required at:

- Sweyn Road
- The Belt Road (near East Lodge)
- Foxby Lane (from Middlefield Lane)

### Signage

9.2.3 See 9.1 above for signage of the main Green Network outer route.

9.2.4 The signposting and waymarking of the Green Network outer route should be supplemented by waymarking of the major Green network inner link routes. This waymarking should carry the Green network identity/ branding, but be distinct from waymarking for the main Green Network outer route, to aid user navigation.

### Path Creation

9.2.5 Almost all of the proposed spoke routes use existing paths. The exceptions, where new paths are required are:

- within the northern and southern SUE's
- south of Foxby Lane to Warren Wood

9.2.6 A possible additional path creation – or diversion – is between the leisure centre and the railway. The existing path slopes steeply to the west; and uses steps to access the underpass beneath the railway. This path is too steep to promote use by cyclists. The open space to the west of the leisure centre offers opportunities for an alternative path to be created, meandering up the hillside, reducing gradients. If studies show this to be feasible it would both provide cycle access and improve ease of access for walkers.

For accessing the underpass, cyclists will be required to dismount and wheel their bikes down the steps – for which a simple wheel gully alongside the steps could be provided to improve ease of use.

### Status upgrades

9.2.7 Many of the spoke routes are roads, roadside pavements and cycleways offering pedestrian and cycle access. The few Public Footpaths which will require being upgraded to permit riding are:

- The Public Footpath alongside the railway to the west of the cemetery
- The Public Footpath through the northern section of the cemetery
- The Public footpath leading west from the leisure centre to the railway underpass
- The path linking The Avenue to Marlow Road.

9.2.8 Ideally, the east-west Public Footpath passing between the north and south sections of the cemetery would also be upgraded to permit cycle use. However, the gradient of this path is too steep to enable cycling to be promoted; and unlike the path to the west of the leisure centre, there is no available land to the side to create a shallower gradient meandering path. Accordingly, signage will be required to show this path can act as a Green Network inner link route for pedestrians only.

### 9.3 Principle Delivery Issues – Green Network Green Spaces

Listed below are the green spaces that the GW routes will pass through, or beside; and where considered appropriate, proposed enhancements to those sites.

Ref	Space Name	Description	Proposals
Existing Green Spaces – number references as per map on page 12			
1	Roses Sports Field	Sports Ground	Explore opportunities to enhance west, east and north boundaries through the planting of additional specimen trees.
2	Fairway	Open Field/Recreation Space/Dog Walking (previously football pitch)	No specific proposals. Serves as a useful development break.
3	Richmond Park	Children's Play Area and Public Gardens	Continued use maintenance of the grounds. Early plans to develop the use of the house and outbuildings. Consideration to be given to how that development can contribute to the green infrastructure on the site.
4	Old Castle Hills School Playing Field	Former School Field now used for waking/dog walking.	Likely to be developed but important to incorporate strong green accesses and landscaping plans through the site to link with woodland and green space bordering the site.
5	Local Dog Walking	Dog Walking area but also part of Gainsborough Parkrun route.	Likely to be developed but important to incorporate strong green accesses through the site to link with woodland and green space bordering the site.
6	Allotments	Love Lane Spital Hill North Warren Foxby Allotments Old Showfields	Maintain as allotment sites. Internal improvements as part of routine management and maintenance.
7	Levellings	Mixed use recreation/sports ground/play areas.	Landscaping to be considered as part of any future development of the site. To remain as a play and recreation space.
8	Whittons Gardens	Public Realm Gardens	To be improved and enhanced as part of any future riverside development.
9	Marshall's Sport Field	Sports Ground	Maintain as Sports Ground. Limited scope for green enhancement.
10	Danes Road Field and Play Area	Open Field and Play Area	Maintain as present save for upgrades and improvements to play area as necessary due to wear and tear.
11	Scouts Hut Field	Open Space	Maintain as present save for any landowner improvements.
12	Land between Thorndike Way and Elsham Walk	Informal Open Space	This area is identified by The Gainsborough Spatial Strategy as an Important Open Space. The setting of the proposed GW spoke could be significantly enhanced through appropriate parkland style planting and the addition of 'trim trail'/ outdoor gym equipment and natural play features. Assess site for possible Local Green Space (LGS) designation.
13	Aisby Walk	Open Space, Skate Park and Play Areas (previously used as Football Pitches)	Maintain as open space. Maintain existing play areas.
14	Scouts Hill	Ground	Enhance seating and install information board at viewpoint. If site no longer needed for sport, enhance as an amenity green space with planting as a community woodland or similar.
15	Ashcroft Road Pocket Park	Small Play/Recreation Space.	To be considered as part of wider South West Ward improvement measures.

			Possible scope for incorporating into larger green space if adjacent former pumping station buildings can be acquired.
16	St George's Field	Open Field	No real proposals. Maintain as green space to act as break in development.
17	White's Wood	Woodland	Woodland Management Principles to be implemented as necessary.
18	Warren Wood	Woodland	Woodland Management Principles to be implemented as necessary.
19	Bass Wood	Woodland	Woodland Management Principles to be implemented as necessary.
20	Mercers Wood	Woodland	Create woodland management plan, incl habitat creation measures (ref Gainsborough Green Corridor Project). Assess site for possible Local Green Space (LGS) designation.
21	Pits Hill (Cassie's Wood)	Woodland and sports ground	Create woodland management plan, incl habitat creation measures (ref Gainsborough Green Corridor Project). Assess site for possible Local Green Space (LGS) designation.
22	Eight Acre Wood	Eight Acre Woods	Woodland Management Principles to be implemented as necessary.
23	The Gap	Open Space Supporting Public Access Route through it.	Maintain as open space if Planning Permission for development of the site should lapse.
24	Theaker Avenue Local Nature Reserve	Grassland nature reserve	Continue to involve the community to manage the site as a LNR. Assess site for possible Local Green Space (LGS) designation.
25	Rec Hill	Large area of scrubby woodland on escarpment, with play area	Undertake scrub clearance and appropriate tree surgery / planting to enhance this area as a managed parkland, to complement the landscaping of the adjacent cemetery. Assess site for possible Local Green Space (LGS) designation.
26	Gainsborough Landfill site	Restored landfill site	Ensure restoration landscaping scheme is implemented. Seek opportunities for post-restoration public access onto the site.

*Proposed new Green Spaces – mostly outside of the parish boundary*

1	Area north of Birch Wood	Proposed woodland linkage	Plant as woodland to link/ buffers existing woodland areas and maximise habitat and landscape value. Create a new Public Right of Way permitting walking and cycling (as a minimum) within the woodland.
2	Areas north and south of A631 / B1433 junction	Proposed woodland linkage	Plant as woodland to link/ buffers existing woodland areas and maximise habitat and landscape value. Create a new Public Right of Way permitting walking and cycling (as a minimum) within the woodland.
3	Areas north and south of Bass Wood	Proposed woodland linkage	Plant as woodland to link/ buffers existing woodland areas and maximise habitat and landscape value. Create a new Public Right of Way permitting walking and cycling (as a minimum) within the woodland.
4	Area between warren Wood and Lea Wood	Proposed woodland linkage	Plant as woodland to link/ buffers existing woodland areas and maximise habitat and landscape value. Create a new Public Right of Way permitting walking and cycling (as a minimum) within the woodland.

Green spaces need to meet a number of criteria before they can be designated and protected at Local Green Spaces. These criteria are summarised in Section 3.3.

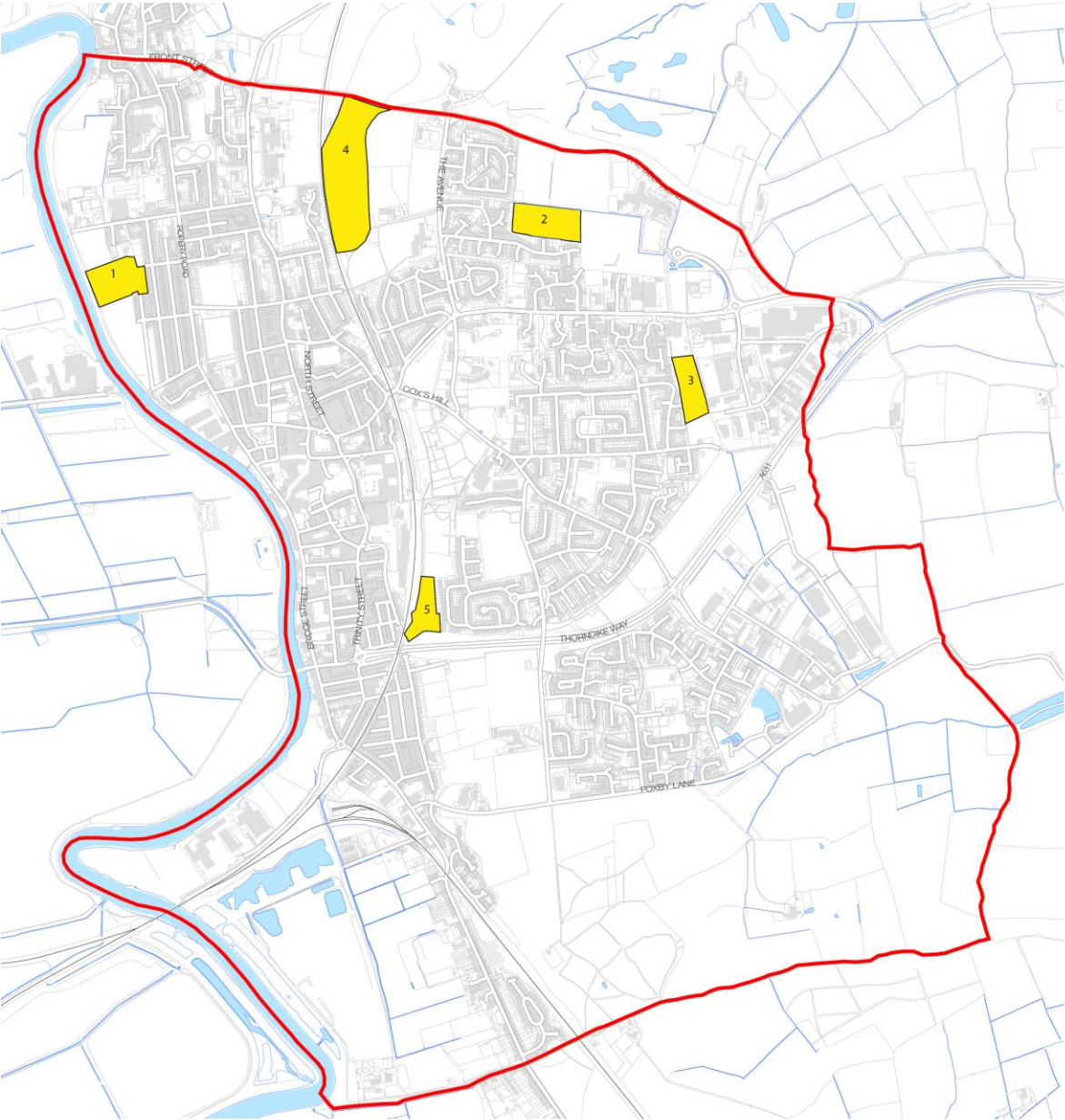
The author of this report proposes that Gainsborough Town Council and the Gainsborough Neighbourhood Plan Group undertake an assessment of local green spaces – in particular those highlighted in the table above and the map below – with the intention of designating those which meet the LGS criteria.

The sites above which are not identified as potential LGS's are considered by the author of this report to not meet the LGS designation criteria. Reasons include some sites not being 'local' in scale/ location; or not being demonstrably special, or – in the case of the proposed new woodlands – neither existing or primarily within the Neighbourhood Plan area.

There are other sites within the town (including play areas and allotments) not featured in this report) but which could meet LGS designation criteria and should be included in any LGS assessment.



Gainsborough Proposed LGS Map



Key:

- 1. Mercers Wood
- 2. Eight Acre Wood
- 3. Theaker Avenue LNR
- 4. Pits Hill (Cassie's Wood)
- 5. Rec Hill

— Parish boundary

## **10.0 Conclusion**

This report identifies the clear potential for the creation of a valuable GI network in and around Gainsborough.

Existing GI assets, when combined with the creation of new GI provision, including within the growth developments planned for the town, have the potential to provide a high value GI network.

This GI provision will serve the residents of Gainsborough, providing recreation and healthy lifestyle opportunities within a landscape rich in heritage and wildlife.

Funding to implement the Green Network will be required from many sources. S106 / CIL contributions from all local development, in addition to on-site provision of Green Network routes, links and green spaces will be pursued as a principle means of delivering the Green Network.

Cliff Andrews  
BRCC, June 2018