



**A Green Infrastructure Strategy for
Melton Borough
November 2011**



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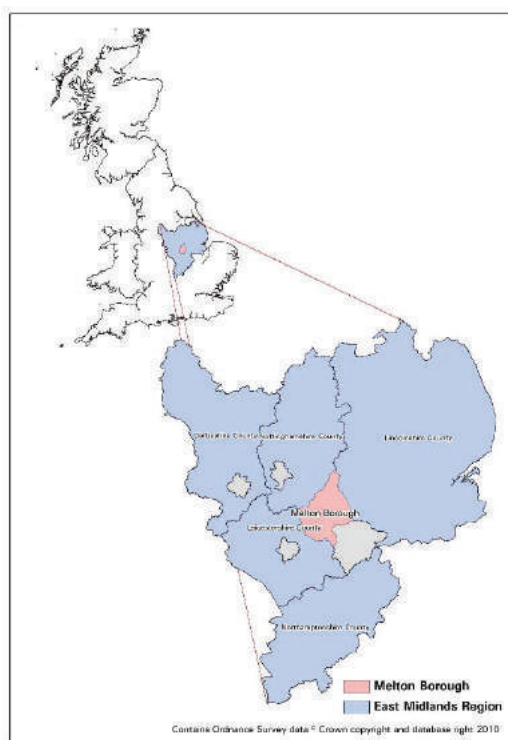
Chapter 1: Introduction

This Green Infrastructure Strategy has been produced for Melton Borough in response for the need to plan for future growth and to enable sustainable prosperity. Responding to the predicted growth, specifically to the north of Melton Mowbray this strategy is envisaged to help sustain and enhance quality of life for the Borough's communities and ensure environmental sustainability for generations to come.

This strategy will allow for the expansion of settlements, such as residential and employment development whilst ensuring that the Borough, its assets and landscapes suffer no negative effect and instead prosper from new development. Whilst new development is the main driver, other aspects such as environmental quality, recreational opportunities and access to green space have been examined. The need to respond to the threats, challenges and opportunities presented by climate change has also helped shape Melton's Green Infrastructure Strategy development.

Whilst this strategy is a response to growth, it should also be seen as a guide to the provision of green infrastructure outside of areas of development. Opportunities and gaps highlighted by the research exist across the Borough and this strategy provides the basis on which community actions, private enterprise and authority departments can help achieve a more sustainable, functional and inclusive environment for the communities of Melton.

Figure 1.1 Melton Borough Location



Melton Borough lies within the East Midlands and is part of Leicestershire. The main settlement is Melton Mowbray, a market town which is the centre of the agricultural economy in the area. Outside of Melton Mowbray the largest settlement is Bottesford in the north, and the rest of the Borough's settlements are rural villages. To the south-west the suburban fringes of Leicester and to the north-west is Nottingham.

The Borough covers 481km²/185 sq miles and has a number of green infrastructure assets, including the Grantham Canal, Rivers Eye and Wreake and 223ha of Sites of Special Scientific Interest (National biodiversity and geodiversity designation), 1 National Nature Reserve (Nationally important) and 238 Local Wildlife Sites (Local Authority designation).



The Borough has a comprehensive public rights of way access network including six promoted routes the most notable the Mowbray Way and Jubilee Way. A number of dismantled railway corridors provide access in some areas, they are not all used for this access, though the opportunity for improvement does exist.

Melton has retained the housing targets from the East Midlands Regional Plan (Regional Spatial Strategy), some 4000 dwellings, 1000 of which are to be delivered in a proposed Search Area for Growth to the north of Melton



Mowbray. This Strategy is a response to this planned growth and aims to bring together the strategic needs of the sub-regional 6Cs¹ Green Infrastructure Strategy and the local needs of Melton's communities and environment. Further to its strategic planning purpose, this document should also be considered as a toolkit and evidence base to support neighbourhood planning.

¹ 6Cs (3 Cities – Nottingham, Leicester, Derby), (3 Counties Nottinghamshire, Leicestershire, Derbyshire)

Chapter 2: What is Green Infrastructure?

This chapter introduces green infrastructure as a concept. It will also demonstrate the benefits that can be associated with green infrastructure planning. The way in which these benefits can be applied to the various plans, policies, strategies and programmes, national and local will also be illustrated.

Green infrastructure (GI) describes the network of greenspaces and natural elements that intersperse and connect our cities, towns and villages. More than this, it is a holistic approach to viewing the natural and historic environment which acknowledges the multiple benefits and vital functions it provides for the environment, wildlife, local people and communities alike.



(Source: Northwest Green Infrastructure Guide)

It provides functions and environmental services to a community such as employment, recreation, physical health and mental wellbeing, social interaction, contact with nature, drainage and flood management, climate change adaptation and pollution mitigation. It may be considered the essence of local character and sense of place.

Transcending traditional geopolitical boundaries, and as well as natural features GI incorporates other aspects such as recreational networks, public rights of way and national cycle routes. Green infrastructure planning can offer low impact and often low cost solutions to many of the issues that affect our environment, society and economy. Green infrastructure planning is an approach to land-use planning and management that can be applied from the neighbourhood to the regional level.

Natural England has produced the following statement championing Green Infrastructure, providing direction as to how GI should be viewed and delivered.

'Green Infrastructure is a strategically planned and delivered network comprising the broadest range of high quality green spaces and other environmental features. It should be designed and managed as a multifunctional 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 regard to habitats and landscape types. Green Infrastructure includes established green spaces and new sites and should thread through and surround the built environment and connect the urban area to its wider rural hinterland. Consequently it needs to be delivered at all spatial scales from sub-regional to local neighbourhood levels, accommodating both accessible natural green spaces within local communities and often much larger sites in the urban fringe and wider countryside.' Natural England²

Thus green infrastructure is much more than simply a greenspace strategy. It is about identifying, protecting, conserving, enhancing and extending healthy environments, and is an essential element in planning for sustainable development. It is also a technique for planning greenspace through change, ensuring that developments such as the Growth Point programmes include new usable open spaces and that these are linked to existing and enhanced green spaces and greenways.

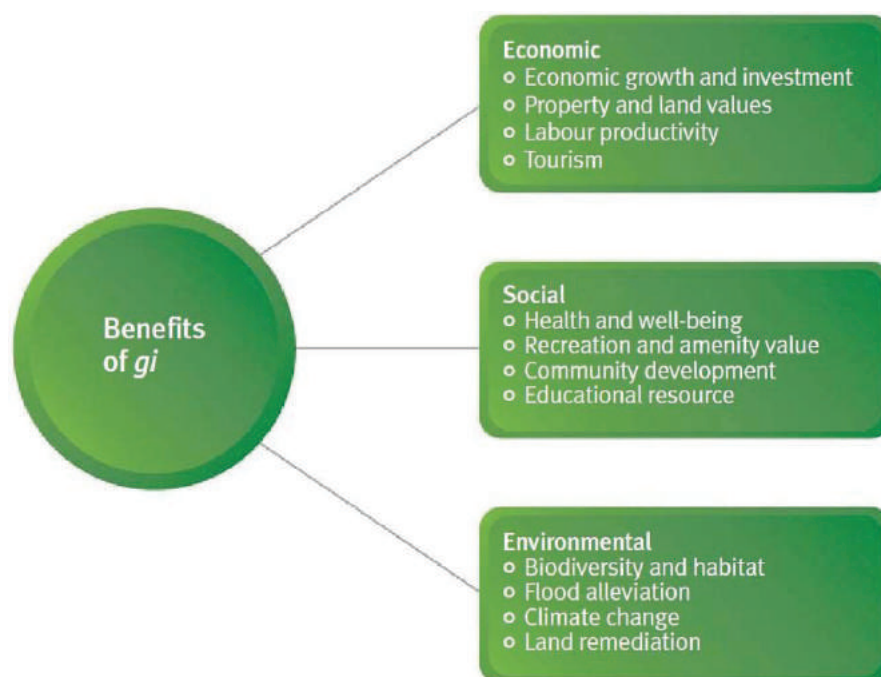
The multifunctional nature of green infrastructure means that it can provide a wide range of environmental and socio-economic benefits, such as biodiversity enhancement, climate change adaptation, social inclusion, community cohesion, tourism, water quality management and many others.

The East Midlands Development Agency GI Toolkit published in 2009³ describes the benefits that a well-planned green infrastructure network of spaces and corridors can provide across economic, social and environmental categories:

² Green Infrastructure Guidance, (2009), Natural England

³ EMDA GI Toolkit, (2010) AMION Consulting for EMDA

Figure 2.1 Benefits of Green Infrastructure: source EMDA



Whilst the range of green infrastructure benefits is presented across three distinct categories (Economic, Social and Environmental), many of these benefits are in fact cross-cutting and can deliver economic, environmental and social outcomes. For example, 'health and wellbeing' benefits can also be economic in nature since improved health reduces health authority expenditure.

Economic Benefits of Green Infrastructure

Economic Growth and Investment

Green infrastructure is an essential element of creating a setting for investment. It provides a positive impression of the Borough for would-be investors, entrepreneurs and potential workers. Its successful implementation and design raises the Borough's profile outside of the area.

Property and Land Values

Houses and indeed businesses with accessible, attractive and importantly well-managed green spaces have been shown to have a higher value and more appealing to buyers than those without. In addition to this areas with a high standard of green space are more likely to retain communities, reducing flight and the concentration of singular economic demographic groups.

Labour Productivity

Studies have shown that employees whose workplaces are located close to, or contain clean and attractive green space are less likely to suffer stress, absenteeism and illness. High grade staff are more likely to remain in Melton if their workplaces/neighbourhoods are within an attractive setting, reducing staff turnover and reducing recruitment costs.

Tourism

As a tourist/visitor asset or simply as the setting for other visitor interest, GI supports the wider economy through its contribution to the tourism industry, whether this is through direct contribution through expenditure or simply adding value to existing places associated with tourism.

Social Benefits of Green Infrastructure

Health and Well-Being

Accessible and usable green spaces and green space networks provide the opportunity for exercise. Active pastimes such as jogging and sports have direct health and economic benefits, reducing (in combination with other factors) the occurrence of heart disease amongst other illnesses. More passive activities such as walking or angling provide quiet relaxation have been shown to reduce mental stress and relieve anxiety. Any reduction in the load on health services has significant economic benefit.

Recreation and Amenity Value

Open spaces close to and within residential areas provide opportunities for children's play, vital to the development of young people, both socially and physically. Well cared for and inclusive green space enables families to spend time together outside.

Community Development

Open spaces can become the focus for neighbourhood/settlement events which can aid in community cohesion. Spaces adopted and managed by neighbourhood groups can engender a sense of pride and has been shown to reduce the occurrence of anti-social behaviour and its associated costs

Educational Resource

As a setting or surrounding, green infrastructure and its constituent elements provide numerous opportunities for education, both academic and physical. As part of the wider curriculum, environmental education can increase awareness and respect of our natural and shared environment.

Environmental Benefits of Green Infrastructure

Biodiversity and Habitat

Green infrastructure and its combination of open spaces and networks is essential to the vitality of our wildlife. It provides habitat and importantly connectivity between habitat patches which is essential for a health ecosystem. Connectivity allows for forage, dispersal and reduces vulnerability to local extinction through increased genetic exchange and repopulation from source populations. Enhanced green spaces within and around our settlements also allows for contact for people with nature and increases the permeability of urban areas for wildlife.

Flood Alleviation

Increasing need for housing and other development is putting pressure on the environment's capability to deal with rainfall and flooding. Increased surface sealing reduces the ability of the ground to soak up rainfall and allow natural percolation to the ground water. Through creating rainfall interception/storage areas such as SuDS within and close to development we can reduce the effect of rainfall run-off on our watercourses, residential, commercial and employment areas and are beneficial to wildlife

Climate Change

In addition the risk of increased flooding associated with climate change, increased temperatures will also cause discomfort, health issues and potential economic loss. Greening of urban areas through increased green space provision, greater tree cover or water bodies reduces the urban 'heat island' effect. Shading and evapotranspiration from vegetation reduces heat stress and the potency of airborne pollution, both of which affect the most vulnerable members of our society. Green infrastructure also has a role in mitigating against climate change, through carbon storage and providing sustainable transport options.

Land Remediation

Despoiled, derelict and unused land can be an eyesore and focus for fly-tipping and anti-social behaviour. It has an effect on the quality of place. Green infrastructure is a use for such land, even if only a temporary measure. Uses could include allotments, woodland or even a refuge for wildlife. Poor quality landscapes affect the image of an area and create a negative impression for visitors/potential investors and more importantly directly affect our quality of life.

The public value of investment in green infrastructure has been confirmed in an independent economic appraisal⁴, which suggests that the returns to society are worth several times the initial investment in green infrastructure.

Generally multifunctionality is desirable as it suggests an efficient and sustainable use of land, especially where pressures on land are acute. However some assets have single functions of over-riding importance which might compromise by multifunctional use – for example assets of nature or landscape conservation value may be damaged by insensitive access.

This Strategy responds to the needs, identified in the analysis and resulting from consultation, to manage these key assets for their single purpose, intrinsic value (often in the face of unintended or inappropriate use). This is achieved by re-evaluating perhaps previously underused areas to meet functional needs, and promoting and providing a wider range of green infrastructure assets, reducing pressure on sensitive single use areas.

Green Infrastructure Policy

National, county and local policies all promote green infrastructure, both in terms of its functions; and also as an organising concept for delivering sustainable development. It is implicitly recognised in numerous documents, strategy and policy that there are many policy priorities that may be delivered through green infrastructure. Additionally there are also policies and programmes that will further support the delivery of green infrastructure projects and initiatives, through civil empowerment, notably The Natural Choice: Natural Environment White Paper, Localism Bill and Big Society agenda.

Green infrastructure is firmly established as a planning tool, a policy framework and an essential part of sustainable development. At the national level Planning Policy Statement 12 (PPS 12) considers green infrastructure as integral to the health and quality of life of sustainable communities

Green infrastructure can also help achieve policy objectives across the range of benefits or functions it can provide as shown in Figure 2.2, which illustrates the relationship between some key policies/strategies/plans/programmes and the benefits derived from green infrastructure. Green infrastructure has risen up the political agenda to be referenced directly and indirectly in many national policy and strategy documents, including;

- The Natural Choice: securing the value of nature, Natural Environment White Paper, (2011), HM Government

⁴ Economic Analysis of Forestry Policy in England, (2003), CJC Consulting

- Making Space for Nature: A Review of England's Wildlife Sites and Ecological Network (2010), Defra
- Planning for a Natural and Healthy Environment PPS (*Draft Consultation*)
- Planning for a Low Carbon Future in a Changing Climate (*Draft Consultation*)
- Planning Policy Statement 25: Development and Flood Risk
- Securing the Future: The UK Sustainable Development Strategy 2005
- Heritage Protection for the 21st Century, 2007 (The Heritage Protection Reform White Paper)
- HM Government's Quality of Place Strategy, 2009
- Planning and Climate Change- Supplement to Planning Policy Statement 1 (2007)

Previous to the revocation of the Regional Spatial Strategies, Melton was expected to absorb some of the housing growth in the 6Cs growth area⁵. Melton has retained the level of housing recommended in the RSS and as such is duty bound to comply with the sustainable development responsibilities outlined in the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004. This is in-line with the original prospectuses for Growth Points and the need for green infrastructure to be considered at the outset of settlement planning. Planning guidance also requires the protection (and building) of environmental capital as a co-product of development and land management, with several Planning Policy Statements (particularly PPS12) and Planning Policy Guidance notes having particular relevance to green infrastructure.

A planned approach to green infrastructure can therefore deliver economic and community benefit, helping a variety of stakeholders achieve and deliver upon their individual remits. These include those not traditionally associated with greenspace/environment planning such as Health Authorities, Economic Regeneration and Tourism.

Natural England, Environment Agency, Forestry Commission, the Wildlife and Woodland Trusts are amongst the many organisations that are supportive of a planned approach to green infrastructure and recognise the many benefits it provides.

The East Midlands Rural Action Plan⁶ makes direct reference to green infrastructure as a priority aim of the plan in addition to other aims to which GI can contribute such as addressing climate change. Green infrastructure is also seen as integral to the Region's future sustainable economic growth within the

⁵ 'The Three Cities of Leicester, Derby and Nottingham and their surrounding Counties form the Growth Point known as the 6Cs. It forms one of 29 areas nationally proposed under the Sustainable Communities Plan for significant growth' (Definition from 6Cs)

⁶ East Midlands Rural Action Plan 2007-2013, (2007), East Midlands Rural Affairs Forum

Regional Economic Strategy⁷ and a key aspect of protecting and enhancing the Region's environmental resource.

At the local planning policy level the key objectives outlined in the Melton Local Development Framework Core Strategy (Preferred Options) are directly related to the benefits and functions that green infrastructure can provide;

- Increase physical activity
- To achieve an improvement in people's health
- Promote civic pride
- Enhance the vitality and viability of Melton Mowbray town centre
- Reduce traffic congestion
- Protect and enhance the built and natural environment
- Protect the rural character of the Borough
- Protect and manage the use of natural resources and mitigate activities that cause their loss
- Prepare for, limit, and adapt to climate change
- Reduce the risk of flooding and avoid development in areas prone to flooding
- Improving the appearance of public spaces
- Reducing the need to travel by car and improve access to public transport

Green infrastructure can also help Melton achieve some of its Community Strategy⁸ Objectives, including re-vitalising Melton Mowbray Town Centre, reducing traffic congestion and improving the health and well-being of local people.

The Melton Community Strategy also considers green infrastructure as a key issue and that a coordinated approach to its planning, delivery and management could:

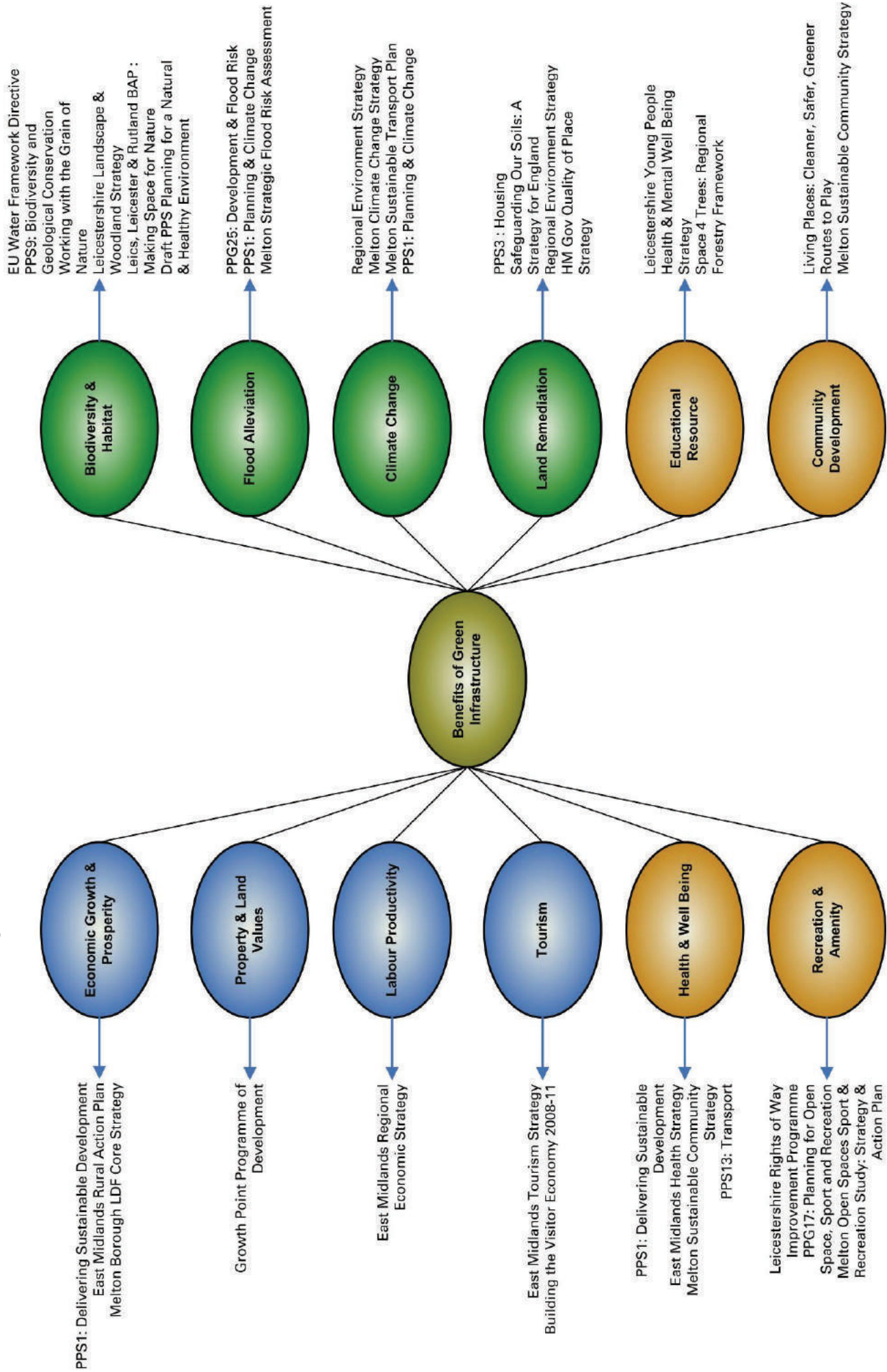
- Support the protection of the environment, including biodiversity, landscape, historic assets and water quality
- Improve the quality and attractiveness of the local environment
- Provide communities with better access to natural green space

The latter was considered as one of the top ten needs identified in the 'Quality of Life' survey carried out for the Borough⁵.

⁷ A Flourishing Region – Regional Economic Strategy for the East Midlands 2006-2020, (2006), East Midlands Development Agency

⁸ Melton Sustainable Community Strategy 2008-2013, (2008), Melton Community Partnership

Figure 2.2 Benefits of Green Infrastructure and Policy Links



Green infrastructure has clear economic, community and environmental benefits and is vital to ensuring sustainable development. It can contribute towards the objectives of, and the support of many plans, policies, strategies and programmes, both local and national. Green infrastructure can and will make a significant contribution to the ability of Melton Borough to live and prosper within environmental limits.

Chapter 3: Green Infrastructure in Melton

This chapter explores green infrastructure in Melton Borough, using a range of information sources to identify and map existing green infrastructure resources and assets, and to examine the socio-economic context in which the assets exist.

Green infrastructure assets are areas and/or elements which, by virtue of their location, their use or their management, serve one or more functions of social, economic or environmental public benefit. Assets can be spaces, linear features, landscapes or other broader environmental features, and can include;

- Green spaces
- Water courses and water bodies (including small ponds and ditches)
- Land under Countryside/Environmental Stewardship or other management regimes
- Parks, gardens and heritage features
- Access networks, including footpaths, cycleways and promoted paths
- Woodlands, allotments, playing fields and cemeteries

Existing Green Infrastructure Resources and Assets

A variety of sources of information have been used to identify and map the distribution of green infrastructure assets within Melton Borough, including;

- PPG17 (Open Space Sport and Recreation Assessment)⁹
- Land use/cover (MasterMap[®]), Landscape features
- Public Rights of Way
- Existing green space and historic environment assets and their formal functions
- Other green space and historic environment assets without any formal designation
- Flood Risk (Environment Agency flood zones 2 and 3)
- Potential areas for development

Using these information sources and datasets, we have mapped the existing green (and blue) resource and asset provision at the Borough and Melton Mowbray scales (figure 3.1 and figure 3.2).

⁹ Open Space, Sport and Recreation Assessment, (2006), Knight, Kavanagh and Page for Melton Borough Council

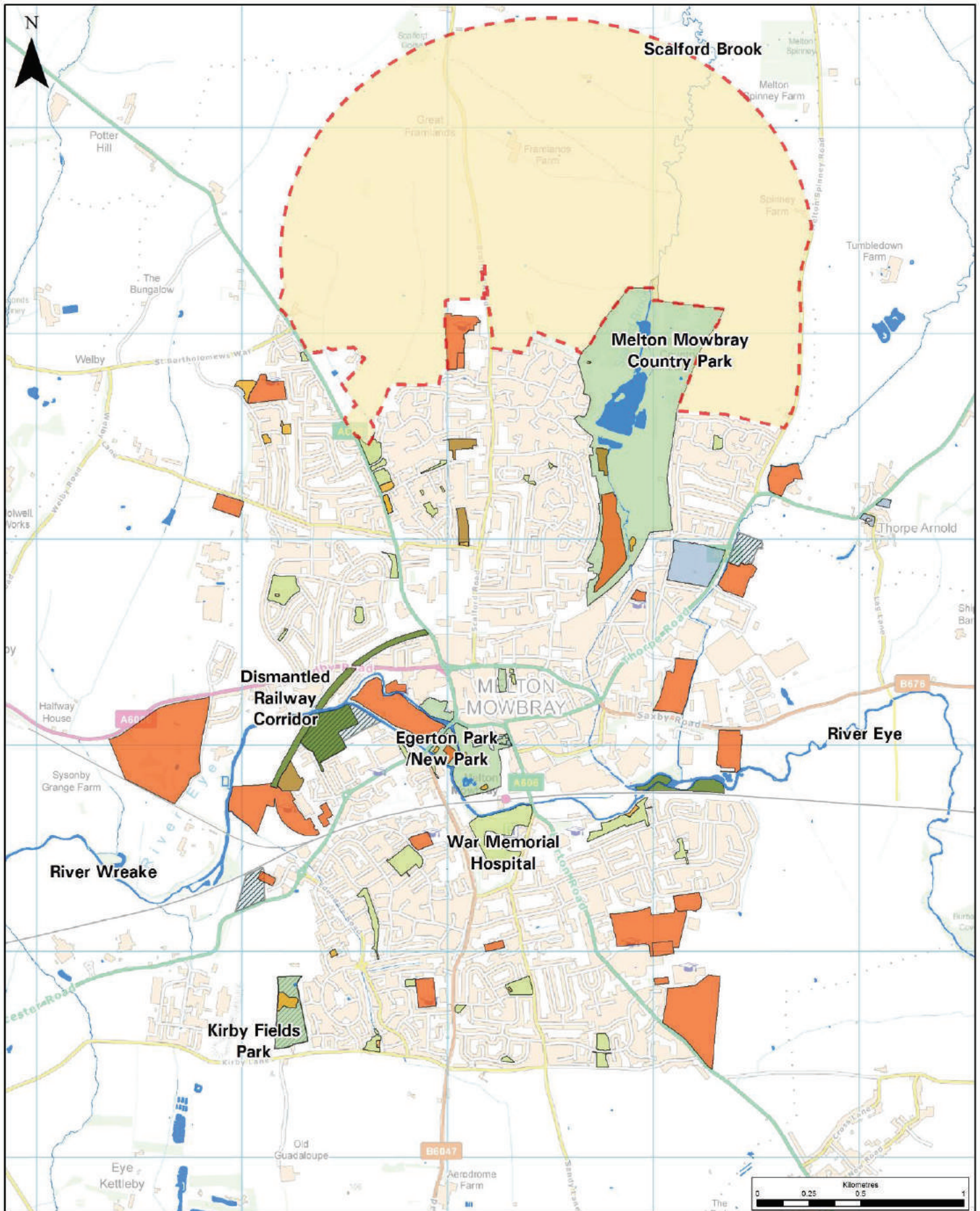




Figure 3.1 Accessible Open Spaces in Melton Mowbray







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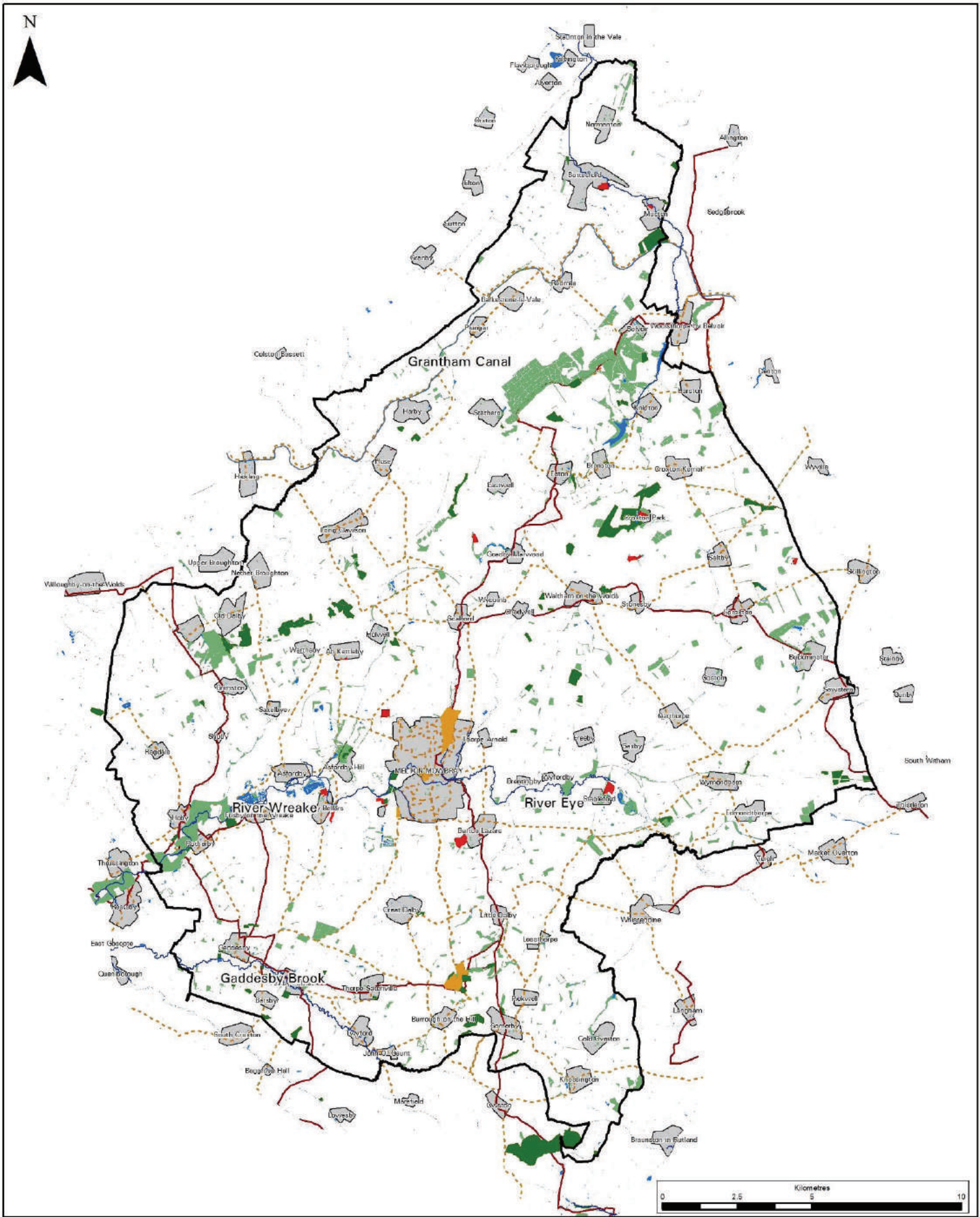












Figure 3.2 Green Infrastructure Assets - Melton Borough

- | | |
|---|--|
|  Country Parks and Gardens |  Priority Habitats |
|  Scheduled Monuments |  Waterbodies & Watercourses |
|  Grantham Canal |  Settlements |
|  Cycle Routes inc NCN |  Melton Borough Boundary |
|  Recognised Biodiversity/Geodiversity Site* | * Inc SSSI, NNR, RIGS and Local Wildlife Sites |





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Formal and Informal Greenspace

Melton Mowbray has a number of different types of green space (Figure 3.1) ranging from the successful and large Melton Mowbray Country Park through to smaller children's equipped play areas. The Country Park is a good example of a multifunctional space, providing access, allotment space, recreation, flood storage/prevention and access to nature for the communities of the town.

Sports provision has equally varied distribution with a number of publically accessible sport fields as well as private sports venues, indoor and outdoor. Egerton Park, Prior's Close, New Park and Play Close provides a large central and well-managed green space in the heart of the town with opportunities for a number of recreation options.

Semi-natural accessible greenspace within Melton Mowbray is somewhat limited, although there are two areas that are essentially part of the central east-west corridor located along the river. These areas form a chain of green infrastructure assets along the rivers Eye and Wreake which includes the Egerton Park/New Park set of sites. The surrounding agricultural nature of the land in which Melton Mowbray sits means that access to 'natural' green space is limited. The riverside and dismantled railway corridors are the only recognised areas of accessible natural green space within the town's envelope.

Semi-Natural Greenspace

Semi natural accessible greenspace is where 'human control and activities are not intensive so that a feeling of naturalness is allowed to predominate'. It is an essential part of greenspace provision, offering contact with nature and providing a place for relaxation and space for wildlife to thrive close to and within our settlements. Adapted from Natural England¹

The Search Area for Growth planned for the north of the town will place pressure on the town's green space resource; limited opportunity for children's play in the north of the town amongst other issues will need to be addressed during the development's planning and design.

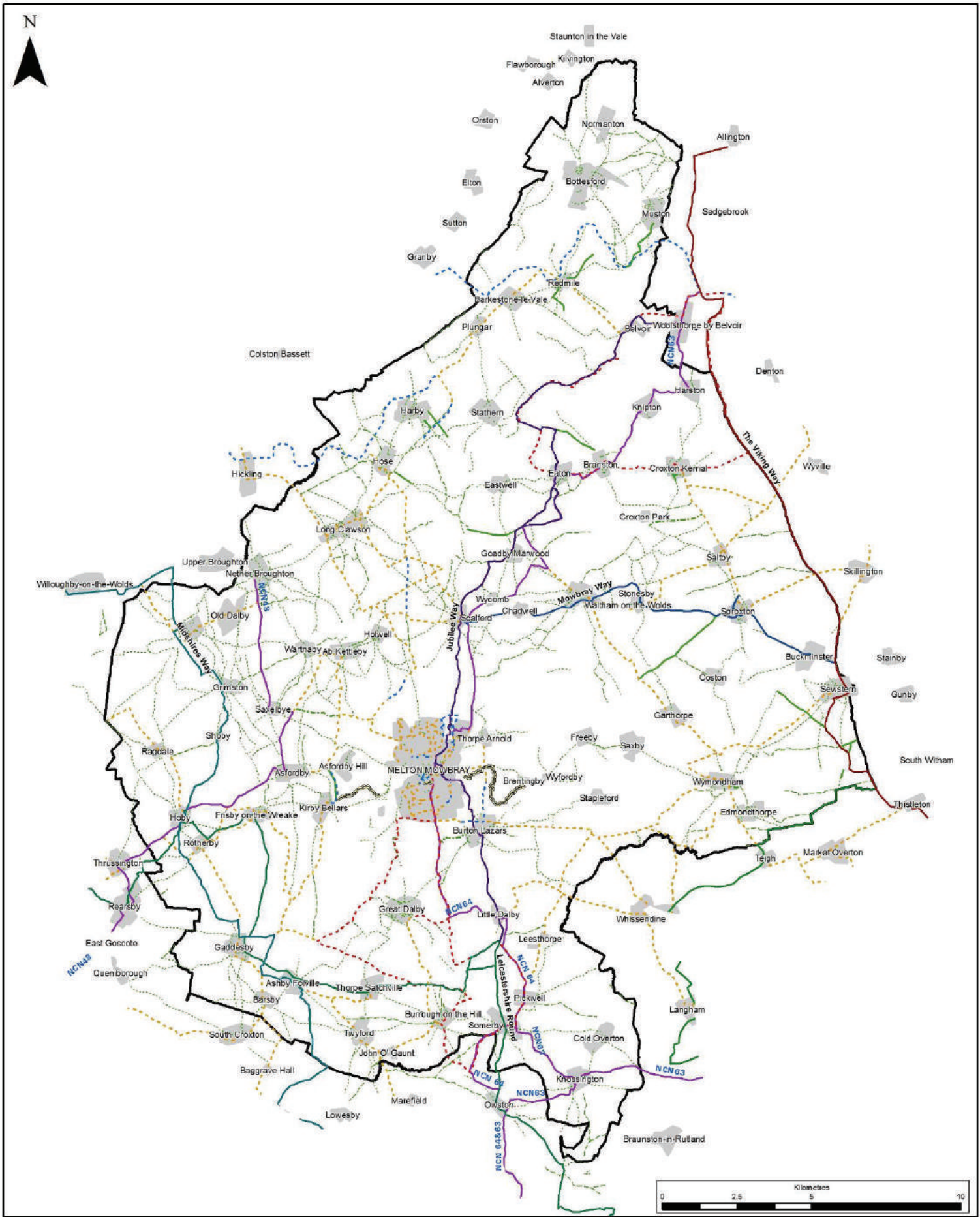


Figure 3.3 Rights of Way Network - Melton Borough

Viking Way	Off-Road Cycle Route	Footpath
Midshires Way	Leisure Route	Bridleway
Mowbray Way	Recommended Route	Restricted Byway
Leicestershire Round	National Cycle Network Routes	Byway
Jubilee Way	Proposed Footpath	Settlements
Rutland Round	Melton Borough Boundary	

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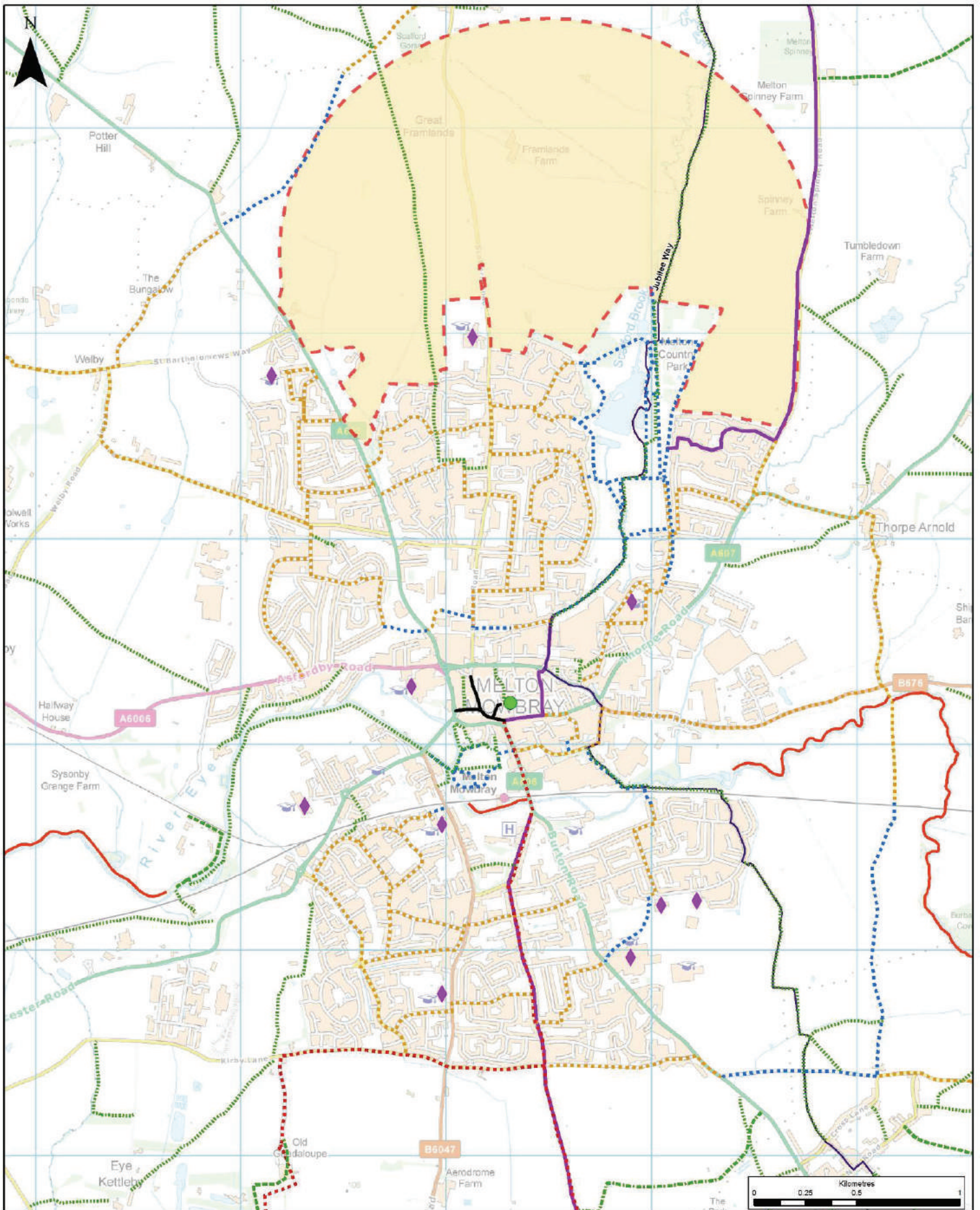


Figure 3.4 Rights of Way and Cycle Network - Melton Mowbray

Footpath	Pedestrian Area	Jubilee Way
Bridleway	Off-Road Cycle Route	National Cycle Network (NCN)
Restricted Byway	Leisure Route	Schools
Byway	Recommended Route	Bicycle Parking (King St)
Proposed Footpaths	Mowbray Way	Search Area for Growth

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Access

Figure 3.3 illustrates the spatial arrangement of existing access routes across the Borough, highlighting the location of the main settlements. The Borough's Public Rights of Way (PROW) Network is extensive; spreading across the rural parts of the Borough there is a particular concentration of access routes around Scalford, Old Dalby and Grimston. There are some settlements that are poorly served by the PROW network including Knipton, Saxby and Freeby. Two new footpaths have been proposed along the Rivers Eye and Wreake.

There are six 'strategic' routes (promoted trails such as the Mowbray and Viking Ways) passing through the Borough (Figure 3.4), two of which pass through Melton Mowbray. The Grantham Canal also provides an off-road link for pedestrians and cycle users in a natural environment in the north of the Borough.

The cycle network, comprised of national and local routes and a combination of off-road and on-road routes serves Melton Mowbray. However, there is limited provision for cyclists to the west of the town along the Wreake valley, although the PROW network does provide access to the river valley. Borough-wide there are a few settlements that are not part of either the National or local cycle route network including Bottesford, Stathern, Eastwell and Cold Overton.

Despite the relatively comprehensive network there are some areas where gaps in the provision exist Borough-wide and within and around Melton Mowbray. As Melton Mowbray grows, the increasing population will require further extensions to the network (Figure 3.4) to provide sustainable transport options and access to recreation, employment and education.

Biodiversity and Geodiversity

The historic legacy of agricultural use of the landscape of Melton has created a patchwork of field patterns and a fragmented set of natural/semi-natural habitats. The rivers, streams and Grantham Canal provide some of the few connected habitat networks. Woodland cover in the Borough is around 4.28% this is lower than the regional average 5.3% and the national average. This is due mainly to the agricultural nature of the Borough. The woodlands are not well connected to each other. Of this only 59ha is considered as ancient woodland in Natural England's Ancient Woodland Inventory (AWI), accounting for about 3% of Melton's woodland resource.

Ancient Woodland

Ancient woodland is woodland that has been in existence since 1600CE. It is valued for its high biodiversity value and often for its heritage and culture value, such as coppicing and charcoal burning. Ancient woodland is under threat from a number of factors, including lack of management, over-grazing, damage from inappropriate usage and felling amongst others.

There are several concentrations of biodiversity interest in the Borough, particularly along the River Wreake, Grimston and Old Dalby and around the Belvoir Estate. Outside of these areas the surrounding matrix is mostly arable with well-managed hedges and supporting several farmland birds including the United Kingdom Biodiversity Action Plan Priority Species grey partridge (*Perdix perdix*).

United Kingdom Biodiversity Action Plan (UKBAP)

'The UK BAP is the UK Government's response to the CBD. The Convention called for the development and enforcement of national strategies and associated action plans to identify, conserve and protect existing biological diversity, and to enhance it wherever possible. The UKBAP describes the biological resources of the UK and provides detailed plans for conservation of these resources, at national and devolved levels. Action plans for the most threatened species and habitats have been set out to aid recovery, and reporting rounds show how the UKBAP has contributed to the UK's progress towards the significant reduction of biodiversity loss called for by the CBD.'¹

Natural England considers the Muston Meadows National Nature Reserve in the north of the Borough adjacent to the Grantham Canal as one of England's finest examples of a lowland meadow and is seeking to extend the site.

The Borough contains several UK Biodiversity Action Plan Priority Habitats (Figure 3.5) and 223ha of Sites of Special Scientific Interest, the largest of which is at Croxton Park. The Borough does not currently contain any Local Nature Reserves (LNR), Natural England recommends that 1ha of LNR should be provided per 1000 people.

Local Nature Reserves (LNR)

To be declared a Local Nature Reserves a site should be;

'Of high value locally for environmental education and/or research. People are more likely to be aware of and value the natural environment when they can experience it at first hand in places such as LNRs, or

Of high natural interest locally. LNRs can help safeguard not just rare but also more common, locally valued species, habitats and geodiversity. They can play an important part in Local Biodiversity Action Plans and Local Geodiversity Action Plans, or

*Of reasonable natural interest and of high value locally for enjoyment of nature by the public.'*¹

There is therefore a shortfall in the current provision of opportunities for the education and the enjoyment of wildlife under a designation. Local Wildlife Sites account for 335.59ha of the Borough's area and a further 16.58km of species-rich hedgerow and 8.43km of rivers and streams are also designated as local wildlife sites.

Land Use

Much of the Borough's landscape is in agricultural use, supporting the area's rich heritage of food production. The majority of the agricultural land is Grade 3 with a richer belt of Grade 2 land that runs from the north east at Grantham, through the Borough south of the Belvoir Ridge, and on south west to the outskirts of Leicester (Figure 3.6). The less productive Grade 4 can be found in several areas around the Borough, but is mainly associated with the river valleys and floodplain. Grade 1 land is limited to a small area south of Wymondham.

Agricultural Land Grades

In England agricultural land is graded on a scale of 1 to 5 by Defra. It includes sub-categories of 3a and 3b. Grades 1 to 3a are the most productive for growing crops, whilst 3b-5 are considered the least productive.

Poorer quality agricultural land presents the opportunity for habitat creation/woodland planting and potentially bio-fuel crops, most likely in the form of Short Rotation Coppice (SRC) using willow (*Salix* sp.) for woodfuel considering the hydrology of those areas, being within the floodplain. Combining

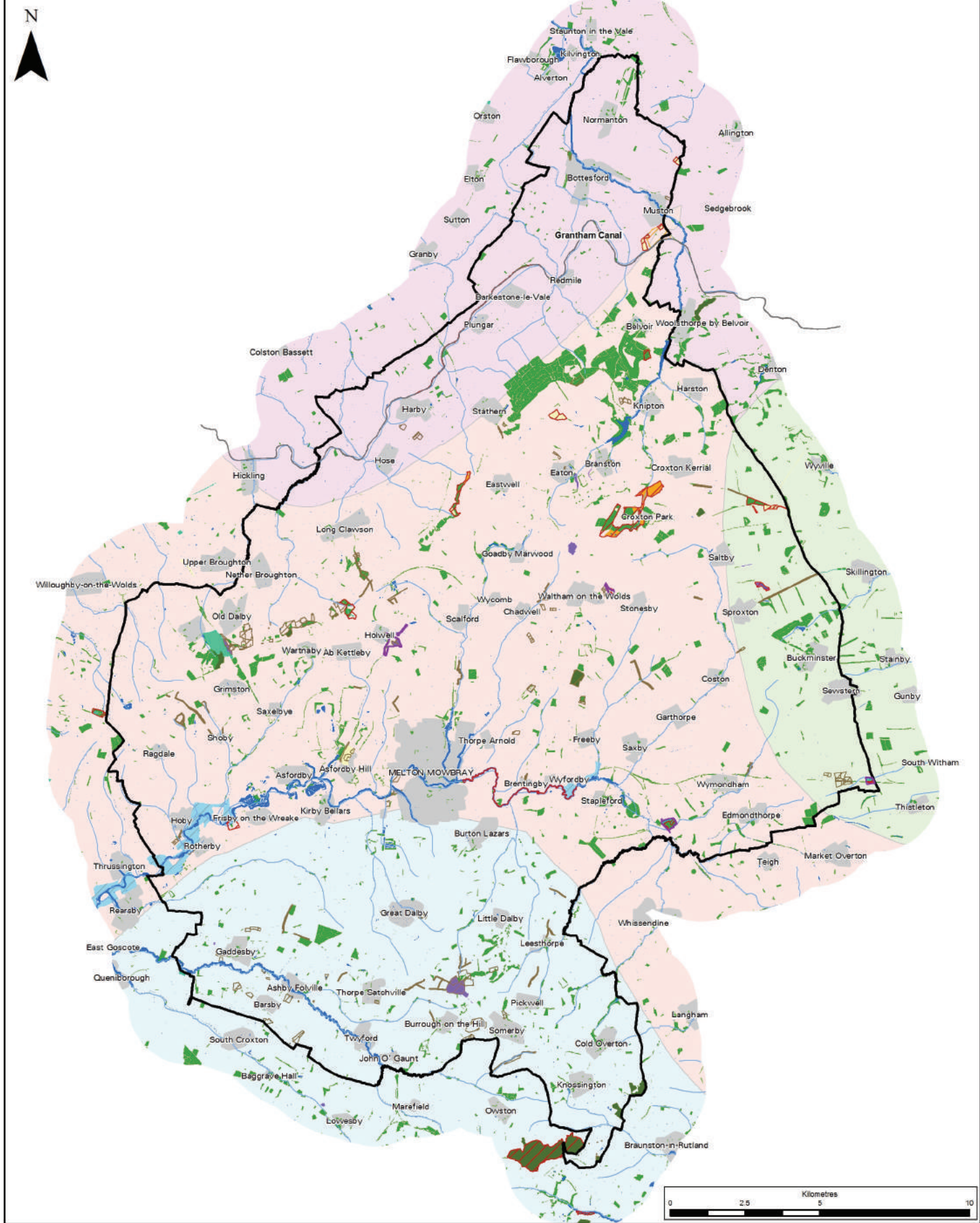


Figure 3.5 Biodiversity and Geodiversity

Melton Borough Boundary	Lowland meadows	Wildlife Trust Reserves
Local Wildlife Sites (Linear, Hedges/Streams)	Lowland dry-acidic grassland	National Landscape Character Areas
Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)	National Nature Reserve (NNR)	High Leicestershire
Waterbodies & Watercourses	Regionally Important Geological Site	Kesteven Uplands
Floodplain and grazing marsh	Ancient Woodland	Leicestershire and Nottinghamshire Wolds
Local Wildlife Sites	Woodland	Trent and Belvoir Vales
Lowland calcareous grassland	Settlements	

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habitat creation, flood storage and access in these relatively poor productive areas can bring multiple benefits that exceed simple crop production. Short Rotation Coppice has been shown to have a number of benefits for wildlife and game birds¹⁰ and so also has a positive contribution to the Borough's biodiversity

Heritage and Tourism

Melton has a number of tourism and visitor attractions ranging from its historical buildings and scheduled monuments, country parks and nature reserve through to recreation such as sailing and angling (Figure 3.7). Promoted paths such as the Melton Way, Leicestershire Round and National Cycle Network Routes are also important elements of Melton's visitor infrastructure. Of the Borough's settlements, Bottesford is noticeably disconnected from the wider strategic access networks.

The Green Infrastructure Strategy should aim to support Melton in creating and improving a network of natural corridors. These corridors or access networks should provide attractive connections to visitor attractions, recreational venues, and provide educational opportunities to the Borough's varied community and interest groups. Green infrastructure can also provide the setting for cultural and historic assets and add to the visitor interest.

Landscape Character

The Borough's landscape character is defined by land-use, natural/semi-natural habitat and topography. Farming, arable and pasture, dominates the character across the Borough, well-kept hedgerows and differing field sizes defining the various character areas. River valleys and the Wolds Top and Scarp provide linear landscape elements and some habitat connectivity.

Landscape Character

Put simply, landscape character is what makes an area unique. It is defined as "a distinct, recognisable and consistent pattern of elements, be it natural (soil, landform) and/or human (for example settlement and development) in the landscape that makes one landscape different from another, rather than better or worse".¹ Landscape Character Areas are areas of land, usually adjacent to each other that share similar landscape features

¹⁰ Willow short-rotation coppice for energy and breeding birds: an exploration of potentials in relation to management, M. Londo, J. Dekker, W. ter Keurs, (2005), Biomass and Bioenergy 28 pp281-293

To the south of Melton Mowbray the High Leicestershire Hills Landscape Character Area extends south to Leighfield Forest. The Vale of Belvoir in the north of the Borough slopes northwards towards Newark and the Trent Plain. The Borough contains two areas where the landscape could be described as parkland, the Belvoir Estate and Stapleford.

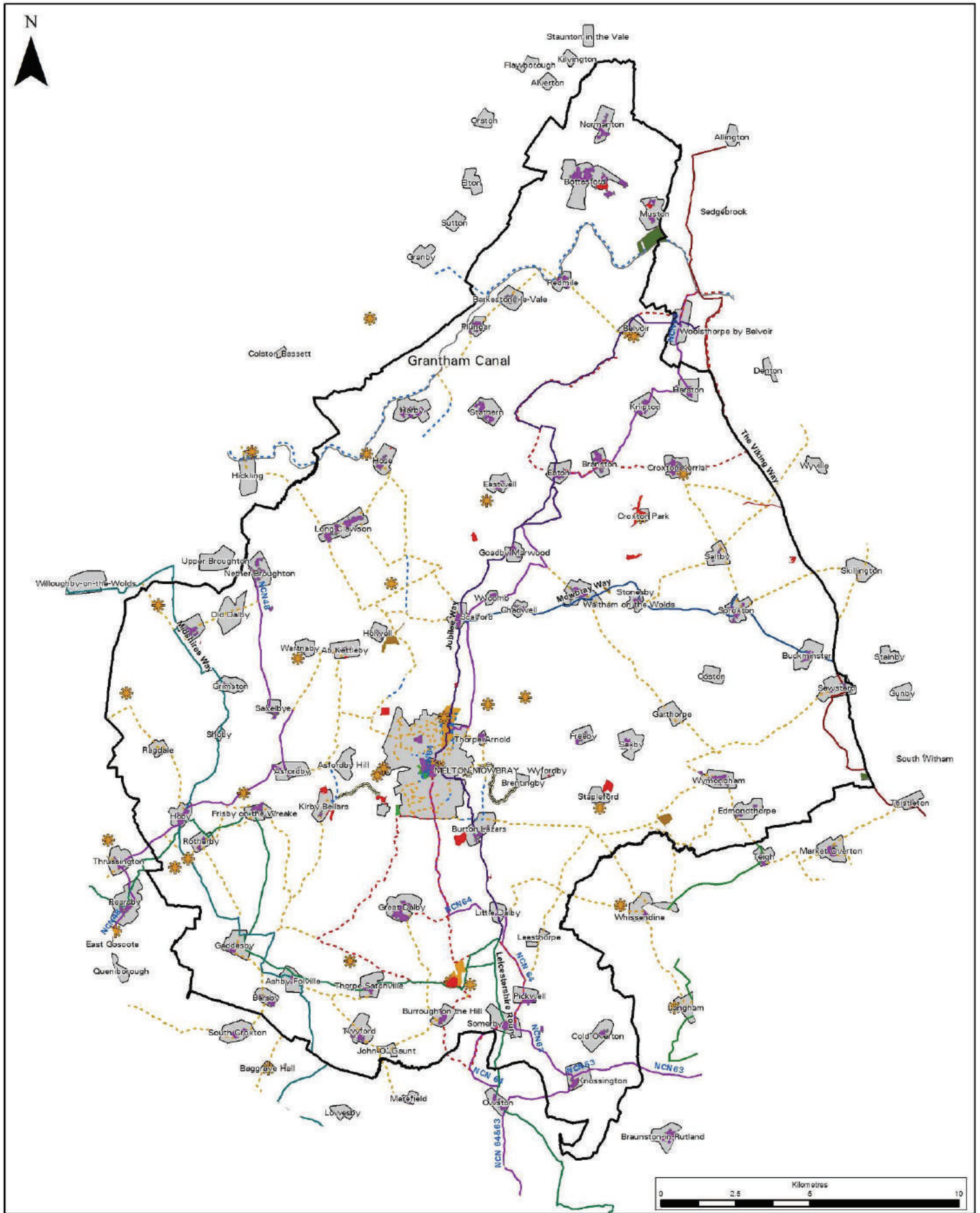




Figure 3.7 Heritage and Tourism

Country Parks	Historic Settlement Core	Leicestershire Round
Parks and Gardens	National Cycle Network Routes	Mowbray Way
Wildlife Trust Reserves	Off-Road Cycle Route	Midshires Way
Scheduled Monuments	Leisure Route	Viking Way
National Nature Reserve	Recommended Route	Proposed Footpath
Grantham Canal	Rutland Round	Settlements
Visitor Attractions	Jubilee Way	Melton Borough Boundary

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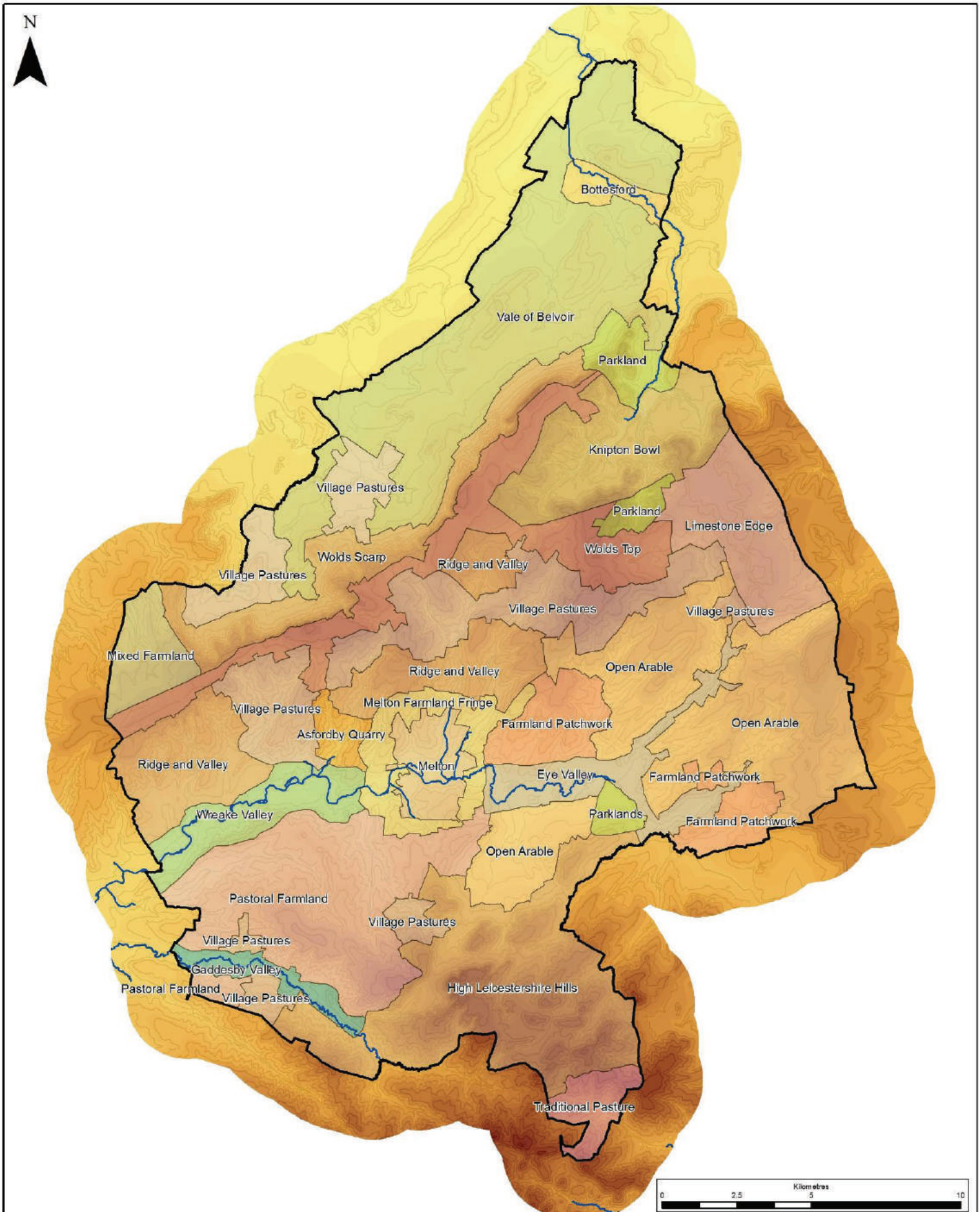




Figure 3.8 Landscape Character - Melton Borough

Ashfordby Quarry	Knipton Bowl	Parklands	Wolds Scarp
Bottesford	Limestone Edge	Pastoral Farmland	Wolds Top
Eye Valley	Melton	Ridge and Valley	Wreake Valley
Farmland Patchwork	Melton Farmland Fringe	Traditional Pasture	
Gaddesby Valley	Mixed Farmland	Vale of Belvoir	
High Leicestershire Hills	Open Arable	Village Pastures	





Melton Borough Council

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Chapter 4: Drivers for Change

This chapter examines the issues that are or will be affecting Melton's green infrastructure resources, directly or indirectly. The multiple benefits that green infrastructure provides means that any negative consequences for the GI resource will have an effect on the socio-economic and environmental well being of the Borough's communities.

Understanding these drivers for change, which include current physical needs such as health deprivation and poor access to green space or policy needs, is vital to underpin the successful sustainable development and future of the Borough and deliver the aspirations of its settlements and communities.

The assessment of the Borough's assets, policy, initiatives and programmes and consultation process has revealed that five broad drivers for change that are having, or will have an effect on the Borough's green infrastructure resource and communities, they are;

- Growth and development
- Climate change and flooding
- Green infrastructure initiatives
- Protection of biodiversity
- Access and recreation/community need for greenspace

The drivers for change should not be seen solely as having negative consequences; they can present opportunities all well. An opportunity could be simply an open space that has yet to fulfil its potential, a new development/regeneration scheme or local and regional environmental/socio-economic initiatives.

Each analysis of the Drivers for Change will be concluded with a list of the immediate needs associated with the above drivers (e.g. need for additional green space), potential opportunities (e.g. funding) and the key areas or locations where both needs and opportunities present themselves.

Growth and Development

Over the next 15 years Melton Borough will be subject to growth and change through its location within the 6Cs (3 Counties, 3 Cities) sub-regional Growth Area and retention of the Regional Plan's housing targets. It is anticipated that the Borough will provide around 170 dwellings annually until 2026, or around 3400 units. This will require flexibility due to land availability and other external factors. As the sub-regional centre

the majority of the growth, approximately 80% of these dwellings, will be located in Melton Mowbray¹¹, with the remainder spread out across the Borough.

The Core Strategy Preferred Options report also recognises that more land may be required for employment to meet the predicted population growth and to widen employment opportunities. Taking into account the recommendations of the Employment Land Study¹² (Update 2007), the Core Strategy options report proposes that an additional 30ha of land be made available to fulfil employment needs until 2026. The Melton Economic Regeneration Action Plan¹³ considers the lack of available land as a weakness undermining the ability to attract large scale businesses and the lack of space for business premises expansion threatens to seek other areas for investment. Net levels of out-commuting reinforce the idea that some particular types of employment opportunities are not available within the Borough.

Some allocated employment land in the Borough may or may not be located in appropriate areas (i.e. close to residential areas and sustainable transport routes). For a sustainable set of employment options it may be necessary to de-allocate some employment land in parts of the Borough and make up the shortfall in more suitable areas closer to employees (i.e. residential areas) and to the sustainable transport network. Long journeys to work were also seen as a weakness in the Borough's economic competitiveness.

A strategic site has been identified as having the potential for an Search Area for Growth. The SUE will provide 1000 new homes and associated infrastructure. This strategic site to the north of Melton Mowbray will also feature local services. A separate employment allocation will be provided elsewhere in the Borough.

This increase in housing and population requires measures to ensure that existing green spaces, services and neighbourhoods are not impacted upon and that a high quality of life is available to existing and potential residents.

Development on green-field sites raises issues regarding the landscape, biodiversity, community access and the environmental functions of the site. Unless this is managed correctly, development on green-field sites will alter the hydrology and rainfall interception capability of the ground. Sealing surfaces for roads, paving or the footprint of a house will increase the rate rainfall run-off enters the waste water system. This has implications in regard to localised surface flood risk and the release of untreated waste at water processing plants due to overload during high levels of rainfall.

¹¹ Melton Local Development Framework: Core Strategy (Preferred Options), (2008), Melton Borough Council

¹² Employment Land Study (Update Note 2007), (2007), Roger Tym and Partners for Melton Borough Council

¹³ Melton Economic Regeneration Action Plan 2007-2008, (2007), Melton Borough Council

Design guides for new development can help reduce the rate of run-off by ensuring rainfall interception methods are used in the design and layout of new development. Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS), interception and storage ponds are all vital in reducing run-off, and can also provide habitat for wildlife within residential areas and can form part of an access network.

Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS)

Sustainable Drainage Systems are an important aspect of development planning to reduce the impact of development on watercourses and surface-water flood risk. They can be built alongside access networks connecting to greenspaces and provide habitat for wildlife. They intercept and slowly release rainwater into the natural water courses, reducing sediment loss, pollutants and flooding.

Listed below are a number of other examples of how development could have an impact and how green infrastructure delivered through development can have a positive contribution.

-Negative Impact/ + Positive Contribution

➤ **Communities**

- Loss of greenspace, access routes and recreation opportunities
- Increased user pressure on existing greenspace and access routes
- Increased traffic and congestion
- Potential new greenspace and improved access infrastructure
- Enhanced sustainable transport options

➤ **Wildlife**

- Loss of habitat/disturbance to natural connective networks
- Increased user pressure on natural areas such as nature reserves
- New, enhanced and accessible wildlife areas close to communities
- Habitat networks created/re-connected along access routes

➤ **Landscapes**

- Potential loss of landscape features such as mature trees, ponds and hedges
- Development may affect the views across familiar landscapes
- Green Infrastructure delivered through development could reinforce landscape character through retaining and enhancing landscape elements
- Poor quality or neglected land could be enhanced, improving sense of place

➤ **Environmental Processes**

- Potential to decrease groundwater recharge and increase rainfall run-off, affecting watercourses and increasing flood risk
- Reduced air quality due to increased traffic
- May increase the urban 'heat island' effect
- Layout design could include Sustainable Drainage Systems, reducing run-off and providing space for wildlife
- Tree planting could reduce airborne particulates, provide cooling and habitat

Maintaining human access is also a vital part of delivering sustainable development, and a network that meets local needs and is fit for purpose will be a key aspect of creating sustainable and healthy communities. Parts of the existing footpath network have been used for generations and are an essential part of the heritage and cultural history of local areas. Keeping and where necessary improving these important routes within new development is therefore essential in maintaining access for communities. As landscapes and settlement structures change, there may be a case for switching investment from obsolete or redundant paths to secure more strategic and appropriate access arrangements where previously there were none.

Other aspects of green-field development include the potential loss of landscape character elements such as hedgerows, ponds and trees. These elements are not only an important part of an area's landscape character but also provide valuable habitat and linkages between habitats in what is essentially in Melton, an open agricultural landscape. Retaining such elements within design will help new development retain or adopt the landscape character of an area, making it more attractive to potential residents whilst maintaining a biodiversity function. Development in the Search Area for Growth will require some mitigation for the loss of these landscape elements.

High value biodiversity areas such as Special Areas of Conservation (SAC) and Special Protection Areas (SPA) are sensitive to user pressures and uses such as dog walking, mountain-biking and other activities. Any increase in population is likely to exert pressure on important biodiversity resources (even those outside of the Borough such as Rutland Water) and must therefore be compensated for. Sustainable Accessible Natural Greenspace (SANG) is recommended by Natural England as a way of reducing user pressure on more sensitive sites that allow public access.

Failure to address any negative consequences of development on the environment and communities and to take advantage of the positive contribution that well-planned green infrastructure can deliver; will ultimately affect the deliverability of objectives outlined in document such as the core strategy and community plan.

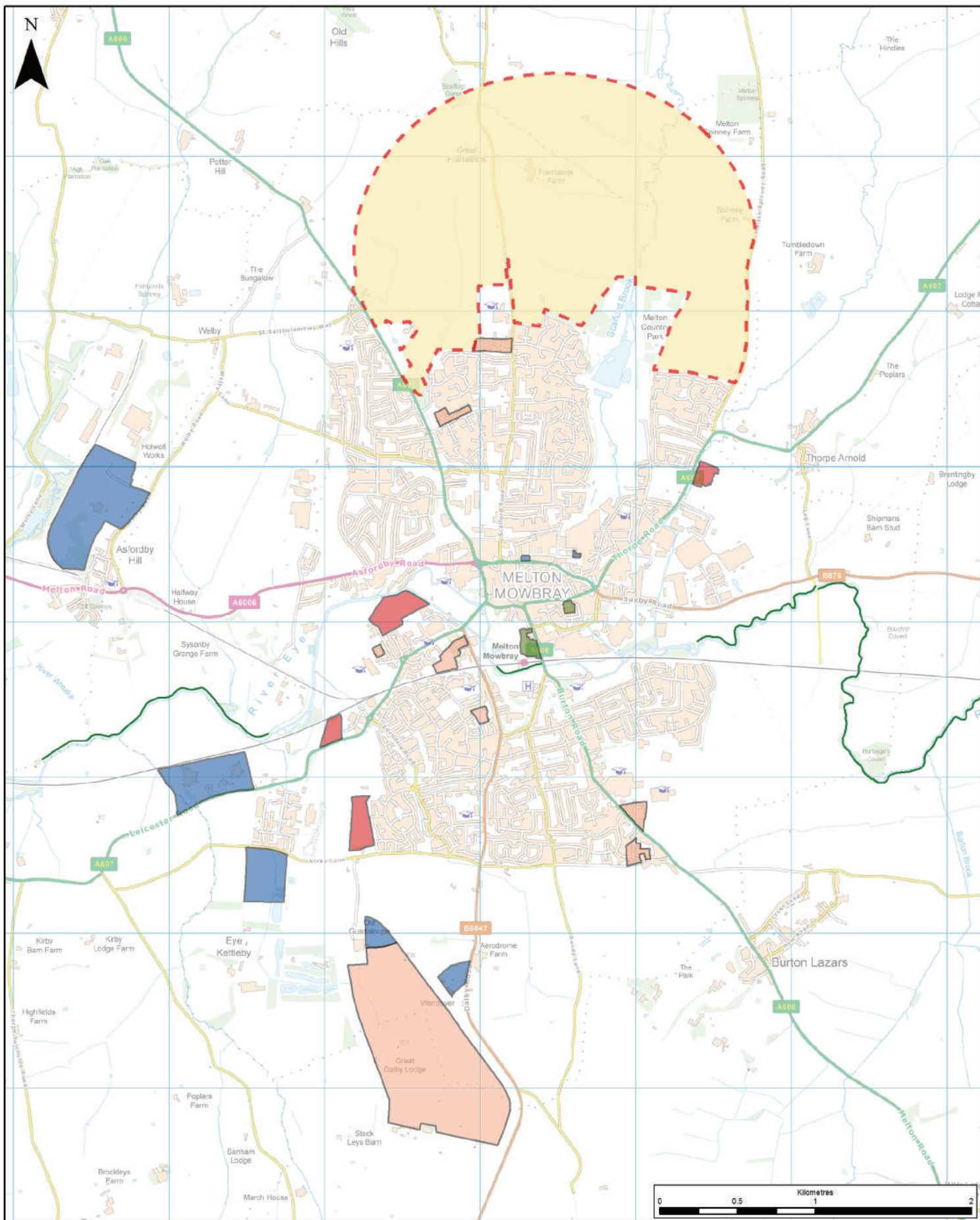


Figure 4.1 Development and Growth in Melton Mowbray

- Housing Allocations*
- Industrial Allocations*
- Shopping Allocations*
- Recreation Allocations*
- Proposed Footpaths*
- Search Area for Growth



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Needs

- To progress with development without impacting on communities, economy and the environment and biodiversity
- To ensure Melton's population has safe and sustainable transport options
- To provide Melton's expanding population with accessible & functional green space that meets the needs of a changing population

Opportunities

- To design-in sustainable transport routes between the workplace, schools, recreation opportunities and home within the Search Area for Growth and through existing greenspace and access routes
- To provide attractive, accessible employment and housing development opportunities in which people want to live, work and invest
- To use the natural features such as the Scaford Brook to provide accessible multifunctional green space within the Search Area for Growth

Key Locations

- Search Area for Growth
- Employment Areas
- New Highway Route

Climate Change and Flooding

There is now an overwhelming body of evidence, and general agreement within the scientific community, that significant changes to our weather patterns and climate can be expected over the next century. These changes are already beginning to be felt and our adaption to them will require action on our part to safeguard our communities as well as our landscapes.

Changes in our climate will affect us all over the coming decades, including increased risk of flooding from more intense rainfall in the winter months (13% increase by 2050) and greater river flow rate in addition to the increased temperatures and reduced rainfall in the summer months (18% decrease by 2050)¹⁴. The expected impacts of climate change can be reduced by a combination of changes in human behaviour (to reduce CO₂ emissions and thus the rate of climate change) and changes in the way we use and manage land to adapt to the changes we cannot avoid and maximise any benefit arising from those changes.

Reducing the causes and effects of climate change were Core Objectives in the East Midlands Regional Plan¹⁵, which set out through its policies how climate change could

¹⁴ Strategic Flood Risk Assessment- Stage 2 Strategic Assessment of Flood Risk Updated to PPS25, (2008), Entec for Melton Borough Council

¹⁵ East Midlands Regional Plan (2009) Government Office for the East Midlands

be addressed in areas such as transport, development design, flood risk and managing water resources amongst others. Reducing the heat island effect and creating sustainable drainage and carbon sinks (collection and storage of Carbon Dioxide in vegetation) were considered as key aspects of new development design and control.

Rainfall and Flooding (Figure 4.2)

Current predictions about rainfall patterns show reduced rainfall in the summer months and heavier rainfall during winter. In terms of land use and development there are several issues raised by these changing patterns:

– Urban Run-off

Areas with a high percentage of sealed surfaces create excessive run-off, creating problems for wastewater treatment and possible diffuse pollution entering the river network. Several of the Borough's settlements (including Melton Mowbray) are located on the river network and lack of rainfall retention in new development may lead to increased run-off and also increases the risk of downstream flooding.

– Agricultural Run-off

Intensification of agricultural land in the 20th Century has contributed to a faster and higher rate of surface run-off. Excessive rainfall can create a situation where fertilisers, pesticide and soils can find their way into the river network with the potential to damage the economic and environmental value of the fisheries (freshwater and marine), and the productivity of farmland due to nutrient loss.

– Sealed Surfaces

In addition to creating run-off, sealed surfaces deny the opportunity for water to enter the water table naturally (groundwater recharge). This creates a situation where during the dryer summer months, rivers and connecting brook/stream networks have reduced flow rates or indeed can cease to flow at all. Combined with excessive run-off during wet weather this negatively impacts on the biodiversity inhabiting these water courses.

– Water Usage

Growth will increase the pressure on water resources in the domestic, industrial and agricultural sectors. Drier summers and reduced groundwater recharge mean that water will be at a premium during these dry months.

Run-off - already a problem in urban areas – is likely to worsen as weather patterns change and has been recognised as a national issue that the planning system must address¹⁶. Melton's planned growth has the opportunity to create housing and employment areas that not only reduce run-off but allow for natural percolation into the water table, helping to sustain the stream/brook networks and groundwater abstraction. Incorporating Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) and rainfall interception/storage into the layout and design of development will therefore be essential in avoiding flood risk and environmental damage and was recommended by the Regional Plan.

¹⁶ Safeguarding Our Soils – A Strategy for England (2009) Defra

In areas where development is already established, greenspaces can serve as storage areas and street trees can aid the interception of rainfall and reduce the run-off rate.

In rural and peri-urban areas flood control and storage can be achieved through allowing wetlands/washlands to be created alongside the rivers. These areas can become important refuges for wildlife, recreational areas for communities and help natural sediment deposition.

Urban Heat Island

All new development must take into account the needs of the communities and environment as our climate changes. Urban areas and settlements with poor tree cover and a high proportion of heat absorbent surfaces create a 'heat island' effect, making these areas significantly warmer than the surrounding countryside.

The predicted rise in summer temperatures due to climate change will create a situation where our urban areas could become uncomfortable, with people choosing to live in the cooler suburbs, which raises issues of the sustainability of town centres and transport options. Raising temperatures also increases the effect of airborne pollution on human health, further discouraging people from moving to and indeed remaining in an area.

Higher temperatures and the negative effects of airborne pollution further reduce the quality of life available to communities in urban areas. For the more vulnerable members of society and particularly those with limited mobility (physically and financially) this is a serious issue that has been identified as a key action the Region's climate change programme of action¹⁷.

To improve the quality of life for the Borough's communities it will be necessary to address identified deficiencies in green space (quality and quantity) in a way that is appropriate to local needs and provides access and connections to the wider green space network.

Research and modelling¹⁸ has predicted that a 10% increase in green space cover can potentially eliminate the effects of climate change on increasing surface temperatures, conversely however, the reduction by 10% of green space cover could increase those surface temperatures by up 8.2% with climate change at the 'high' 2080 scenario.

¹⁷ Tackling Climate Change in the East Midlands – Regional Programme of Action 2009-2011 (2009) East Midlands Regional Climate Change Partnership

¹⁸ Adaptation Strategies for Climate Change in the Urban Environment- Draft Final Report to the National Steering Group, (2006), Handley, J. and Carter, J., Centre for Urban and Regional Ecology (CURE), University of Manchester

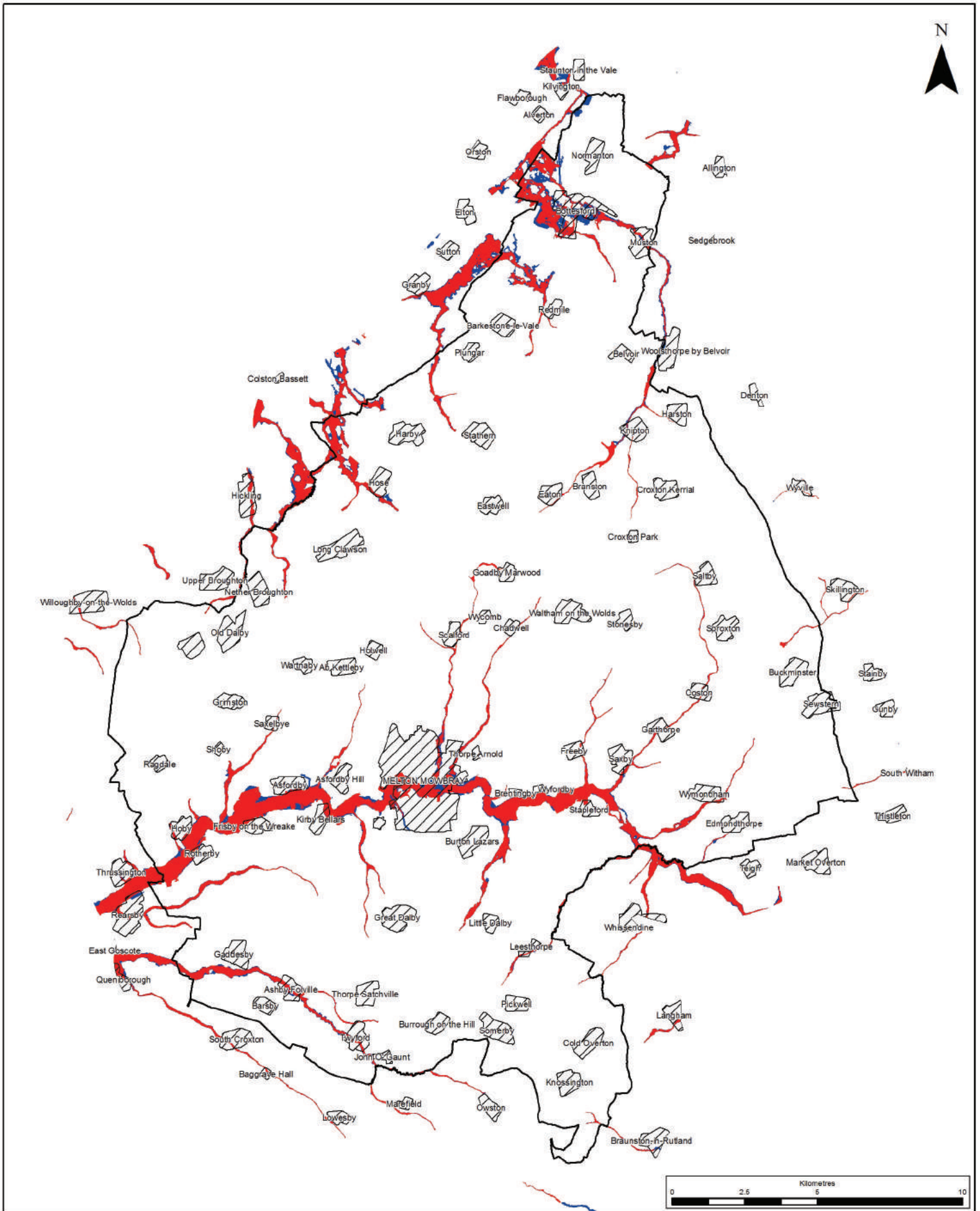


Figure 4.2 Flood Risk Melton Borough

-  Melton Borough Boundary
-  Flood Zone 3
High Probability
-  Flood Zone 2
Medium Probability
-  Main Rivers

Zone 3 comprises land assessed as having a 1 in 100 or greater annual probability of river flooding (> 1%) (Environment Agency)

Zone 2 comprises land assessed as having between a 1 in 100 and 1 in 1000 annual probability of river flooding (1% – 0.1%) or



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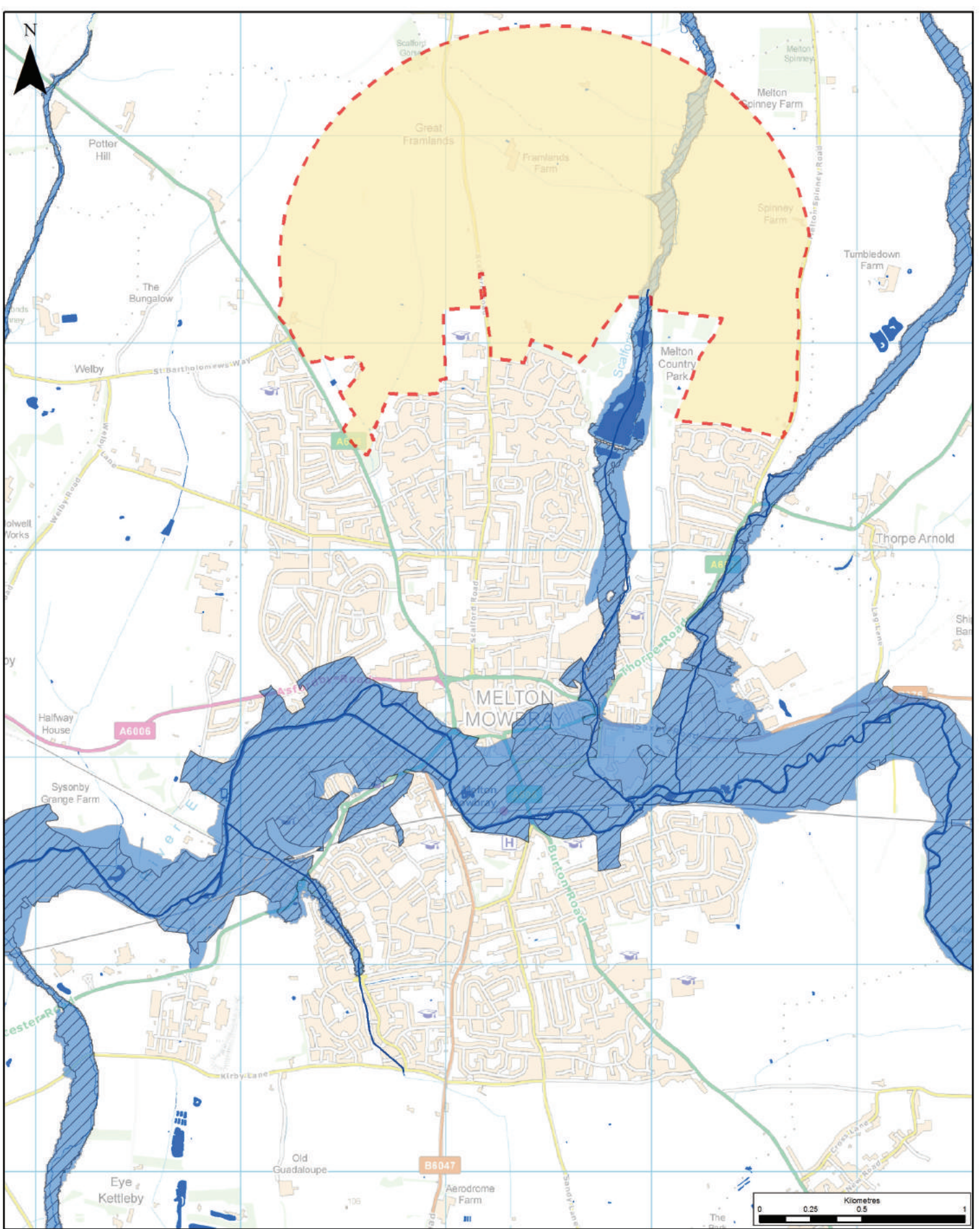






Figure 4.3 Flood Risk Melton Mowbray

-  Main Rivers
-  Search Area for Growth
-  Flood Zone 3
High Probability
-  Flood Zone 2
Medium Probability

Zone 3 comprises land assessed as having a 1 in 100 or greater annual probability of river flooding (>1%) (Environment Agency)

Zone 2 comprises land assessed as having between a 1 in 100 and 1 in 1000 annual probability of river flooding (1% – 0.1%)



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Approaches to reducing the 'heat island' that can be employed include increasing tree cover. Trees provide cooling through shade and evapotranspiration. Trees could be planted in existing green spaces such as parks and gardens (where appropriate) or streets, where they can help address pollution issues such as reducing airborne pollution such as particulate emissions. Planters, green-walls and green-roofs are all ways in which GI elements within a settlement can address both the causes and effects of our changing climate.

Energy and Sustainable Transport

As recognised in the Regional Plan, there is a need to reduce the causes of climate change. There is also a need to reduce our energy consumption not only because of the need to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, but also because supply, growing global demand and finite nature of resources require that we use less, and more efficiently.

Sustainable transport is just one aspect of reducing both emissions and our reliance on motorised transport and is supported by policies within the Regional Environment Strategy¹⁹. Providing alternatives to motorised transport improves health (by providing opportunities for exercise in green spaces, which will also tend to have better air quality than urban areas with heavy traffic flow), reduces congestion in town centres and so improves quality of place.

In the Quality of Life surveys undertaken in 2003/6 Melton's residents identified congestion as a key issue in Melton Mowbray, congestion is seen as a priority for improvement and its reduction remains an objective of the Community Strategy.

The summary below highlights the key needs of the Borough in respect of climate change. It also recognises the main opportunities and the key locations where both need and opportunity are found.

Needs

- To progress with development without impacting on hydrology (run-off and surface sealing)
- To reduce the reliance on private motor vehicle transport
- To mitigate against and to adapt to climate change (reduce emissions, prepare for change)
- To ensure our urban areas remain healthy places where people want to spend time
- To reduce soil and nutrient loss and watercourse pollution (organic and non-organic)
- Reduce the effects of climate change on human health
- To ensure wildlife has opportunity to adapt to a changing climate

¹⁹ East Midlands Environment Strategy – Objectives and Policies (2002) EMRA

Opportunities

- To retain rainfall/reduce run-off within development design
- To provide networks of natural and multifunctional space for people and wildlife within new development design and improve functionality of existing spaces
- To target land management along watercourses to reduce soil loss/diffuse pollution and enhance their function as natural corridors
- To increase, where suitable, the level of street tree planting to reduce airborne PM₁₀ particulates, increase shade and provide cooling through evapotranspiration
- To manage floodplains for flood storage, wildlife and access

Key Locations

- Search Area for Growth and other development sites, including employment areas
- Watercourses (primarily the River Eye, River Wreake and Scalford Brook)
- All greenspaces (subject to suitability assessment)
- Existing cycle and pedestrian access networks and gaps within those networks
- Main arterial roads and residential neighbourhoods for street tree greening
- Melton Mowbray Town centre
- Industrial/Employment Areas

Green Infrastructure Initiatives

The Borough of Melton is contained within the 6Cs Growth Area, as part of this growth programme the 6Cs Green Infrastructure Strategy has been developed. 'The 6Cs Green Infrastructure Strategy provides an overarching strategic framework to 2026 for Green Infrastructure planning, investment and delivery by stakeholders working across the environmental sector. It has been produced to assist with and guide actions on the delivery of multifunctional GI within the sub-region as part of its long term sustainable development. The Strategy takes a long term and holistic view of GI requirements, and many of its recommendations would still be applicable in the absence of Growth Point status.'²⁰ The networks prescribed by the 6Cs Strategy (Figure 4.4) are envisaged to help guide policy development within the Local Development Framework and encourage actions on the ground that contribute to the large spatial/strategic needs of the sub-region's communities, economies and environment. The Strategy recognises the need to be flexible in its prescriptions to allow a more locally specific approach, that addresses the needs of the constituent areas.

²⁰ 6Cs Green Infrastructure Strategy: Executive Summary (2010), ENGIN

BOX 4.1 Sub-regional Corridors

'**Sub-Regional GI Corridors** comprise a mosaic of land uses, natural, built heritage and archaeological resources and settlements, and are intended to become fully multifunctional zones with the ability or potential to deliver a range of economic, environmental and social benefits related to the GI functions listed in **Box 4.3**

Although of major sub-regional significance, in many cases these corridors are also of regional significance - and in the case of The National Forest, it is both a regional and national policy initiative. The Sub-Regional GI Corridors encompass:

- *Strategic River Corridors* – these form the 'backbone' of the proposed Sub-Regional Strategic GI Network for the 6Cs sub-region, providing continuous and interconnected corridors for the dispersal of wildlife and movement of people between the urban centres of the Three Cities and the surrounding countryside;
- *Forests and Woodlands* – the proposed Sub-Regional Strategic GI Network for the 6Cs sub-region includes substantial areas of forests and woodlands, which provide large-scale multifunctional greenspaces and offer major opportunities for strategic woodland creation⁷ and environmental improvements of degraded landscapes, including potential for habitat enhancement, restoration and creation on a landscape scale; and
- *Regional Parks* – the proposed sub-regional Strategic GI Network for the 6Cs sub-region includes potential Regional Parks, distinctive and extensive areas where management and spatial planning can bring about regionally significant economic, environmental and social benefits based on local characteristics, needs and aspirations⁷.

(6Cs Green Infrastructure Strategy – Volume 1: Sub-Regional Strategic Framework, (2010),

The green infrastructure strategy for Melton will use research and already defined corridors to guide its development, and will add to them to reflect local circumstances and needs. Within Melton there are three key aspects of the 6Cs that should inform the development of the Borough GI Strategy, they are Sub-Regional GI Corridors, City GI Corridors and Urban Fringe Enhancement Zones; below are the definitions from the 6Cs GI Strategy²¹ for these three elements.

²¹ 6Cs Green Infrastructure Strategy – Volume 1: Sub-Regional Strategic Framework, (2010), ENGIN

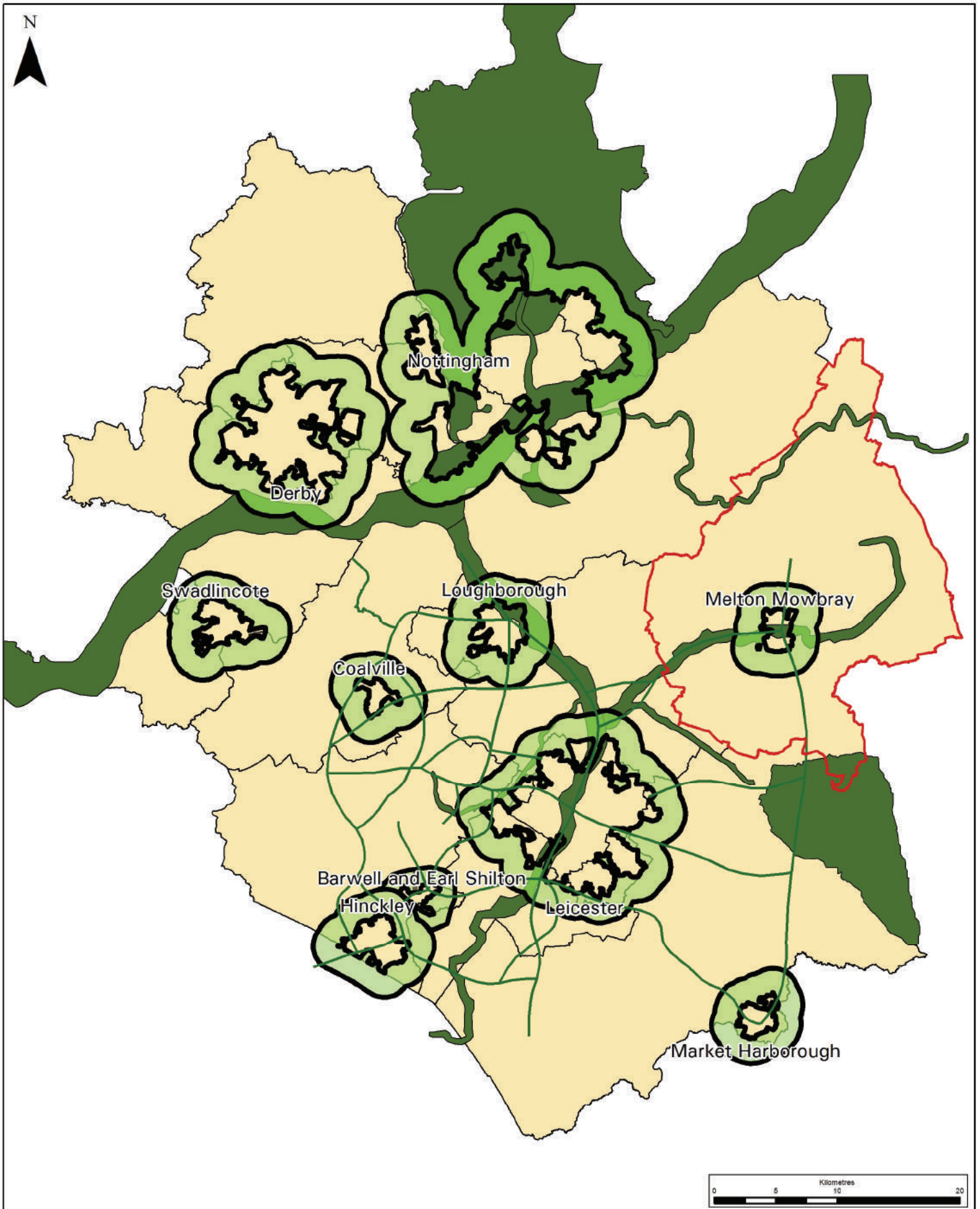


Figure 4.4 6Cs Green Infrastructure Strategy

- Melton Borough Boundary
- Urban Finge Enhancement Zones
- Sub-Regional GI Corridors
- City-Scale GI Corridors (Leicester)
- 6Cs Growth Area



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BOX 4.2 Urban Green Infrastructure Enhancement Zones

‘Within the Urban Fringe Green Infrastructure Enhancement Zones, land is widely used by urban communities as a resource for informal, and often unauthorised, recreation leading to conflicts with other land uses. Additionally, the poor permeability of some built up areas can be a barrier to accessing the surrounding countryside. These Zones would benefit from the adoption of a strategic and co-ordinated approach to managing access for urban communities into the surrounding countryside. It is envisaged that the Urban Fringe Green Infrastructure Enhancement Zones would encompass a network of interlinked and multifunctional greenspaces that connect with city/town centres, public transport nodes, and major employment and residential areas, including new Sustainable Urban Extensions/Areas of Growth. A careful balance will need to be struck between creation of new GI and the need to safeguard existing natural and cultural features that contribute to the character and value of the wider agricultural landscape’.

‘Urban Fringe GI Enhancement Zones have an important role to play in relation to improving linkages and connectivity between principal urban areas/sub-regional centres and the wider GI network of Sub-Regional and City-Scale GI Corridors. In particular, Sustainable Urban Extensions/Areas of Growth will need to protect the integrity of the wider GI network, and support existing urban areas, by maintaining and enhancing GI within the Urban Fringe GI Enhancement Zones. Further work is required at the local level to identify specific opportunities for integrating GI provision into local development and delivery plans within individual Zones’.

(6Cs Green Infrastructure Strategy – Volume 1: Sub-Regional Strategic Framework, (2010),

BOX 4.3 Functions and Benefits of Green Infrastructure

- Access, recreation, movement and leisure;
- Habitat provision and access to nature;
- Landscape setting and context for development;
- Energy production and conservation;
- Food production and productive landscapes;
- Flood attenuation and water resource management; and
- Countering the ‘heat island’ effect of urban areas.

(6Cs Green Infrastructure Strategy – Volume 1: Sub-Regional Strategic Framework, (2010), ENGIN)

BOX 4.4 City-Scale Corridors

'Within the context of the broad Sub-Regional GI Corridors, there are more localised networks of greenspaces, natural features and interconnected green links in and around the three cities of Derby, Leicester and Nottingham, which connect with their surrounding towns and villages. These networks exist at an intermediate 'city-scale' level, which sits between 'sub-regional scale' and 'local scale'.

The City-Scale GI Corridors provide linkages between Sub-Regional GI Corridors, and between Sub-Regional GI Corridors and settlements. In many cases, the City-Scale GI Corridors extend into the urban areas, providing key elements of the Urban Fringe GI Enhancement Zones. While these corridors are indicative, they demonstrate the priority that should be given to achieving a connected network of green links within and between urban areas. A number of City-Scale GI Corridors run along rivers through the centre of towns and cities, which provide opportunities to integrate GI into regeneration projects that can help reduce flood risk, improve water quality and provide quality of life benefits to local residents'.

(6Cs Green Infrastructure Strategy – Volume 1: Sub-Regional Strategic Framework, (2010), ENGIN)

Needs

- To improve the functionality and connectivity of the landscape
- To target initiatives and interventions in areas of maximum benefit

Opportunity

- To support and contribute to the wider sub-regional green infrastructure network and initiatives
- To expand and improve connectivity to the 6Cs networks and beyond

Key Locations

- Sub-regional strategic corridors
- Urban fringe areas
- Higher Level Stewardship (HLS) Farm Environment Schemes Target Area
- North to south corridor across Melton (connecting to City-Scale GI Corridor)

Biodiversity

The Borough has a number of important biodiversity assets including Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), woodland, meadows and river corridors. The Borough has 16 Sites of Special Scientific Interest, made up of 63 individual units. The condition of the SSSIs is varied, with 21% of the total area of SSSIs in either unfavourable declining or unfavourable no-change condition (Table 4.1). More positive is the high percentage

(40%) that is recovering. 233ha of the Borough is designated as SSSI around 0.5% of the total Borough land area. There are 238 Local Wildlife Sites in the Borough encompassing a number of different natural habitat typologies including meadows, woodland and individual trees of significance.

Table 4.1 below shows that whilst many of the SSSIs are in a positive state the two main connective natural networks of Grantham Canal and the River Eye are in unfavourable declining condition. The River Eye and Grantham Canal are component parts of the wider 6Cs Wreake Strategic River Corridor GI network, so any biodiversity enhancement carried out locally to these sites has strategic relevance. Of the 16 SSSIs in the Borough most are in a satisfactory state, however 3 stand out as requiring particular attention (Table 4.1). The River Eye, Grantham Canal and Sproxton Quarry are in poor condition.

Country wide there has been a decline in biodiversity, particularly in the latter half of the 20th Century where farming methods, development, infrastructure and land use have all had an effect on wildlife²², especially on habitats associated with farming such as hedgerows and meadows, which has led to an overall decline in species such as the yellow hammer (*Emberiza citrinella*) and grey partridge (*Perdix perdix*).

The Leicestershire and Rutland LBAP²³ lists several factors that are responsible for the decline of nationally and locally important habitats and species, they are;

- Modern farming methods
- Development (housing, roads, mineral extraction)
- Recreational activities
- Drainage schemes
- Tidying up and destruction of rough ground and 'brownfield' land

The above activities are also vital to economic and social development. However through adopting a green infrastructure approach we can lessen their impact and in some cases increase their public benefit.

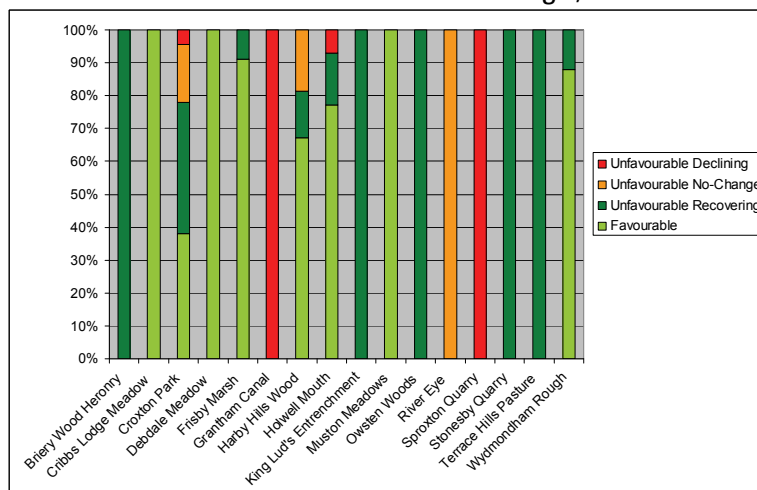
Local Wildlife Sites

Local Sites are sites of substantive nature conservation value. Although they do not have any statutory status, such as Local Nature Reserves (LNR), many are equal in quality to the representative sample of sites that make up the series of statutory Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs). Source Defra

²² Putting Wildlife Back on the Map: A Biodiversity Strategy for the East Midlands (2006) EMRA & East Midlands Biodiversity Forum

²³ Making Space for Nature – Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland Biodiversity Action Plan 2010-2015, (2010)

Table 4.1 Condition of SSSIs in Melton Borough, source: Natural England



Connectivity is important for wildlife, providing corridors for dispersal, foraging and migration. Lack of sufficient connectivity is detrimental to securing the country’s biodiversity for the future²⁴. The main biodiversity resource and connecting features in the Borough are the river corridors, as such the River Eye, designated as a SSSI and part of the 6Cs sub-regional corridor network.

However, the wider landscape can suffer from a lack of connectivity due to the loss and poor management of hedgerows and loss of landscape elements such as ponds. This not only has a negative effect on wildlife but also on landscape character and quality.

The re-connection of habitats and increase in their size is therefore essential in maintaining and enhancing the Borough’s biodiversity (consistent with the requirements of PPS9²⁵ and the East Midlands Biodiversity Strategy). Whilst new development can also be a threat to the Borough’s wildlife, innovative and considerate design can minimise and in some cases increase the biodiversity carrying capacity of development areas. The provision of a network based on increased size and connectivity of habitats will enable the Borough’s wildlife to adapt to future climatic changes and developmental pressures such as user/recreational pressure.

The potential and existing biodiversity and recreational value of the rivers and dismantled railway corridors is such that they should be considered as the Borough’s key connecting features and included as such in the Green Infrastructure Strategy. The Wreake is part of the Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland Biodiversity Action Plan, and Soar and Wreake Living Landscape Area and a key element of the 6Cs wider corridor network.

Whilst run-off (urban and agricultural), lack of connective function, groundwater abstraction, inappropriate management and development and growth can negatively

²⁴ Making Space for Nature: A review of England’s Wildlife Sites and Ecological Network, (2010), Defra

²⁵ Planning Policy Statement 9: Biodiversity and Geological Conservation (2005) CLG

affect the Borough's wildlife resource, there are opportunities to improve the current situation. The development of a Green Infrastructure Strategy will provide a link to and support other initiatives such as:

- Grantham Canal Restoration Projects
- Strategic River Corridors Initiative²⁶, (6Cs GI Strategy)²⁷,
- Regional Forestry Framework²⁸
- Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland Biodiversity Action Plan

The East Midlands Regional Assembly's Strategic River Corridor Survey²⁹ has suggested ways in which rivers can be protected and enhanced within the Local Development Framework's Core Strategy:

BOX 4.5 Suggested LDF Core Strategy Policy for Strategic Rivers

New development should maintain and enhance the strategic importance of the river corridor in terms of its:

- Existing and potential biodiversity value
- Role in sustainable flood management
- Potential for regeneration, rural diversification, tourism and new enterprise
- Cultural and historic environment assets, including archaeology
- Accessibility to and along the river
- Recreational and educational value

Landscape character and townscape quality

Environmental stewardship schemes such as the Environmental Stewardship Higher Level Scheme (HLS) are also an opportunity to improve biodiversity. One of the three constituent parts of the Stanford, Loddington and Melton HLS Target Area can be found in the Borough. It 'extends from the edge of Melton Mowbray to Wymondham and Coston and is highly influential on the water quality of the River Eye (SSSI) and is important along with associated habitat enhancements. There are also hay meadow management and creation opportunities, along with protection of extensive ridge and

²⁶ Strategic River Corridors Initiative (2004) EMRA

²⁷ 6Cs Green Infrastructure Strategy, (2010), EMRA

²⁸ Space 4 Trees: The East Midlands Regional Forestry Framework (2005) East Midlands Regional Forestry Framework Steering Group

²⁹ East Midlands Strategic River Corridors Survey (2004) EMRA

furrow, including some important examples with associated earthworks. In the east of the area on lighter land there is important limestone grassland³⁰.

Through understanding the strategic green infrastructure needs of the Borough, environmental works carried out in areas such as HLS Target Areas can be directed to deliver broader green infrastructure benefits including landscape and biodiversity connectivity for communities and wildlife.

As mentioned the above growth will mean increased usage of the Borough's natural resources, many of which should be considered sensitive. Sustainable Accessible Natural Green Space (SANGS) are an ideal way of reducing this impact and creating space for biodiversity to thrive in an accessible environment. Locating SANGS can be directed by the spatial needs identified in the strategy.

The Borough of Melton does not currently have any designated Local Nature Reserves (LNR), Natural England recommend that 1ha of LNR per 1000 people should be provided. This allows for educational opportunities as well as wildlife benefits and access to natural green space for communities. Taken literally this is a shortfall of just under 50ha of LNR (likely to increase as Melton's population grows).

Informed design within the Search Area for Growth can provide corridors for people and wildlife that connect to the existing human and wildlife movement networks, such as the disused railway lines and the Borough's green spaces.

Below is a summary of the biodiversity needs that exist within Melton and opportunities to address those needs, and the key locations where the greatest benefit can be provided.

Needs

- To improve the condition of the Borough's SSSIs
- To increase habitat patch size and connectivity
- To support and protect biodiversity resources as population increases
- To increase woodland cover in appropriate areas

Opportunities

- To enhance existing networks within new development
- To increase the biodiversity value or function for wildlife in existing green spaces
- To engage with landowners/managers to manage land in a way that contributes to the wider wildlife networks
- To identify areas for targeting grant-funding (English Woodland Grant Scheme/Higher Level Stewardship)

³⁰ HLS Target Area Statement EM14 – Stanford, Loddington and Melton Target Area Statement, (2008), Natural England

- To support the wider sub-regional and regional initiatives
- To manage land adjacent to watercourses that contributes to reducing flood risk and provides habitat for wildlife, whilst supporting the rural economy

Key Locations

- New development
- Existing green spaces
- Watercourse networks
- Areas within sub-regional corridors and urban fringe

Access, Recreation and Community Need for Greenspace

Improving access networks and access to green space are key principles of green infrastructure planning. As mentioned above access routes create opportunities for sustainable travel, to work, services and schools. They allow communities to move around in safe and traffic free environments and provide recreational opportunities and associated health benefits. Importantly they connect communities to services, surrounding countryside, green space assets and each other.

Population growth and development in Melton Borough will create a need for extra green space and connective networks. The Search Area for Growth on the periphery of the Melton Mowbray means that sustainable transport options such as cycling and walking networks are essential to sustainable development, quality of life and to reduce congestion, a key objective of the Sustainable Community Strategy³¹. There is also a need to understand the extent to which the Public Rights of Way (PROW) network meets the existing and future needs of the Borough's communities, an aim of the Rights of Improvement Plan³². Demographic change and the location of concentrations of different age groups will also have a bearing on the types green space needed and the functions they will need to provide

Access networks link spaces together and in doing so increase access to a variety of activities. Safe, traffic-free routes encourage children to participate in activities bringing health benefits and should be key considerations in planning new development and associated green spaces³³. Increasing opportunities for play and improving access and transport to those opportunities are key priorities of the Leicestershire Children and Young People's Plan³⁴.

The Open space, sport and recreation study³⁵ identified a shortfall in five types of open space in the Borough when considering population growth. Parks and Gardens, Natural and Semi-Natural Greenspace, Amenity Greenspace, Allotments and Play Areas were all

³¹ Melton Sustainable Community Strategy 2008-2013, (2008), Melton Community Partnership

³² Rights of Way Improvement Plan for Leicestershire 2006-2011, (2006), Leicestershire County Council

³³ Routes to Play – A Guide for Local Authorities, (2009), Sustrans

³⁴ Leicestershire Children and Young People's Plan 2008-2011, (2008), Leicestershire County Council

³⁵ Open Space Assessment – Update Report, (2011), KKP for Melton Borough Council

shown to be less than the recommended provision required for the Borough's expected population in 2026.

There are several areas within the Borough that suffer from comparatively poor health, although at a national level these areas are only within the top 40% for health deprivation (Figure 4.6). The most health deprived wards in Melton are the eastern area of Warwick Ward, the northern area of the Dorian Ward, the northern area of the Egerton Ward and the western area of the Craven Ward.

An analysis of research material by the Faculty of Public Health in association with Natural England confirms that there is an existing and growing body of evidence to show that 'contact with safe green spaces can improve a number of aspects of mental and physical wellbeing as well as various social and environmental indicators'³⁶ They include;

- A reduction in symptoms of poor mental health and stress, and improvement in mental wellbeing across all age groups
- Increased levels of physical activity in all ages
- May contribute to reduced health inequalities
- Increased levels of communal activity across different social groups as well as increased residents' satisfaction with their local area

³⁶ Great Outdoors: How Our Natural Health Service Uses Green Space to Improve Wellbeing, (2010), Faculty of Public Health

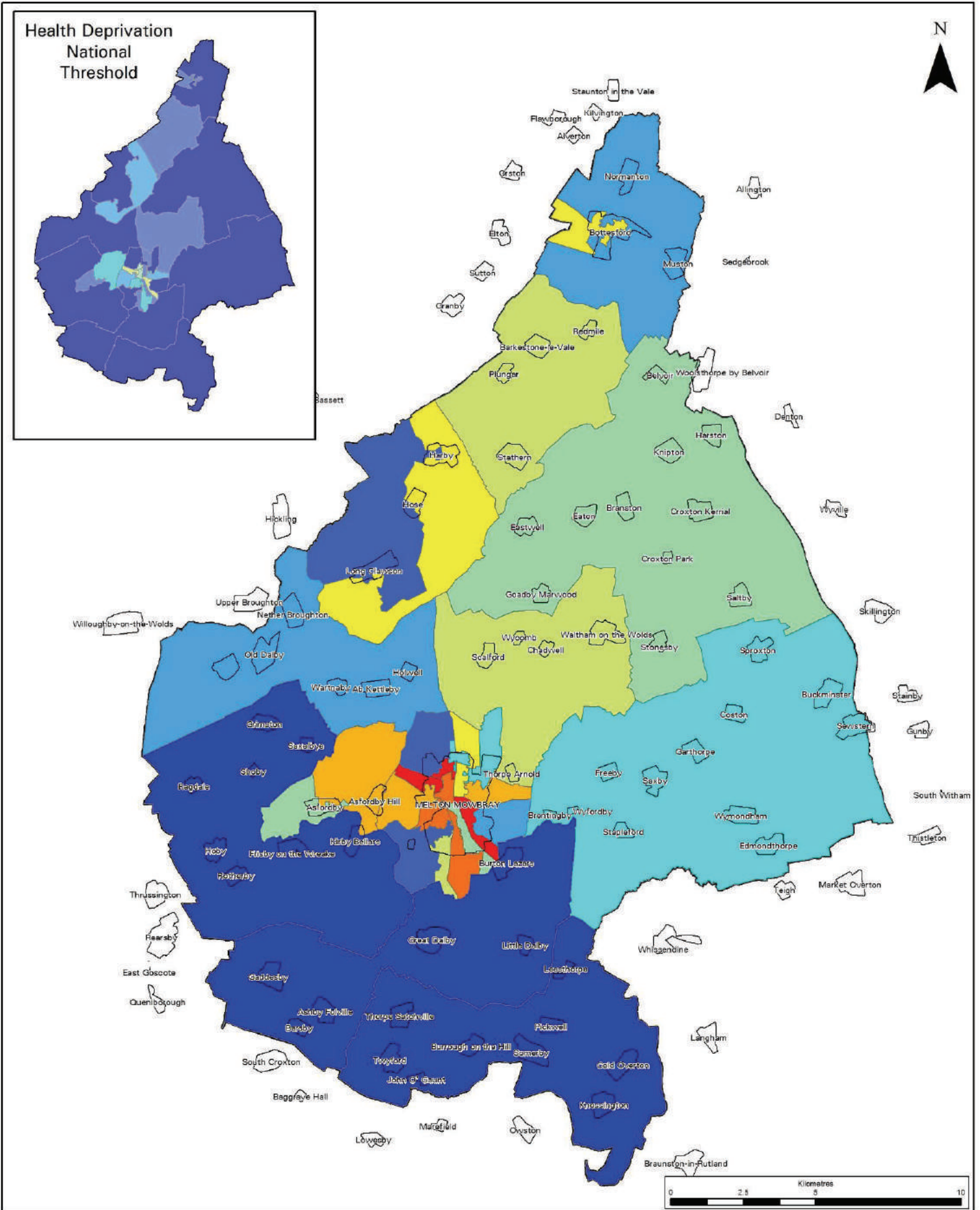


Figure 4.6 Health Deprivation IMD2007 Melton Borough

Health Deprivation IMD 2007
Borough Threshold

Lowest Highest

Melton Borough Boundary

TEP Melton Borough Council

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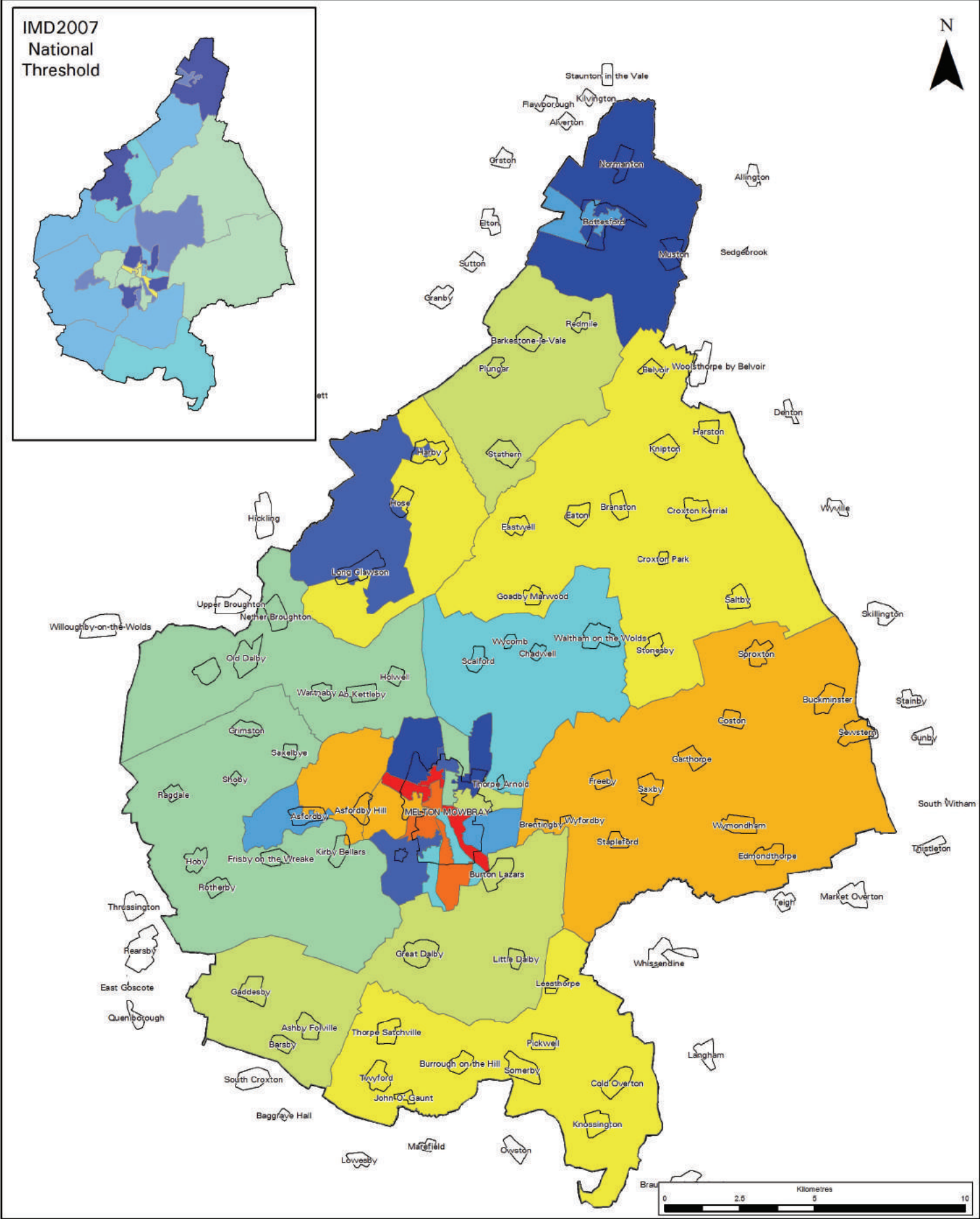




Figure 4.7 Multiple Deprivation IMD2007 Melton Borough

<p>Multiple Deprivation IMD 2007 Borough Threshold</p> <p>Lowest Highest</p>		<p> Melton Borough Boundary</p>	 
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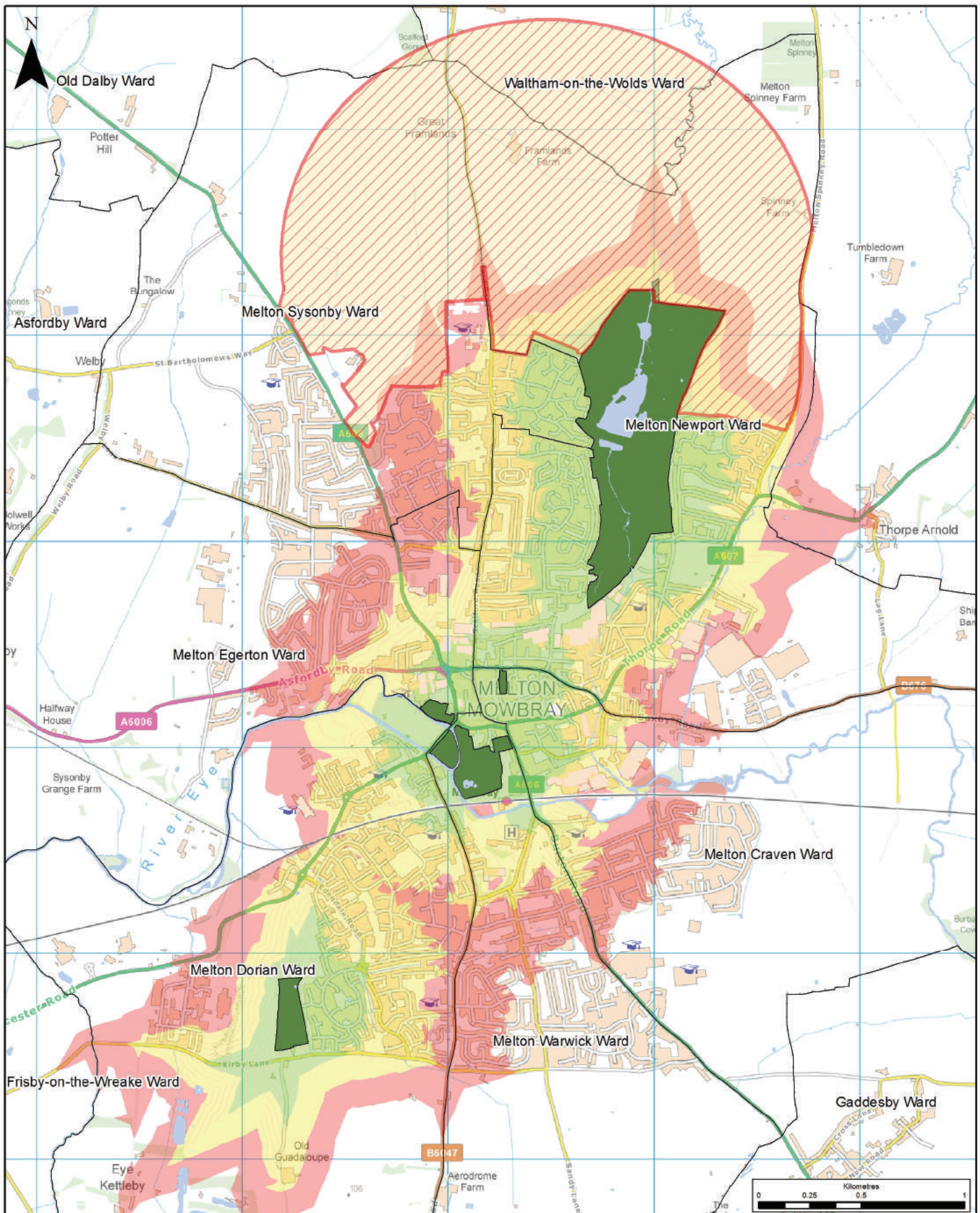


Figure 4.8 Pedestrian Access to Parks and Gardens



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Times based on an average walking speed of 3 miles per hour.
Using roads, footpaths & cycleways

Understanding the spatial distribution of Melton's green infrastructure assets and distances from neighbourhoods to the various green space and recreation assets is vital in identifying the level of provision and potential gaps in that provision.

Figure 4.8 shows the relative times taken to walk to the Melton Mowbray's parks and gardens, periods of 5, 10 and 15 minutes have been used. There are two areas that are more than 15 minutes walk away from a publically accessible park or garden, the north west (Sysonby and Egerton Wards) and south east of the town (Warwick and Craven Wards).

In addition to this, parts of the proposed Search Area for Growth are more than 15 minutes from a publically accessible garden, despite the proximity of the Country Park. Access routes through the Search Area for Growth will reduce the time taken to reach the park, such routes should be integral to the layout of the Search Area for Growth and the potential for expanding the park northwards will further improve accessibility subject to masterplanning and design of the SUE.

There is some correlation between the areas that display poor health levels and those that are more than 15 minutes from an accessible park or garden.

Figure 4.9 provides an analysis of the locations and relative travelling times for equipped children's play areas. Whilst these play areas are well spread across the town there are still neighbourhoods that remain some distance from such sites.

The Borough's own guidance suggests that it should take no more than 5 minutes on foot to reach an equipped play area from a home. The Open Space Study research suggests that people would be willing to walk between 5 and 10 minutes to an equipped play area. A substantial amount of the town's neighbourhoods are further than five minutes away from an equipped play area. Development within the Search Area for Growth will require additional provision for this type of space. The area that stands out as being under-supplied is around the Ankle Hill neighbourhood. Whilst there is no equipped area there is opportunity for provision on the playing fields close to Blythe Avenue.

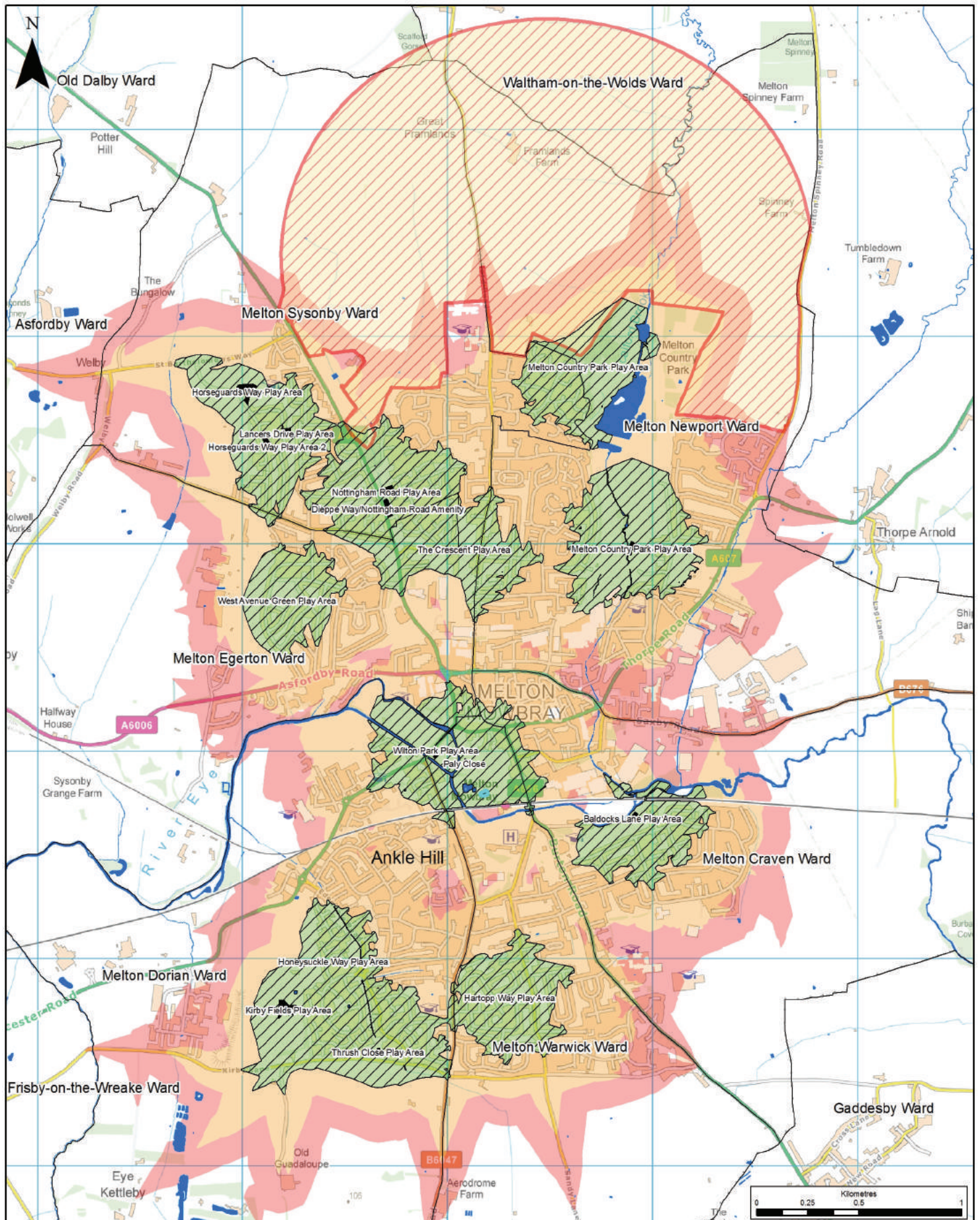


Figure 4.9 Pedestrian Access to Equipped Children's Play Areas

- Search Area for Growth
- 5 Minute Walkzone
- Play Areas
- 0 - 5 minutes
- 5 - 10 minutes
- 10 - 15 minutes

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Times based on an average walking speed of 3 miles per hour.
Using roads, footpaths and cycleways

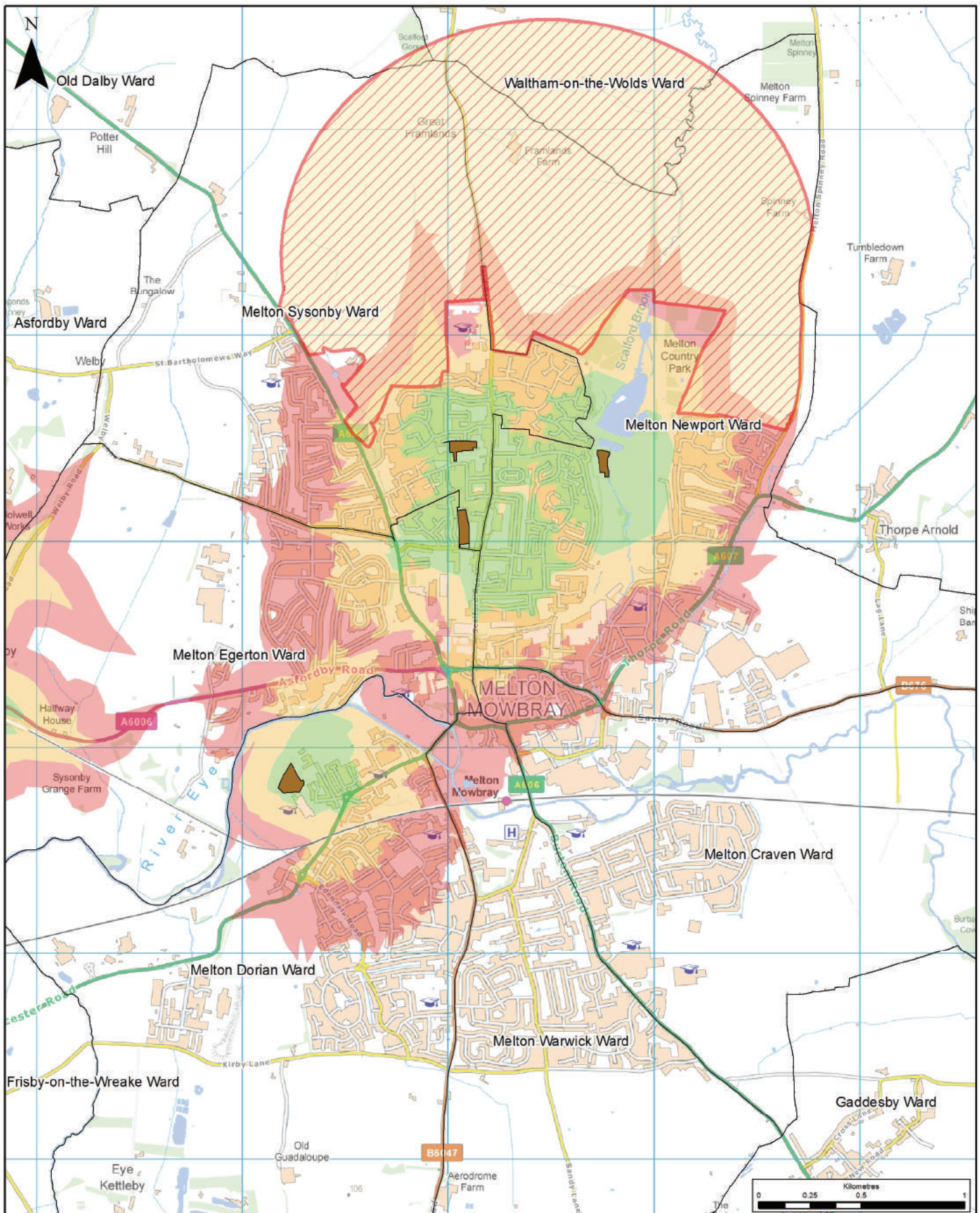


Figure 4.10 Pedestrian Access to Allotments - Walking Times

- Allotments
- 0 - 5 minutes
- 5 - 10 minutes
- 10 - 15 minutes
- Search Area for Growth



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Times based on an average walking speed of 3 miles per hour.
Using roads, footpaths and cycleways

Allotments (Figure 4.10) are also poorly distributed across Melton Mowbray, with several neighbourhoods more than 15 minutes³⁷ from an allotment, with the south east poorly provided for. Allotments provide more than just produce, they are places of community interaction, opportunities to exercise and contribute towards mitigation against climate change through reducing food miles. The proposed 1000 homes to be developed in the Search Area for Growth will require additional allotments; this would also provide improved coverage for the north/northwest of the town. The lack of allotment provision in the south west could be addressed by expanding Kirby Park to include some allotment space. New development in the south east of Melton Mowbray should make provision for allotments.

The attractiveness of spaces and access routes to those spaces is an important factor in the continued use and respect of these spaces. In several locations across Melton Mowbray these routes are less than ideal and would benefit from improved signage and more attractive gateways. Two examples of such areas are shown below.

Figure 4.11 Entrance to green space at War Memorial Hospital



Figure 4.12 Southern gateway to Melton Country Park

³⁷ The Open Space Survey suggests that respondents are willing to walk 15 minutes to an allotment

The Woodland Trust 'Spaces for People'³⁸ research found that across the Borough of Melton 87.9% of the population are more than 500m away from a 2ha+ accessible woodland and 64.4% are more than 4km from a 20ha+ accessible woodland, based on the Woodland Trust's aspirational Woodland Standards. To meet these standards in the Borough an additional 113ha would need to be planted to meet the 2ha+ standard and 140ha for the 20ha+ standard.

To summarise, there are several areas of greenspace provision that will need to be improved to ensure that Melton's communities can have access to a number of recreational opportunities. The creation of LNRs, increased access to woodland, adoption of neighbourhood spaces and new greenspace provision will allow for the sustainable expansion of Melton Mowbray providing that meets the needs of the existing and expected population.

Needs

- To use and locate GI effectively to support a reduction in health deprivation
- Ensure provision and access is equitable across the Borough
- To ensure that green and open spaces contribute to the health and mental well-being of the Borough's communities
- To ensure that green and open spaces are connected to the sustainable transport network
- To ensure existing green and open space and recreational networks are not over-pressured by increasing population numbers

Opportunities

- To develop access to semi-natural green space along the river corridor
- To increase functionality of local green spaces to reflect local needs such as an equipped play area at Blythe Avenue/Ankle Hill
- To include recreational opportunities within the wider strategic and local green infrastructure networks
- To create of new green and open spaces in areas of deficiency and development, such as extending the country park and access opportunities to it, such as allotments in the Kirby Park area

Key Locations for Green Infrastructure Intervention

- River corridor
- New development, specifically the Search Area for Growth
- Melton Mowbray (north west and south east)
- Gateways to green space and access networks

³⁸ Spaces for People: Targeting action for woodland access, (2010), Woodland Trust

Chapter 5: Strategic and Borough Green Infrastructure Priorities

Green infrastructure is about identifying, protecting, conserving, enhancing and extending healthy environments, and the many benefits the Borough's variety of natural, green and open spaces can deliver. The quality of the environment is an essential component in providing a quality of place for living, working and relaxing. Melton Borough has some outstanding urban and rural landscapes, but is under pressure to provide additional homes as well as associated and improved built (or 'grey') infrastructure facilities, and over time will become increasingly under threat from the impacts of climate change.

Green infrastructure will support successful and sustainable growth in Melton Borough by:

- Supporting healthy, sustainable and cohesive communities by;
 - Improved health through exercise and recreation and reduced airborne pollution
 - Reduced reliance on private motorised transport
 - Provide opportunities for community interaction and improve sense of place and community pride
- Protecting and promoting local distinctiveness, heritage and cultural assets by;
 - Preserving important natural landscape elements
 - Connecting heritage and cultural assets to the wider access network
- Adapting to and mitigating against the effects of climate change by;
 - Reducing flood risk
 - Reducing emissions from transport
 - Countering the effects of the urban 'heat island' effect
- Enabling urban and rural economic growth and sustainable prosperity by;
 - Attracting investment
 - Retaining skilled workers
 - Increased visitor expenditure (including locals)
- Protecting, enhancing and extending biodiversity resources and natural networks; by
 - Improving habitat connectivity
 - Increasing habitat size and quality

The priorities for Melton Borough's green infrastructure are described in three ways:

- A set of overarching key priorities that govern the planning and delivery of green infrastructure in the Borough, that contributes to quality of life in the Borough, increasing sustainability, reducing the impacts of climate change and improving health and well being.
- A spatial plan for green infrastructure in the Borough, with more detailed plans outlining proposals for green infrastructure in Melton Mowbray.
- A series of recommended interventions addressing those issues of Borough-wide relevance, such as flooding, access, landscape protection and biodiversity, together with more locally specific recommendations for Melton Mowbray, will provide a greater degree of detail and specific actions that are appropriate to the settlement and its communities.
- Throughout, specific recommendations are made for particular (named) areas. Developments in those areas should demonstrate that these specific green infrastructure recommendations have been taken into account in its design and form.

Green infrastructure planning and interventions require an understanding of the existing resource and the gaps or opportunities that exist within it. It is also important to set out from the beginning the objectives and priorities within which those actions are to be planned. The previous chapters have provided an insight into the existing resource of the Borough and many of the issues that affect it, both socio-economic and environmental.

The Priorities that have emerged through the research, analysis and stakeholder consultation are centred on the drivers for changes identified in Chapter 4; the priorities for green infrastructure planning in Melton are;

- To ensure development can take place without impacting on communities and the environment
- To reduce and mitigate against the causes of, and the negative effects of climate change
- To support the wider 6Cs Green Infrastructure Strategy and Action Plan and neighbouring authorities' GI strategies
- To protect and enhance the Borough's biodiversity resource
- To ensure that the Borough's communities have access to well maintained, usable green spaces that meet the various needs of the community

The nature of the Borough's geography, settlement patterns and external influences such as the 6Cs GI strategy and climate change require a multi-level approach with delivery and planning of GI at different scales, ranging from the wider strategic planning needed to help deliver the 6Cs Strategy, through to the changes made in local green space management needed to maximise the benefits of green spaces to local communities. Through planning local actions whilst keeping in mind the wider strategic needs of the Borough, we can ensure that small actions /projects carried out at the neighbourhood and settlement scales each contribute to the greater goal of a sustainable, clean, healthy and accessible environment.

With this in mind, two scales of action are suggested, strategic and local. The strategic priorities are Borough-wide and the local are oriented towards delivery of GI in Melton Mowbray. The local actions are also intended to contribute towards and complement Borough-wide priorities. The networks illustrated on Figure 5.1 are those areas where actions on the ground can deliver the greatest benefit, due to concentrations of biodiversity resources and environmental processes. This does not however exclude the need for environmental improvement across the rest of the Borough and actions and proposals for GI enhancement outside of the core network are to be supported.

Details of the actions proposed, potential funding streams and partnership can be found in the Appendix.

Green Infrastructure Enhancement Areas

- Priority**
1. Burrough Hill Country Park
 2. River Wreake and River Eye Strategic River Corridor
 3. Newark to Market Harborough Dismantled Railway
 4. Melton Mowbray Network
SUE Green Corridor
Melton Mowbray Country Park
 5. Grantham Canal
 6. Jubilee Way
 7. Wolds Escarpment

- Secondary**
8. Gaddesby Brook
 9. Scaford Brook Network
 10. Sproxtan to Scaford
 11. Edmondthorpe to Thistleton
 12. Bottesford and Muston
 13. Buckminster Woodlands
 14. Watercourse Buffering (Borough-wide)
 15. Woodland Enhancement (Borough-wide)

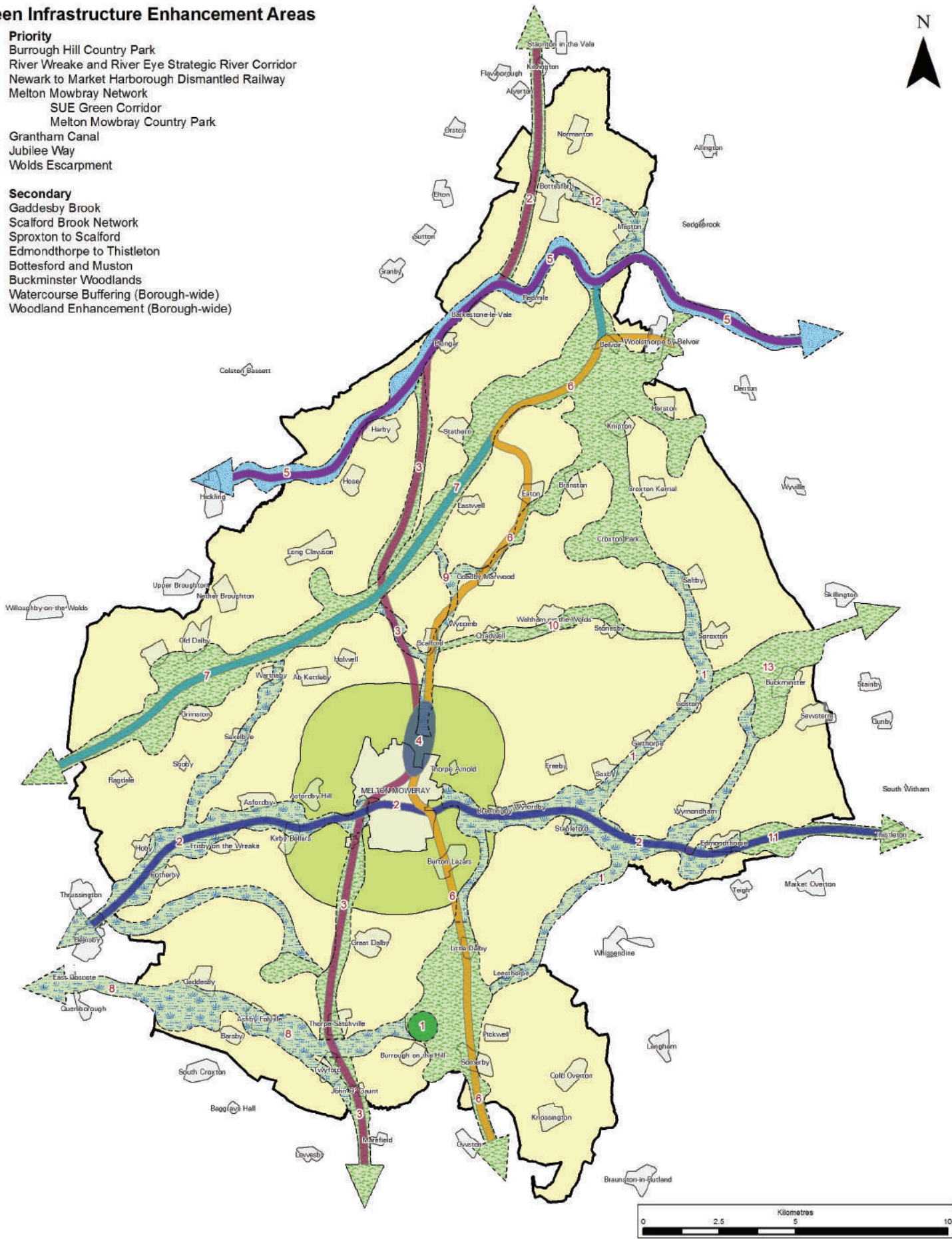



Figure 5.1 Melton Borough Strategic Green Infrastructure


Priority Green Infrastructure Enhancement Areas

- Burrough Hill Country Park
- Grantham Canal
- Jubilee Way
- Melton Mowbray Country Park & SUE Green Corridor (See Figure 5.2)
- Newark to Market Harborough Dismantled Railway
- Wolds Escarpment
- River Wreake/River Eye Strategic River Corridor

Ecological Network

- Canal Corridor
- River Corridor Buffering, Wet Meadows, Floodplain Restoration, Washlands
- Woodland, Lowland Meadows
- Melton Urban Fringe Enhancement Area
- Settlements
- Melton Borough Boundary





Melton Borough Council

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Melton Borough Strategic Green Infrastructure

Melton's Strategic Green Infrastructure brings together access, biodiversity and ecosystem services. Access improvements alongside biodiversity enhancement are shown on Figure 5.1. These improvements are planned within an extensive landscape-scale habitat network that spans the Borough and connects to neighbouring green infrastructure resources. They have been prioritised to create flagship projects and the secondary projects support the network and priority enhancement areas. Detailed descriptions of the types of actions required can be found in Chapter 7.

Priority Green Infrastructure Enhancement Areas

- Burrough Hill Country Park
- River Wreake Strategic River Corridor
- Newark to Market Harborough Dismantled Railway
- Melton Mowbray Country Park
- Sustainable Urban Extension Green Corridor
- Grantham Canal
- Jubilee Way
- The Wolds Escarpment

Secondary Green Infrastructure Enhancement Areas

- Gaddesby Brook
- Scalford Brook and Feeder Streams
- Sproxton to Scalford
- Edmondthorpe to Thistleton
- Bottesford and Muston
- Buckminster Woodlands
- Watercourse Buffering
- Woodland Buffering

1. Priority Green Infrastructure Enhancement Area – Burrough Hill Country Park

This country park is one of several major green infrastructure assets within the Borough. It has cultural, historic and wildlife value and located close to the Jubilee Way promoted path and surrounded by several small attractive villages. This site should be promoted as a destination, with circular access routes, improved signage and enhanced visitor infrastructure will make this sub-regional GI asset a 'full day' visitor attraction.

Working with adjacent landowners/managers to enhance and expand existing

habitats and improve the aesthetic quality of the entrance and approach to the site will; further increase its value to Melton and the wider sub-region.

2. Priority Green Infrastructure Enhancement Area – River Wreake & River Eye Strategic River Corridor

The Rivers Eye and Wreake corridor is an integral element of the wider 6Cs GI network (sub-regional corridor). It contributes to the Borough's and sub-region's biodiversity resource and has the potential to provide access to nature for the communities of the Borough, specifically those in the east of Melton Mowbray, which currently has limited provision for this.

The lower section of the Eye, just before it enters Melton Mowbray is designated as a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI). The Eye is however subject to a number of different threats to its ecological value. Foremost among these is land use along the river. Diffuse pollution and sedimentation are the two main issues affecting the Eye.

Through creating a buffer of natural vegetation along its length we can help to reduce these influences on water quality. These buffers could be in the form of washlands or flood meadows, or perhaps where the use of the land is unable to accommodate these measures a narrow strip along the bank. Reducing access to the river by farm stock is also important in reducing sedimentation and stabilising the river bank.

On low-grade agricultural land adjacent to river there may be the opportunity for the cultivation of short-rotation coppice for wood-fuel. Short-rotation coppice can provide cover for game birds and other fauna moving along the river corridor.

The River Eye corridor is a Higher Level Stewardship Target Area, highlighting its importance as a biodiversity resource. Improving access, biodiversity value, understanding and appreciation of nature and the rural environment would be key outcomes of an integrated approach to managing this river corridor.

The streams and field drains that feed into the Eye should also be protected from stock and buffered from other land-uses.

The River Wreake as the continuation of the River Eye is part of the 'Sub-Regional Green Infrastructure Corridors' within the 6Cs area. Feeding into the Soar and eventually the Trent, it is vital that its water quality is kept at a high

level. In addition to its ecological network function the Wreake corridor has the potential to become a major recreational resource for the Borough.

Along the river, away from public access needs the vegetation should be left to form a buffer along which wildlife can move. Development within the town should be controlled along the river corridor and should be sympathetic to visual amenity and wildlife needs.

The streams and field drains that feed into the Wreake should also be protected from farm stock and buffered from other land-uses

3. Priority Green Infrastructure Enhancement Area - Newark-on-Trent to Market Harborough Dismantled Railway Corridor

This dismantled railway corridor is a good example of multifunctional green infrastructure, having along its length a number of sections providing access and recreation opportunities. However some sections do not have the same level of access or biodiversity value. Consultation revealed this route to be considered as key future element of the wider GI network and it is consistent with the city-scale corridors and Urban Fringe Enhancement Zones within the 6Cs GI Strategy.

To maximise the potential of this corridor, habitat and access enhancement will be required along its length. It may be the case that access will not be possible on some sections due to development or land use, however alternatives will be sought to supplement access using the existing Public Rights of Way Network or negotiate access close to the route.

4. Primary Green Infrastructure Enhancement Area – Melton Mowbray Country Park and SUE Green Corridor

Melton Mowbray Country Park is on the Borough's most important and most used green infrastructure assets. It is a multifunctional green space offering active/passive recreation, sustainable transport/access, wildlife interest and flood control. Limiting the use of the park is perhaps the access to it, entrances in the south of the park and the main entrance in the north could be better signposted and more inviting. Signage and interpretation within the park is also limited, especially considering its location on the strategic access routes of the Jubilee Way and the Newark to Market Harborough Dismantled Railway.

The Scafford brook natural corridor leading into the park has considerable wildlife flood control value and development in the valley floor may compromise this. The provision of a Green Corridor directly to the north would greatly

increase the recreational options for existing and incoming residents. It would also strengthen the value of the Country Park, reducing the impact on increased user numbers.

Key improvements in these two areas should be centred on improving access infrastructure such as signage, specifically directional and interpretation.

Entrances to the Country Park and the Green Corridor should be enhanced and improved directional signage from the town centre and from within the Sustainable Urban Extension should be provided. Alongside the brook, wildlife areas should be created to provide undisturbed breeding and forage.

5. Priority Green Infrastructure Enhancement Area - Grantham Canal

Recognised as a sub-regional corridor within the 6Cs Strategy and with a high level of biodiversity, access and heritage value, the Grantham Canal is an important part of the local and wider strategic green infrastructure network. The canal provides a natural corridor between Grantham and the Trent Valley and passes through several biodiversity rich areas, including; the Muston Meadows NNR. Part of the canal itself is designated as a SSSI, although its condition is affected by diffuse pollution and siltation. A programme of habitat enhancement, dialogue with adjacent landowners and access improvements is needed to maximise the benefits that this corridor can provide.

6. Primary Green Infrastructure Enhancement Area – The Jubilee Way

The Leighfield Forest is set to become a major 6Cs GI asset, set partly within the Borough, providing access to nature and biodiversity interest (over 40% is SSSI). Improving the landscape-scale connections through habitat creation and enhancement along the Jubilee Way will be a long-term goal of the Borough's GI Strategy. This habitat connectivity will supplement the access improvements recommended. Planting close to or buffering woodlands will reinforce the landscape character of this part of the Borough and help our woodland wildlife adapt to and be less vulnerable to climate change. The Leighfield Forest area is also within the Forestry Commission's Woodland Bird Target Area, and additional grant funding is available for woodland management that is for the benefit of woodland birds.

To the north of Melton Mowbray the Jubilee Way passes through Scalford, Goadby Marwood, Eaton and Belvoir. Enhancements to the route should include signage (interpretation and directional), improved access such as easy access gates/stiles.

7. Priority Green Infrastructure Enhancement Area – The Wolds Escarpment

The Wolds and Scarp Landscape Character Area contains a large amount of the Borough's Priority Habitat and Sites of Ecological Importance, specifically Lowland Meadows and woodland, and is an important habitat for a number of declining farmland and woodland birds.

The area is also the catchment and/or source for a number of streams that feed into the Wreake, Eye and the Trent system. The large amount of priority habitat requires that this area should be a key element of the GI network. Improved connectivity through the re-establishment of priority habitats, such as meadows and woodland planting will ensure that the existing habitats remain viable and less vulnerable to pressure such as climate change.

Enhancement to the woodland resource in this area will complement the programme of woodland improvement and management for wildlife that is being carried out within the woodlands of the Belvoir Estate.

Where appropriate access along the Wolds Escarpment should be enhanced to include signage and ease of use.

Secondary Green Infrastructure Enhancement Area

These form part of the corridors that connect the green infrastructure assets of the Borough and contribute towards the wider 6Cs GI Network. Within these networks numerous projects/actions can be carried out to improve their functionality, such as habitat enhancement/creation, washland creation, and access improvements. They have been selected through the needs and opportunity assessment and for their deliverability, i.e. part of a wider programme or availability of funding schemes.

8. Secondary Green Infrastructure Enhancement Area - Gaddesby Brook

Located in the south west of the Borough, this watercourse is a feeder for the Wreake/Soar system. It is also a connecting natural feature in the landscape and a Local Site of Ecological and Geological Interest.

Land management along its length has the potential to affect water quality through diffuse pollution and sedimentation. Buffering of the river course and

an increase of natural vegetation has the potential to reduce the rate of soil and nutrient loss in the watercourse and increase biodiversity.

Changes to land management through the Catchment Sensitive Farming Scheme can reduce the impact of farm-based pollutants entering the watercourse. Reducing the ability of farm stock to use the watercourse can also benefit water quality and bank stability. Grant funding is available to address this issue.

Opportunities for reducing flood risk along this river could be provided by washlands and increased use of the adjacent land for flood storage. The creation of washlands/wet meadows and/or wet woodland will enhance the Borough's biodiversity and improve water quality.

9. Secondary Green Infrastructure Enhancement Area - Scalford Brook Network

Flowing into the Melton Mowbray Country Park from the countryside to the north, the Scalford Brook is one of the few landscape-scale corridors in the Borough. It feeds into the main lake at the Country Park which has become an important biodiversity resource and provides habitat for water voles and an over-wintering location for wildfowl.

A new development to the north of Melton Mowbray has the potential to affect the Scalford Brook, to alter its flow rate during peak rainfall or for sediment and pollutant infiltration. More positively development within the Search Area for Growth could be beneficial for the Brook, and the wildlife and people that use it. Creation of rainfall catchment areas or Sustainable Drainage Systems SUDs along the river will create more natural and/or semi-natural habitat for the wildlife of the valley and a buffer for pollutants and interception for sediment.

The development of road infrastructure to support new communities in the Search Area for Growth should be designed to allow as much access along the brook as possible. To the north of the Search Area for Growth opportunities should be taken to increase the riverside vegetation corridor and reduce access for stock.

10. Secondary Green Infrastructure Enhancement Area - Sproxton to Scalford

Being on the Mowbray Way the Scalford to Sproxton route network is already a promoted one. Opportunities should be taken along this route to reinforce the landscape character of the area. This should be in the form of hedgerow repair and planting or creating wildflower dominated field margins. This will not only improve the visual amenity of the route but provide habitat and cover for farmland birds and other wildlife.

11. Secondary Green Infrastructure Enhancement Area - Edmondthorpe to Thistleton

Around Edmondthorpe exists a substantial woodland resource made up of blocks of woodland and connective strips along watercourses, field boundaries and road network. Through increasing the woodland cover, particularly to the east of Edmondthorpe we have the opportunity to create a woodland corridor that connects to the larger woodland resource in neighbouring South Kesteven and Rutland.

12. Secondary Green Infrastructure Enhancement Area - Bottesford & Muston River Devon Corridor

Bottesford and Muston are located astride the River Devon which feeds into the River Trent at Newark. The Devon is an important element within the Newark and Sherwood Green Infrastructure Network. Through measures undertaken within Melton, the Borough can support the ecological function of the Devon and the wider Newark and Sherwood GI Network, providing the cross-boundary cooperation vital in securing and enhancing our environmental resource.

These measures could include the creation of flood meadows/washlands along the river. The creation of flood storage ponds in the context of nearby development allows the opportunity for the creation of wildlife rich area within access of communities.

Outside of the settlements within the agricultural surrounds there are further opportunities to improve the functionality and vitality of the river. Grange Farm just to the south of Newark is a good example of land management that benefits biodiversity and reduces flood risk whilst maintaining productivity within a farming environment.

13. Secondary Green Infrastructure Enhancement Area - Buckminster Woodlands

Around Buckminster there is a comparatively large amount of woodland compared to other areas of the Borough. It is here where an increase in the uptake of woodland grant schemes and enhanced management of the existing woodland resource will have a high level of benefit for biodiversity. An increase in woodland area will also lessen the potential exposure to the negative effects of a changing climate.

14. Secondary Green Infrastructure Enhancement Area - Watercourse Buffering (Borough-wide)

This is a general action that should be carried out along as many of the Borough's watercourses as possible, and also includes drains. Where possible and appropriate a corridor of natural vegetation should be retained along the watercourse, this will aid water quality and wildlife movement.

Opportunities should be sought to create washlands and/or flood storage areas along the Borough's water courses to enhance biodiversity and reduce run-off

15. Secondary Green Infrastructure Enhancement Area - Woodland Buffering (Borough-wide)

The larger the woodland the more species it can support, indeed some woodland species are dependent on a large area of woodland. Where appropriate and without detriment to landscape character, existing woodlands can be expanded through new planting. While an increase in all woodland area would be of benefit to biodiversity, recreation opportunities and mitigating against climate change, the priority should be for semi-natural ancient woodland, current areas of which are located in the south of the Borough.

Strategic Access Network Enhancement and Creation

Figure 5.1 illustrates a number of strategic access networks that complement the existing access network and 6Cs GI Strategy. Five key routes have been identified, each of which is set along existing routes and/or natural corridors and is planned to provide access to important natural, heritage and community assets and existing and potential visitor assets.

The five routes are;

The Wreake/Eye River Corridor

Jubilee Way

Newark to Market Harborough Dismantled Railway

Wolds Escarpment

Grantham Canal

Planning policy should promote developments and initiatives that would complement the strategic access network such as visitor destinations along a route. Planning policy should seek to refuse development deemed to

compromise the network function and/or future function. Where appropriate, i.e. within large-scale developments, developer contributions could be sought to improve the strategic access network.

Enhancement measures should include, where appropriate;

- Habitat creation/enhancement
- Signage and interpretation
- Multi-user surfaces

Access through agricultural land should be developed in combination with farm environment schemes and woodland creation and potential washland/flood storage.

Melton Mowbray Green Infrastructure Network

The following recommendations for green infrastructure projects and initiatives are for the settlement of Melton Mowbray as this is where the greatest change , and therefore need, is concentrated. However, the types of projects and the broad principles could be applied in other areas of Melton Mowbray and indeed to any of the Borough's settlements. The locations illustrated on Figure 5.2 are those where the evidence and research suggests the greatest public benefit can be achieved, these are therefore priority areas.

For example, projects such as 'Gateways to Greenspace' are equally applicable throughout the Borough's settlements and would bring added value to the strategic access network. Opportunities to enhance or create habitats will also contribute to the strategic green infrastructure network.

1. Sustainable Urban Extension Green Corridor

Melton Mowbray's population is set to increase and the major part of this growth will be located to the north of the town in the Proposed Area of Growth. To support the recreational needs of the incoming residents, provide additional accessible natural green space for existing residents and to reduce the impact of development on the surrounding environment, a Green Corridor is proposed.

This corridor naturally lends itself to be located directly to the north of Melton Mowbray Country Park. It has associations with the Scalford Brook, Dismantled Railway Line and the Jubilee Way. The corridor should be multifunctional in nature providing access to green space, flood/rainfall storage and wildlife value.

Smaller access routes within the Proposed Area of Growth should connect to the Green Corridor, delivering opportunities for traffic-free access to the town centre and transport hubs.

2. Melton Mowbray Country Park

The Country Park is Melton Mowbray's premier green infrastructure asset, providing access to natural green space for much of the town's residents. A number of enhancements could improve its value to those people and visitors to the town and indeed to the Borough.

Key improvements should be the quality of the access and gateways to the park at those locations indicated on Figure 5.2. Following the development of the green corridor, there should be seamless access between the Park and the Corridor. Improved signage will encourage the use of the park as a sustainable transport route to the town centre and northwards towards the settlements of Scalford, Goadby Marwood, Eaton and the Belvoir Estate area.

3. New Accessible Community Woodland

Public access to woodlands is an important element of improving access to natural green space. Currently Melton does not meet any of the Woodland Trust 'Accessible Woodland Standards'. These standards are *aspirational* but the 'Spaces for People' report suggests that 113ha is needed to meet the 2ha+ within 500m standard. The report also states that some 87.9% of the Borough's population are more than 500m away from accessible woodland.

Melton Mowbray is located in a Forestry Commission 'Quality of Place' target area, meaning that additional funding for woodland creation is available, specifically for publically accessible woodland.

Opportunities close to Melton Mowbray within the Urban Fringe Enhancement Zone should be sought for the planting of new community woodlands. Ideally these should be close to the existing public rights of way network and residential neighbourhoods, and located on the least productive agricultural land. Figure 5.2 shows search areas with the greatest potential for new woodland planting to deliver biodiversity and community benefits.

4. Gateways to Greenspace

Access to greenspace is not simply a matter of providing new open spaces or the enhancement of existing spaces. Improving access must include ensuring that entrances or gateways to those spaces are clearly defined and inviting to the people for whom they are intended.

Gateways should provide information about what can be found in the space and access routes through the space, importantly they should inform the user of wider access routes that can be reached. Often interpretation at these gateways is themed, such as heritage or natural interest. Street trees and/or other greening should guide potential users to the space.

The gateways shown on Figure 5.2 are those considered to be a priority in Melton Mowbray.

5. Creation of Local Nature Reserves (LNRs)

Currently Melton Borough does not have any declared Local Nature Reserves. Natural England recommends that for every 1000 people at least 1ha of Local Nature Reserve should be provided. This means that Melton would require around 50ha of LNR to meet this standard. The 17% projected increase in population will mean that by 2026, 57ha of LNR will be needed under the current Natural England recommendations.

Within Melton there are a number of locations that could have the potential as Local Nature Reserves. They have been suggested because of their contribution to the wider strategic GI networks, both local networks and those of the 6C and their biodiversity interest. They are also in locations where they can perform other functions such as flood control and water quality.

The three search areas recommended for Local Nature Reserves are;

- East of Melton Mowbray along the River Eye
- West of Melton Mowbray along the River Wreake
- North of Melton Country Park along Scalford Brook

The Scalford Brook LNR could be created in combination with rainfall retention ponds/wetlands and accessible green space delivered through the proposed Search Area for Growth and the strategic access route along the Newark on Trent to Market Harborough dismantled railway line.

6a. Road Corridor Greening

Greening of the urban environment is a vital part of our adaptation to climate change. Shade, cooling through evapotranspiration and helping to reduce airborne pollution can be achieved through a programme of street tree planting and other greening measures.

Throughout Melton Mowbray there are numerous neighbourhoods, public spaces roadsides and business premises that provide the opportunity for increased or more diverse greening. Greening road corridors that lead into the town will

reduce airborne pollution and create a positive impression for visitors to the town.

Road verges are ideal locations for conversion to wildflower areas or tree/shrub planting. These interventions can reduce management costs, supports biodiversity, and create a positive impression for both visitors and residents alike.

6b. Potential New Roads and/or Corridor Greening

In the north of Melton Mowbray new transport infrastructure resulting from the Search Area for Growth should be screened from adjacent neighbourhoods by planting. Other potential new roads should be planned to include street trees and other natural screening as well as provision for cyclists. Key areas and routes for greening are indicated on Figure 5.2

7. Rainfall Retention and Flood Risk Reduction

Reducing the amount of urban and agricultural run-off entering both rivers and the waste water system is vital in maintaining and improving water quality. These measures also ensure that ground-water recharge remains at a level that sustains our rivers and streams during dry periods, protecting amenity, agricultural productivity and wildlife value.

Measures to reduce run-off can be applied in development and on non-developed land such as green space, brownfield land and agricultural land adjacent to rivers.

Within development measures to reduce run-off can be combined with existing natural water networks including field drains and access routes to become multifunctional in nature. The proposed Search Area for Growth will require measures to reduce run-off. Its location close to the Scalford Brook and Melton Country Park means that environmental, community and biodiversity needs can be addressed through well-planned rainfall storage areas along multi-user access routes.

8. Neighbourhood Adoption of Greenspace and Additional Green Space Provision

There is currently some deficiency in some types of green space; allotment provision amongst other green space types for example is unevenly distributed in Melton Mowbray. New development should seek to increase provision to make up existing shortfalls highlighted in the Open Spaces Assessment Report³⁹ and to provide for new communities.

³⁹ Open Spaces Assessment Report – Update Report (2011), Knight, Kavanagh and Page for Melton Borough Council

In some cases elements of the existing green space resource could be managed in a different way to address some of the current shortfall. Community adoption of green spaces can often address the green space needs of communities. Community adoption of spaces will often reduce management costs for the local authority as well helping to enhance quality of place and a sense of belonging.

All of Melton Mowbray's neighbourhoods have the potential for the adoption of green spaces by the local community or changes to current management practices. Grant funding is currently available for community adoption of spaces. Those neighbourhoods with large open spaces with the highest potential for community adoption of open space are shown on Figure 5.2

Other areas outside of the settled area indicated on Figure 5.2 should be considered for flood storage as permanent or seasonal wetland areas. Creation of flood storage through wetland or wet meadows along the River Eye is consistent with the biodiversity needs of the watercourse and current available grant funding.

Watercourses that pass through the town should be buffered from development. Where watercourses are currently culverted, planning policy should seek to de-culvert watercourses within new development layout.

9. Supporting Tourism

Within the envelope of Melton Mowbray, the River Eye the Wreake and the disused canal section provide an important corridor through the built-up area for wildlife. This corridor also has the potential to support the tourism interest of the town. Currently however the river corridor and section of canal is a passive element of the visitor attraction with limited access and interest. Opportunities should be sought to increase visitor interest of the river corridor, this could be through interpretation or use of the river itself for tours. Making a visit to Melton Mowbray could be a 'Whole Day' experience and the use of the river as an attraction can help achieve this.

10. Multi-User Access Routes

Improvements to the existing access network and additional routes will be necessary to ensure that the town's current and future residents will have the maximum opportunity to enjoy the town's green spaces and sustainable transport alternatives.

The key routes for enhancement, in conjunction with improved gateways are illustrated on Figure 5.2 These routes are intended to address current access needs and those of proposed new development to the north of Melton Mowbray.

The routes highlighted for improvement/creation support not only the local needs but will also be an integral element of the wider strategic networks such as the Jubilee Way and any future development of a route along the Newark on Trent to Market Harborough dismantled railway.

These routes can be created using a combination of soft and hard infrastructure and adequate and informative signage.

11. Town Centre Greening

Preserving and enhancing Melton Mowbray's town centre through green infrastructure improvements is an important aspect of maintaining its image. The town centre is a major aspect of the Borough's visitor offer, ensuring that it remains an attractive destination visually and environmentally is vital to the economy of the town and the wider Borough.

In addition to improving image and supporting the economy of the town, greening of the urban environment is vital in addressing the challenges of climate change, through providing cooling and shading.

The key areas that should be prioritised for greening are shown on Figure 5.2, these are areas that are either destinations or are currently low in green or open space or other green infrastructure elements such as street trees.

12. Habitat Enhancement, Access and Interpretation

Figure 5.2 illustrates three key areas where enhancement to existing habitats and creation of new natural or semi-natural habitats can deliver the greatest benefits to communities and wildlife.

These areas are located alongside the settlement's main watercourses and will become a valuable natural resource for the Borough. Key projects in these areas will be the re-creation of riverside habitats such as wet meadow and flood pasture, reducing access to the river for stock, addressing the land management issues that are affecting the condition of the River Eye SSSI and promoting access and providing interpretation about the natural and rural environment.

13. Search Area for Growth

The development proposed for the north of Melton Mowbray will require the designing-in of green infrastructure in a number of forms. New usable green spaces will be needed for the communities moving in to the area, and measures are needed to reduce the impact of development on the natural environment and adjacent communities.

A design brief should be considered for the whole of the Search Area for Growth to ensure that the strategic needs of the Borough are considered within the development design layout. This is necessary to ensure that each parcel or development phase is mindful of wider networks and future phases of development.

The existing green infrastructure of watercourses, hedges and access routes should guide the overall planning of the sites layout. The topography and hydrology of the area allows for the creation of rainfall storage and/or SUDS that will complement the natural network of the Green Corridor through providing natural linkages between the development and the Corridor.

The key areas and actions suggested for the Search Area for Growth area shown on Figure 5.2

14. Employment Area Greening

Well designed 'green' areas of employment have been shown to be an important factor in attracting investment. In addition to this, employment areas with green and open spaces provide a pleasant working environment for employees.

Alternative approaches to open space management such as wildflower planting and the creation of rainfall storage ponds provide spaces for relaxation and of wildlife value. The design of rainfall storage ponds in new development with people and wildlife in mind will create multi-functional and attractive spaces.

Key locations for Employment Area Greening are shown on Figure 5.2

15. Supporting Community Greening and Settlement-Wide Initiatives

Through the above initiatives and projects (illustrated in Figure 5.2) have specific geographic locations within Melton Mowbray, the principles and types of project can be applied across all of the Borough's settlements, and indeed within other locations around Melton Mowbray.

For all of the Borough's settlements and outside of those areas indicated for specific actions or initiatives on Figure 5.2, there is still scope to enhance green infrastructure and contribute towards an improved quality of place, adaptation to climate change and increased biodiversity.

A combination of community-led and council-led projects, and green infrastructure related planning policy can help to deliver improvements across residential and commercial areas.

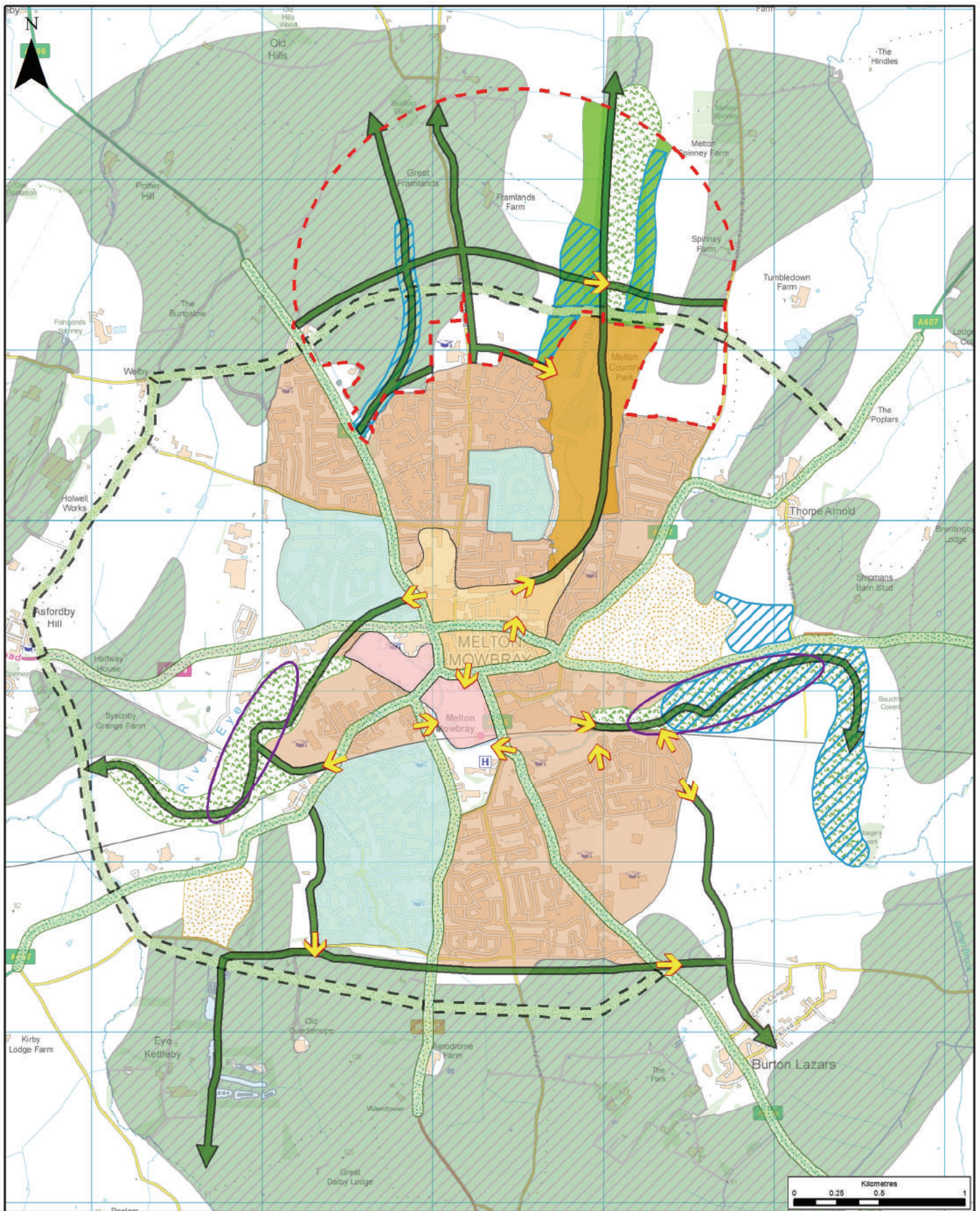




Figure 5.2 Melton Mowbray Green Infrastructure Initiatives

- | | | | |
|--|--|---|---|
|  | 1. Green Corridor |  | 8. Neighbourhood Adoption of Spaces |
|  | 2. Melton Mowbray Country Park |  | 9. Supporting Tourism |
|  | 3. Community Woodland/Orchard Search Areas |  | 10. Multi-user Access Routes |
|  | 4. Gateways to Greenspace |  | 11. Town Centre Greening |
|  | 5. Local Nature Reserve(s) Search Area |  | 12. Habitat Enhancement/Access/Interpretation |
|  | 6a. Road Corridor Greening |  | 13. Proposed Area of Growth |
| | 6b. Potential New Roads/Corridor Greening | | 14. Employment Area Greening |
| | 7. Rainfall Retention/Flood Risk Reduction | | 15. Supporting Community Greening |

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Community and volunteer groups are a valuable resource for delivering green infrastructure in the Borough. Local interests which might be missed by Council led projects are often brought to the forefront through the involvement of neighbourhood groups. Addressing specific and locally identified needs and aspirations will, in the long-term, ultimately lead to a greater sense of ownership of a project or space and require less intervention and resources from Melton Borough Council.

Many examples of successful community involvement in design and management exist around the Country and within the 6Cs area. Programmes such as improving brownfield sites, adoption of spaces, redesigning of existing spaces and community forests have all been shown to be vehicles for better community interaction and an improved sense of pride in our public spaces.

Chapter 6: Core Strategic Policies and Strategic Priorities

Taking Green Infrastructure Forward in Melton Borough

This Green Infrastructure Strategy will inform the framework for local planning policy, which will be set within the Borough's Local Development Framework: a suite of documents that set out policies and priorities for the Borough until 2026. The Core Strategy will provide the overarching framework for the development and use of land in the Borough, setting out the vision, strategic objectives, locations for strategic development, a delivery strategy and arrangements for managing and monitoring delivery.

Green infrastructure is firmly embedded in the national and local planning policy framework, and as such must be considered as an essential element of planning and development control.

Planning Policy Statements (PPS) explain statutory provisions and provide guidance to Local Authorities and others on planning policy and the operation of the planning system. They also explain the relationship between planning policies and other policies which have an important bearing on issues of development and land use. Local Authorities must take PPS into account in preparing their development plan documents, and can use the guidance to inform decisions on individual planning applications.

PPS with particular relevance to green infrastructure include:

- PPS1: Delivering Sustainable Development⁴⁰ (including Climate Change and Eco Towns supplements)
- PPS9: Biodiversity and Geological Conservation⁴¹
- PPS12: Local Spatial Planning (provides a definition for green infrastructure)⁴²
- PPS25: Development and Flood Risk⁴³

The planning system has a critical role to play in implementation of green infrastructure, aiming to maximise design quality and environmental sustainability of developments while still enabling the developer to achieve their objectives.

PPS12 (published 2008) sets out government policy on Local Development Frameworks (LDFs), stating that LDFs must create a strong relationship between service delivery and planning for the built and natural environment in order to create strong and prosperous communities.

Adoption of the recommended interventions within this strategy in policy in the LDF can support Melton Borough in safeguarding and improving its green infrastructure, and realising multiple benefits for the community, businesses and the local environment.

However, it is important that this Green Infrastructure Strategy does not stand alone and remain just the responsibility of Melton Borough Council as the Local Planning Authority to implement. It should be integrated and progressed in tandem with other LDF documents and with other Borough and County-wide strategies such as the community strategy, climate change, tourism and so on.

Successful and inventive delivery of the strategy requires cross-sector and inter-departmental cooperation within Melton Council. Volunteer groups, charities, parish councils, major landowners and delivery bodies such as Woodland Trust should be made aware of the Strategy, its recommendations and priorities. This is necessary to ensure that all aspects and shared objectives of potential project

⁴⁰ Planning Policy Statement 1 (PPS1): Delivering Sustainable Development (2005) CLG; Climate Change supplement (2007), Eco Towns supplement (2009)

⁴¹ Planning Policy Statement 9 (PPS9): Biodiversity and Geological Conservation (2005) CLG

⁴² Planning Policy Statement 12 (PPS12): Local Spatial Planning (2008) CLG

⁴³ Planning Policy Statement 25 (PPS25): Development and Flood Risk (2006) CLG

delivery are explored, reducing costs and possibly allowing a greater number of green infrastructure related projects to be undertaken.

It is also suggested that the first housing development to receive planning approval should be used as an example of GI 'best practice'. The development should demonstrate how effective and well planned use of GI can bring a multitude of benefits to an area, create an economically sound investment in terms of flood risk reduction, property values and a number of other factors. This would then set the standard and demonstrate that the Council is willing to strongly encourage and continue to invest in, the development of improved green infrastructure.

Detailed development and management policies in the LDF should ensure that green infrastructure assets are assessed during any development and that each development:

- Creates new green infrastructure assets within its own footprint
- Safeguards any assets that might be affected by development
- Contributes to overall functioning of the green infrastructure network, local and sub-regional 6Cs.

Robust planning policy will enable refusal of development which does not deliver high standards of green infrastructure both on and off-plot. This will require commitments in Core Strategy and other LDF and associated policies, while supplementary guidance can provide Melton Borough Council with the flexibility needed to guide and control delivery across a broad range of development locations, footprints and types.

Melton Core Policies for green infrastructure should ensure that;

- **All** new development results in a **net-gain** in green infrastructure
- The following key green infrastructure assets are prioritised for investment;
 - River Wreake Strategic River Corridor
 - The Jubilee Way
 - Melton Country Park
 - Sustainable Urban Extension Green Corridor
 - Grantham Canal
 - The Wolds Escarpment
 - Burrough Hill Country Park
 - Newark to market Harborough Dismantled Railway

- **All** new development in the Borough should seek to retain green infrastructure elements within design including;
 - Watercourses (including ditches)
 - Woodland, Orchards, Mature Trees and Hedgerows
 - Local and UKBAP Habitats and those supporting Local and UKBAP Priority Species
 - Access Routes (PROW and Permitted Routes)
 - Existing Public Green Space, including sports pitches
 - Areas of geological interest

- Where the loss of green infrastructure is unavoidable or impractical, off-site provision should be provided and result a **net-gain** in green infrastructure and should have regard for the Green Infrastructure Network and proposals illustrated on the Green Infrastructure Diagram

The box overleaf suggests a four stage process that could be used within the LDF process to ensure the integration of green infrastructure principles within Melton (stage 1 and 2 are already largely covered by this work on a Borough-wide basis, but may need more work at the site specific level).

In addition to this Melton Borough Council should seek to;

- Encourage proposals that contribute towards the 6Cs GI and Strategic Access Networks on Figure 5.1

- Ensure that development within the GI networks contributes to the functioning of those networks and access links to them

- Expect that design layout takes account of local biodiversity needs and protects locally and nationally important habitats and geological sites

- Support planning proposals that actively seek to increase and/or enhance the Borough's green infrastructure resource

- Promote the creation of new green infrastructure and its use to benefit the communities of the Borough

- Support communities and volunteer groups seeking to enhance the Borough's green infrastructure resource

Embedding GI in the LDF Process

Step 1 Audit

- Identify green infrastructure assets (on and off site) which may be affected. This includes vegetation, biodiversity, access, soil porosity, distinctive landscape and heritage.

Step 2 Plan

- Have regard to the Melton Core Strategy, Landscape Character Assessments, Open Space Assessment Report, 6Cs Green Infrastructure Strategy, Leicestershire, Leicester and Rutland Biodiversity Action Plan, Leicestershire Rights of Way Improvement Plan and the East Midlands Regional Forestry Framework
- Consider design and sustainability codes that apply to the development type and location, such as BREEAM/Code for Sustainable Homes
- Consult local planners, neighbourhood plans, environmental bodies and communities to understand neighbourhood priorities and needs
- Assess how the development might impact on areas of opportunity and/or deficiency in green infrastructure.

Step 3 Site Design

- Safeguard green infrastructure assets on site
- If asset loss is inevitable: recreate green infrastructure to ensure “no net loss” of the functions provided by the lost assets
- Create new assets on site in line with local and strategic priorities.

Step 4 Reinforce strategic green infrastructure functions

- Address deficiencies (both pre-existing in the neighbourhood and those caused by the new development)
 - Ensure linkages to the green access network
 - Contribute to the 6Cs strategic green infrastructure network
- Ensure long term management and governance arrangements are in place for green infrastructure on site and, where relevant off site

Outside of the Local Development Core Strategy a separate Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) could provide the basis for GI planning in the Borough. An SPD has the advantage of being able to be updated to take account of changes in national and regional or sub-regional initiatives and funding.

Below are three *examples* of existing Supplementary Planning Documents that have a direct relationship to green infrastructure.

Manchester City Council has adopted a Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) entitled "The Guide to Development in Manchester". This requires most developers to produce an Environmental Standards Statement (ESS) in addition to the statutory Design and Access statement. The ESS includes expectations relating to biodiversity and green space. This could logically be extended to encompass other aspects of green infrastructure such as favourable social and health outcomes.

The Mayor of London has drafted (in August 2007) an SPD relating to the East London Green Grid. This suggests topics in which local authorities should develop ambitious policy for safeguarding and (re)building green infrastructure functions.

In 2009 Stafford Borough Council commissioned a draft SPD that sets out standards for green infrastructure provision in the borough. Alongside a set of overarching principles to guide planning officers in the inspection of development proposals, the SPD sets out a range of distinct provision and quality standards that developers must respond to in their proposals. The SPD also sets out a framework for the calculation of Developer Contributions to deliver green infrastructure interventions across the Borough, including the creation of a Community Park, Country Park and an area of 'Natural Parklands'

Recognising the scale of the opportunity

Given the level of support for and interest in green infrastructure at both the national and sub-regional level current funding available and community initiatives such as Big Society and Neighbourhood Planning, it is important that Melton Borough makes the most of this opportunity to consolidate and improve the Borough's green resources. With the manifold benefits of green

infrastructure such as safeguarding and increasing biodiversity, adapting to and mitigating against climate change, health and recreation and inward investment, Melton finds itself presented significant opportunity to make a real and positive change for the Borough's residents and their environment.

Going Forward

Key to driving the Green Infrastructure Strategy forward is the need to create a stakeholder forum. Dialogue and a shared understanding of the various needs, ideas and aspirations of different user and delivery groups will provide the opportunity to co-deliver and co-fund projects, sharing costs and resources and cross-departmental working.

Ideally the forum's organisation should remain the responsibility of Melton Borough Council in order to maintain momentum and avoid single interest parties monopolising. Green infrastructure will need a 'Champion' from within the Council to maintain interest at the decision making level, coordinate the stakeholder forum and to identify co-working opportunities within council department.

Appendix 1 : Melton Mowbray Green Infrastructure Enhancement Initiatives

Priority Green Infrastructure Enhancement Areas			
Project	Actions	Benefits	Funding
1. Burrough Hill Country Park	<p>Create circular routes connecting Burrough Hill, the Jubilee Way and the surrounding villages to provide a 'full day' visitor experience.</p> <p>Visually enhance the approach road from the car park to the fort.</p> <p>Promote Burrough Hill Country Park as a destination, consider increasing car park facilities.</p> <p>Provide more interpretation signage.</p> <p>Work with local landowners and managers to enhance surrounding natural habitats.</p>	<p>tourism, biodiversity, habitat connectivity, access and recreation, heritage, education, landscape character, sub-regional GI asset</p>	<p>6Cs City-Scale GI Corridor, Farm Environment Schemes, Forestry Commission Grants, Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL), Heritage Lottery Funding (HLF),</p>
			<p>Delivery & Partners</p> <p>6Cs Leicestershire County Council (Highways & PROW) Landowners/managers Sustrans Forestry Commission Natural England Sustrans, English Heritage, LLR Wildlife Trust RSPB</p>
Project	Actions	Benefits	Funding
2. River Wreake and River Eye Strategic River Corridor	<p>Reduce diffuse pollution (organic/non-organic) entering the river network.</p> <p>Manage land adjacent to rivers in a way that is conducive to improving habitat quality and connectivity.</p> <p>Create a natural habitat buffer along the river and its feeder streams and drains.</p> <p>Seek opportunities to improve access and recreation.</p>	<p>reduced flood risk, habitat connectivity, biodiversity, landscape character access and recreation, climate change adaptation & mitigation</p>	<p>Catchment Sensitive Farming Capital Grants Scheme, Farm Environment Schemes</p>
			<p>Delivery & Partners</p> <p>Natural England, Farming Wildlife Advisory Group (FWAG), Landowners/managers, Environment Agency, LLR Wildlife Trust, Leicestershire County Council (Highways & PROW), 6Cs, RSPB, Asfordby and Melton Society of Angling</p>

Project	Actions	Benefits	Funding	Delivery & Partners
3. Newark-on-Trent to Market Harborough Dismantled Railway Corridor	<p>Improve access to the corridor from adjacent communities.</p> <p>Work with landowners/managers to create a buffer on natural vegetation along its length and restore breaks in the corridor.</p> <p>Promote corridor as part of the sustainable transport agenda.</p>	<p>sustainable transport, tourism, biodiversity, health and recreation, city-scale GI corridor</p>	<p>6Cs City-Scale GI Corridor,</p> <p>6Cs Urban Fringe Enhancement Zone, Farm Environment Schemes, Forestry</p> <p>Commission Grants, Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL)</p>	<p>6Cs</p> <p>Leicestershire County Council (Highways & PROW)</p> <p>Landowners/managers</p> <p>Sustrans</p> <p>Forestry Commission</p> <p>Natural England</p> <p>Sustrans</p>
4. Melton Country Park and SUE Green Corridor	<p>Provide access routes through the Corridor that link up to the Country Park and long-distance routes.</p> <p>Enhance existing natural habitats including wetland and create new habitats to provide refuge.</p> <p>Provide access links to the new development that increase sustainable transport options.</p>	<p>access and recreation, biodiversity, flood control, climate change, health and increased use of green space, tourism, education, reduce impact of development</p>	<p>Developer contributions,</p> <p>Existing green space funding,</p> <p>Forestry</p> <p>Commission Grants,</p> <p>6Cs City-Scale GI Corridor Project Funding,</p> <p>6Cs Sub-regional Corridors Project Funding,</p>	<p>6Cs,</p> <p>Natural England,</p> <p>Landowners/managers,</p> <p>Landowners/managers,</p> <p>LLR Wildlife Trust,</p> <p>Environment Agency,</p> <p>Leicestershire County Council,</p>

Project	Actions	Benefits	Funding	Delivery & Partners
5. Grantham Canal	<p>Address the causes of the canal's poor SSSI condition (agricultural run-off, siltation and inappropriate cutting).</p> <p>Increase interpretation along the route.</p> <p>Work closely with neighbouring authorities to achieve a vision for the route.</p> <p>Promote low-impact recreation along the canal.</p>	<p>heritage, biodiversity, health and recreation, sustainable transport, tourism, landscape character</p>	<p>Heritage Lottery Funding (HLF), Farm Environment Schemes, 6Cs Project Funding, Catchment Sensitive Farming Capital Grants Scheme</p>	<p>6Cs, British Waterways, Natural England, Landowners/managers, South Kesteven & Newark District Local Authorities, Bottesford Angling Club, Defra, Grantham Canal Partnership, Landowners/managers, LLR Wildlife Trust, Environment Agency</p>
6. Jubilee Way	<p>Explore opportunities for increased woodland creation to complement the Leighfield Forest.</p> <p>Buffer existing woodlands.</p> <p>Ensure quality access infrastructure (including interpretation) along the Jubilee Way/Leicestershire Round.</p> <p>Improve connections and signage to Melton and Burrough Hill Country Parks</p>	<p>landscape character, city-scale GI corridor, biodiversity, tourism recreation</p>	<p>6Cs City-Scale GI Corridor Project Funding, 6Cs Sub-regional Corridors Project Funding, Forestry Commission Grants, Farm Environment Schemes, ROWIP</p>	<p>Leicestershire County Council (Highways & PROW), Landowners/managers, Forestry Commission, 6Cs, Natural England, Farming Wildlife Advisory Group (FWAG), Environment Agency, LLR Wildlife Trust, Woodland Trust</p>

Project	Actions	Benefits	Funding	Delivery & Partners
7. Wolds Escarpment	Promote the management of land to increase the amount of lowland meadow and woodland habitats. Improve access and interpretation.	biodiversity, landscape character access and recreation sustainable energy	Farm Environment Schemes, Forestry Commission Grants, ROWIP	Landowners/managers, Natural England, Forestry Commission, Farming Wildlife Advisory Group (FWAG), LLR Wildlife Trust, Leicestershire County Council, Woodland Trust

Secondary Green Infrastructure Enhancement Area				
Project	Actions	Benefits	Funding	Delivery & Partners
8. Gaddesby Brook	Promote the management of the Brook's banks for wildlife and access. Create washland/flood storage adjacent to the Brook.	landscape character, biodiversity, access and recreation, climate change adaptation & mitigation	Farm Environment Schemes, ROWIP	Natural England Farming Wildlife Advisory Group (FWAG) Landowners/managers Woodland Trust LLR Wildlife Trust Leicestershire County Council Environment Agency

Project	Actions	Benefits	Funding	Delivery & Partners
9. Scafold Brook and Feeder Streams	<p>Work with landowners/managers to create buffers of natural vegetation along watercourses, including field drains.</p> <p>Protect watercourses from livestock through fencing or other measures such as hedging.</p> <p>Protect watercourses within and adjacent to new development.</p>	<p>habitat connectivity, water quality, reducing soil loss, visual amenity, climate change adaptation & mitigation</p>	<p>Farm Environment Schemes, Forestry Commission Grants, Developer contributions (where watercourse is relevant to development area)</p>	<p>Natural England, Forestry Commission, Farming Wildlife Advisory Group (FWAG), LLR Wildlife Trust, Developers, Melton Borough Council, Environment Agency,</p>
Project	Actions	Benefits	Funding	Delivery & Partners
10. Sproxton to Scafold	<p>Reinforce landscape character through restoration of hedgerows.</p> <p>Increase/enhance wildflower field margins.</p> <p>Ensure adequate signage and interpretation where appropriate.</p>	<p>landscape character, biodiversity, access and recreation</p>	<p>Farm Environment Schemes, ROWIP</p>	<p>Landowners/managers, Natural England, Farming Wildlife Advisory Group (FWAG), LLR Wildlife Trust Leicestershire County Council</p>
Project	Actions	Benefits	Funding	Delivery & Partners
11. Edmondthorpe to Thistleton	<p>Promote the management of land to increase the amount of lowland meadow habitat and explore opportunities for woodland planting.</p>	<p>biodiversity, landscape character</p>	<p>Farm Environment Schemes, Forestry Commission Grants</p>	<p>Natural England Forestry Commission Farming Wildlife Advisory Group (FWAG) LLR Wildlife Trust Woodland Trust</p>

Project	Actions	Benefits	Funding	Delivery & Partners
12. Bottesford and Muston	<p>Create wetland/flood storage along River Devon.</p> <p>Buffer river corridor vegetation from other land uses.</p> <p>Improve access to the river and dismantled railway corridor.</p>	<p>reduced flood risk, habitat connectivity, biodiversity, landscape character recreation</p>	<p>Catchment Sensitive Farming Capital Grants Scheme, Farm Environment Schemes, ROWIP</p>	<p>Natural England, Farming Wildlife Advisory Group (FWAG), Landowners/managers, Environment Agency, LLR Wildlife Trust, Leicestershire County Council, Bottesford Parish Council</p>
Project	Actions	Benefits	Funding	Delivery & Partners
13. Buckminster Woodlands	<p>Seek opportunities to increase the level of woodland planting, with the priority of planting adjacent to existing woodlands.</p> <p>Improve access to existing and newly planted woodlands.</p>	<p>biodiversity, access and recreation sustainable energy, climate change adaptation & mitigation</p>	<p>Farm Environment Schemes, Forestry Commission Grants</p>	<p>Landowners/managers Forestry Commission Parish Councils Leicestershire County Council Woodland Trust</p>
Project	Actions	Benefits	Funding	Delivery & Partners
14. Watercourse Buffering (Borough-wide)	<p>Work with landowners/managers to create buffers of natural vegetation along watercourses, including field drains.</p> <p>Protect watercourses from stock through fencing or other measures such as hedging.</p> <p>Protect watercourses within and adjacent to new development.</p>	<p>habitat connectivity, water quality, reducing soil loss, visual amenity, climate change adaptation & mitigation</p>	<p>Farm Environment Schemes, Forestry Commission Grants, Developer contributions (where watercourse is relevant to development area)</p>	<p>Natural England Forestry Commission Farming Wildlife Advisory Group (FWAG) LLR Wildlife Trust Developers Environment Agency</p>

Project	Actions	Benefits	Funding	Delivery & Partners
15. Woodland Enhancement/Planting (Borough-wide)	<p>Increase woodland planting Borough-wide.</p> <p>Work with landowners to provide access to existing woodland.</p> <p>Buffer and connect existing woodlands.</p> <p>Explore opportunities for sustainable woodfuel production.</p>	<p>climate change adaptation,</p> <p>sustainable energy, biodiversity,</p> <p>access and recreation</p>	Forestry Commission Grants	Forestry Commission, Woodland Trust, Landowners/managers LLR Wildlife Trust Farming Wildlife Advisory Group (FWAG)

Melton Mowbray Green Infrastructure Action Plan Project Proposals

Proposal	Objectives	Benefits/Functions	Potential Funding	Partners
1. Sustainable Urban Extension Green Corridor	<p>Provide access routes through the Corridor that link up to the Country Park and long-distance routes.</p> <p>Enhance existing natural habitats including wetland and create new habitats to provide refuge.</p> <p>Provide access links to the new development that increase sustainable transport options.</p>	<p>access and recreation, biodiversity,</p> <p>flood control, climate change,</p> <p>health and increased use of green space</p>	<p>Developer contributions (section 106/CIL),</p> <p>Access to Nature, Pond Digging Fund, Forestry Commission Grants</p>	<p>Developers,</p> <p>Environment Agency, Natural England, Forestry Commission, Woodland Trust, LLR Wildlife Trust, Community/Volunteer Groups,</p> <p>Groundwork, Leicestershire County Council</p>

Proposal	Objectives	Benefits/Functions	Potential Funding	Partners
<p>2. Melton Mowbray Country Park</p>	<p>Encourage increased use of park through improved gateways. Improve signage directional/interpretation. Promote as the Gateway to the Jubilee Way and Newark to Market Harborough Dismantled Railway. Link the access infrastructure of the Park to the SUE Green Corridor.</p>	<p>access and recreation, biodiversity, flood control, climate change, health and increased use of green space, tourism, education</p>	<p>Existing green space funding, Developer contributions (section 106/CIL), Access to Nature, Pond Digging Fund, Forestry Commission Grants, Community Tree Planting Fund,</p>	<p>Developers, Environment Agency, Natural England, Forestry Commission, Woodland Trust, LLR Wildlife Trust, Community/Volunteer Groups, Groundwork, Leicestershire County Council</p>
<p>3. Community Woodland, Orchards Search Areas</p>	<p>Provide accessible woodland close to Melton Mowbray’s Communities. Encourage the planting of fruit-bearing trees. Explore possibility of woodfuel production.</p>	<p>access and recreation, sustainable food production, biodiversity, climate change, sustainable energy</p>	<p>Changing Spaces – Local Food, Programme –Big Lottery fund, Forestry Commission Grants, Green Energy Trusts Grants- Scottish Power, Energy Crops Scheme –DEFRA, 6Cs</p>	<p>Partners Forestry Commission, Woodland Trust, LLR Wildlife Trust, Community/Volunteer Groups, Groundwork, Leicestershire County Council, Landowners/managers, FWAG, 6Cs</p>

Proposal	Objectives	Benefits/Functions	Potential Funding	Partners
4. Gateways to Greenspace	Create attractive gateways/entrances to public green and open spaces that are informative (accessibility, heritage value and wildlife interest). Use street greening to guide users to gateways.	increased use of greenspaces, health and recreation, civic pride, heritage & education	6Cs, Sponsorship	Leicestershire County Council, Access Groups, Ramblers Association, Community/Volunteer groups, 6Cs
Proposal	Objectives	Benefits/Functions	Potential Funding	Partners
5. Local Nature Reserves) Search Areas	Create a series of Local Nature Reserves to address the access to nature and educational needs of Melton Mowbray's Communities.	biodiversity, access to nature, health and passive recreation, education, climate change	Waterways Trust's Wildlife Grants, Access to Nature, Pond Digging Fund	Waterways Trust, Natural England, Landowners/managers, Asfordby and Melton Angling Society
Proposal	Objectives	Benefits/Functions	Potential Funding	Partners
6a & 6b. Road Corridor Greening	Increase tree cover along main roads Convert roadside verges to wildflower/wooded areas where appropriate.	air quality, biodiversity, quality of place, image and investment, climate change	Development Contributions - (Section 106, CIL)	Leicestershire County Council, Developers, LLR Wildlife Trust

Proposal	Objectives	Benefits/Functions	Potential Funding	Partners
7. Rainfall Retention/Flood Risk Reduction	<p>Create rainfall retention ponds/SUDS in new development areas.</p> <p>Support the creation of washlands/flood storage along the settlements watercourses.</p>	<p>water quality, climate change, biodiversity</p>	<p>Development Contributions - (Section 106, CIL)</p>	<p>Developers, Environment Agency, LLR Wildlife Trust, Businesses</p>
Proposal	Objectives	Benefits/Functions	Potential Funding	Partners
8. Neighbourhood Adoption of Spaces	<p>Support the adoption of green and open spaces by local neighbourhood groups.</p> <p>Provide advice and where possible financial support for adoption.</p>	<p>quality of place, community interaction, health and recreation, image and investment</p>	<p>Big Tree Plant, Trees for Schools, Community Tree Planting Fund, Pond Digging Fund, Changing Spaces – Local Food Programme- Big Lottery Fund, Community Spaces, Queen Elizabeth II Fields Challenge – SITA Trust</p>	<p>Community & Volunteer Groups, Forestry Commission, Tree Council, Woodland Trust, Pond Conservation, LLR Wildlife Trust, Groundwork</p>
Proposal	Objectives	Benefits/Functions	Potential Funding	Partners
9. Supporting Tourism	<p>Create the setting for enhanced tourism/visitor interest, though promoting the use of town's riverside areas.</p>	<p>quality of place, visitor economy, image and investment</p>	<p>6Cs, Existing greenspace funding, Private investment</p>	<p>goleicestershire, Leicestershire County Council, Melton Mowbray Town Estate</p>

Proposal	Objectives	Benefits/Functions	Potential Funding	Partners
10. Multi-user Access Routes	<p>Create new access routes to increase access to natural greenspace.</p> <p>Enhance existing access routes.</p> <p>Provide interpretation along routes describing the natural, cultural and heritage interest of the route and destinations.</p>	<p>access and recreation, health, biodiversity, sustainable transport, air quality</p>	<p>Development Contributions, (Section 106, CIL), ROWIP,</p>	<p>Leicestershire County Council, Sustrans, Melton Mowbray Town Estate</p>
Proposal	Objectives	Benefits/Functions	Potential Funding	Partners
11. Town Centre Greening	<p>Increase level of street tree planting/other planting in the town centre.</p> <p>Green the routes and gateways to the town's greenspace assets.</p> <p>Support the Melton Mowbray Town Centre Masterplan.</p>	<p>quality of place, climate change, visitor economy, regeneration</p>	<p>Sponsorship, Existing greenspace funding,</p>	<p>Businesses, Melton Town Council, Developers, Community Groups, Melton Mowbray Town Estate</p>
Proposal	Objectives	Benefits/Functions	Potential Funding	Partners
12. Habitat Enhancement and Interpretation	<p>Create a wide buffer of natural/semi-natural habitats along Melton Mowbray's watercourses.</p> <p>Increase awareness of the natural world and the rural landscape through interpretation and signage.</p> <p>Provide accessible natural greenspace for the settlement's communities.</p>	<p>education, health and recreation, access to greenspace, biodiversity, water quality</p>	<p>6Cs, Farm Environment Schemes</p>	<p>Natural England, Woodland Trust, LLR Wildlife Trust, Landowners/managers, Farm Wildlife Advisory Group (FWAG)</p>

Proposal	Objectives	Benefits/Functions	Potential Funding	Partners
13. Search Area for Growth/New Development	<p>Develop bespoke GI standards in a development brief.</p> <p>Conserve natural and GI elements within layout.</p> <p>Integrate existing surface-water-flow pathways within drainage and rainfall catchment design solutions.</p> <p>Buffer residential areas from proposed new road infrastructure.</p> <p>Create a network of multi-user access routes that connect to the wider access network.</p> <p>Extend Melton Country Park northwards to encompass more of the Salford Brook.</p> <p>Create new, and buffer existing, wetland/wildlife areas along the Salford Brook.</p>	<p>reduced flood risk, environmental stability, biodiversity, health, access and recreation, image and quality of place</p>	<p>Development Contributions, (Section 106, CIL)</p>	<p>Developers, Adjacent landowners/managers, Natural England, LLR Wildlife Trust, Woodland Trust, Environment Agency, Forestry Commission, Melton Borough Council, Leicestershire County Council</p>
Proposal	Objectives	Benefits/Functions	Potential Funding	Partners
14. Employment Area Greening	<p>Encourage the improvement and diversification of green space type/management within employment areas.</p>	<p>biodiversity, quality of place, image, flood control</p>	<p>Businesses</p>	<p>Businesses, Woodland Trust, LLR Wildlife Trust</p>

Proposal	Objectives	Benefits/Functions	Potential Funding	Partners
<p>15. Supporting Community Greening Projects</p>	<p>Support the development of community based green infrastructure projects and action groups.</p>	<p>community interaction, quality of place, civic pride, biodiversity, sustainable food production, remediation of brownfield sites, reduction in antisocial behaviour</p>	<p>Big Tree Plant, Trees for Schools, Community Tree Planting Fund, Pond Digging Fund, Changing Spaces – Local Food Programme- Big Lottery Fund, Biffa – Small Grants Programme, Community Spaces Co-operative Community Fund, Sustainable Investment in Community Facilities Fund,</p>	<p>Community & Volunteer Groups, Forestry Commission, Tree Council, Woodland Trust, Pond Conservation, LLR Wildlife Trust, Groundwork, Sport England</p>

APPENDICES

Appendix 2 – Policy Review

The Natural Choice: Securing the Value Of Nature: Natural Environment White Paper, (2011), HM Government

The first White Paper on the Environment for over 20 years recognises the value of nature to environment, economic growth and personal well-being. It also acknowledges the findings of the Lawton Report: Making Space for Nature, who's findings revealed our natural environment is highly fragmented and unable to respond to the pressures of climate change and demographic change. The White Paper proposes Nature Improvement Areas to enhance and reconnect nature on a significant scale and through reforms of the planning system to take a more strategic approach to planning for nature. Ecological networks and green infrastructure are seen as key to delivering the protection and enhancement of nature.

Planning Policy Statement 9 Biodiversity and Geological Diversity (2005) ODPM

This policy replaced PPG9 in 2005 and recognises that biodiversity has a role in rural and urban renaissance by supporting economic diversification and contributing to a high quality environment. In addition it sees biodiversity and geological conservation as a key part of sustainable development and that planning should seek to conserve, enhance and extend natural habitat within development. By enhancing green spaces in development through improving biodiversity and creating functioning ecosystems these spaces will be valued by people and contribute to a better quality of life and sense of well being.

In the context of Melton, it recognises that where the environment is concerned, cross-border cooperation is necessary for its protection and enhancement. Green infrastructure, by its borderless nature, is an ideal way in which to approach this cooperation. The protection, enhancement and re-creation of habitats in-line with this guidance is also an important part of the green infrastructure approach, in essence GI can deliver these requirements.

In terms of local policies, PPS9 requires that Local Development Frameworks (LDFs) and local authorities should identify opportunities for the re-creation and/or restoration priority habitats. Importantly PPS9 emphasises the need to consider networks;

“..Local authorities should aim to maintain networks by avoiding or repairing the fragmentation and isolation of natural habitats through policies in plans. Such networks should be protected from development, and, where possible, strengthened by or integrated within it. This may be done as part of a wider strategy for the protection and extension of open space and access routes such as canals and rivers, including those within urban areas”.(PPS9)

A strategy for the protection and extension of open space and access routes that help reconnect and enhance habitats is a key objective that underpins green infrastructure planning.

Planning Policy Guidance PPG17 (2002) ODPM

This national policy for open space, sport and recreation (PPG17) also highlights the importance of high quality local networks of well managed and maintained open spaces, sports and recreational facilities in supporting an urban renaissance. In addition to this these networks of spaces are equally important in improving quality of life, sense of well being and being a focus for community activities and promoting social inclusion.

'...Green spaces in urban areas perform vital functions as areas for nature conservation and biodiversity and by acting as 'green lungs' can assist in meeting objectives to improve air quality' (PPG17).

This recognition that networks of open space can deliver a range of functions such as recreation, social interaction, biodiversity and other environmental functions such as moderating air quality and flooding is an important part of PPG17. This multifunctionality of spaces and networks and the ability of the non-built environment to provide economic, societal and environmental benefits is one of the key drivers behind green infrastructure planning.

Planning Policy Statement 25 – Development and Flood Risk (2006) CLG

Planning Policy Statement 25 sets out the Government's national policy on development and flood risk. It is intended to guide the development of Regional Spatial Strategies/Regional Plans and Local Development Plans/Local Development Frameworks. There is recognition in this document of the need to consider climate change and changing weather patterns in future planning. The policy sets out that other than traditional fluvial flooding alongside rivers, the impact of development outside of nominal flood zones can impact upon the flood risk experienced by an area, and that this should be considered throughout all stages of planning. In reducing that risk the policy suggests that sustainable development can be delivered through, amongst other measures by:

- reducing flood risk to and from new development through location, layout and design, incorporating sustainable drainage systems (SUDS);
- using opportunities offered by new development to reduce the causes and impacts of flooding e.g. surface water management plans; making the most of the benefits of *green infrastructure* for flood storage, conveyance and SUDS; re-creating functional floodplain; and setting back defences;

This planning policy statement is supported by a best practice guide with several illustrative case studies showing how restoring the more natural flood plain can in fact reduce risk and how new development can be achieved whilst improving the functionality of the river/stream corridor.

Securing the Future: The UK Sustainable Development Strategy (2005) HM Government

'The goal of sustainable development is to enable all people throughout the world to satisfy their basic needs and enjoy a better quality of life, without compromising the quality of life of future generations.'

The UK Development Strategy has developed a set of shared priorities that apply across the UK:

- Sustainable Consumption and Production
- Climate Change and Energy
- Natural Resource Protection and Environmental Enhancement
- Sustainable Communities

Each of the above priorities has a direct relationship with the benefits that can be attributed to green infrastructure and there is recognition within this strategy of the contribution that green space and biodiversity make to our standard of living, quality of life, health and well-being. Sustainable transport options, productive agricultural land, reduced risk of flooding and vulnerability to 'heat island' effect and the protection, enhancement and expansion of natural habitats are key aspects of green infrastructure planning that contribute to the UK's sustainable development.

World Class Places: Government Strategy for Improving Quality of Place (2009) CLG

Quality of place is vital in maintaining the viability of communities and local economies and this strategy considers it a key local factor in providing a quality of life and one of the four elements that contribute towards a quality of place. World Class Places encourages the use and expansion of green infrastructure to reduce the impacts and causes of flooding, reduce the effects of climate change and increase the viability of the country's biodiversity resource. This is in addition to value of the natural environment to contribute to our health and well being. This strategy has been endorsed by many of the agencies with an interest in seeing green infrastructural improvements across the country including; Environment Agency, CABE, HCA, English Heritage and Natural England.

East Midlands Regional Plan (2009) Government Office for the East Midlands

The Regional Spatial Strategy for the East Midlands prescribes many policies that through well planned green infrastructure, the intended outcomes can be delivered. Policies such as flood risk, protecting and enhancing the natural environment, tourism, sport and recreation are all supported by green infrastructure planning. The plan also has specific policies relating to green infrastructure under Policy 28 - Regional Priorities for Environmental and Green Infrastructure.

This policy requires that local authorities:

- Assess the capacity of existing Environment Infrastructure to accommodate change in order to inform decisions on the scale, location and phasing of new development. Account should be taken of current deficits and likely future demands, including those likely to result from climate change, to identify any further needs or constraints
- Select appropriate indicators and targets to monitor the condition of Environmental Infrastructure and to ensure that its capacity to accommodate change is not breached
- Ensure that the provision and design of new Environmental Infrastructure is considered and its delivery planned through environmental capacity analysis at the same time as other infrastructure requirements
- Within Local Development Frameworks develop 'green infrastructure plans' based on character assessments of existing natural, cultural and landscape assets and the identification of new assets required to meet the needs of existing and expanding communities
- Increase access to green space that can be used for formal and informal recreation, educational purposes and to promote healthy lifestyles, without increasing pressures on sensitive sites, especially those designated under the European Habitats Directive
- Identify delivery and funding mechanisms for the creation and future management of Green Infrastructure, including from the planning system

East Midlands Environment Strategy – Objectives and Policies (2002) EMRA

The regional environment strategy brings together many of the benefits that can be attributed to green infrastructure such as improving the quality of water and soils, providing corridors for wildlife, access to nature and recreation and the concept of the 'green lung' in urban areas. Importantly it recognises the multifunctional nature of green infrastructure in aspects such as green sustainable travel routes, where safe, green and sustainable routes can incorporate wildlife corridors and important environmental functions such as reducing flood risk and maintaining water quality and reducing soil loss.

Green Infrastructure for the East Midlands: A Public Benefit Mapping Project (2006) TEP for EMRA

This document commissioned by the East Midlands Regional Agency looked to understand where the greatest public benefit could be achieved through green infrastructure interventions. Using a variety of datasets to represent the objectives of the regional spatial strategy it showed that green infrastructure can provide a great deal of public benefit throughout the region. For Newark and Sherwood the benefit

manifested itself along the Trent Vale, Sherwood Forest area and the Newark town urban area, particularly with regards to access, biodiversity and climate change.

Tackling Climate Change in the East Midlands – Regional Programme of Action 2009-2011 (2009) East Midlands Regional Climate Change Partnership

This programme of action is clear in its support for green infrastructure as part of new development, in terms of its value in reducing flood risk, supporting biodiversity and sustainable drainage. It recognises the role of green infrastructure as part of the wider environmental infrastructure essential for communities, the environment and the economy and presents green infrastructure as:

“Contributing to a high quality natural and built environment and helping enhance the quality of life for present and future communities, providing multiple benefits in the light of climate change predictions’ and that ‘green infrastructure can link existing green space and habitats, encourage walking and cycling opportunities, provide shade and enable certain kinds of species to move as the climate changes.”

This is clear recognition of the multifunctional nature of green infrastructure and its many benefits in helping to address the issues and challenges that the region will face in light of a changing climate.

Putting Wildlife Back on the Map: A Biodiversity Strategy for the East Midlands (2006) EMRA & East Midlands Biodiversity Forum

The core of this strategy naturally concentrates on protecting, enhancing and expanding the region’s biodiversity resource, but it also contains a vision for green infrastructure in the East Midlands and makes the links between national policy and green infrastructure. It also confirms the link between green infrastructure and other parts of the strategy including; Urban and Post-Industrial Development, Community Engagement, Business and Industry, Tourism and Industry. There are also connections made between green infrastructure and national issues such as Sustainable Development and Quality of Life and wider issues such as Water Resources. Importantly it attempts to understand the limitations and constraints facing the delivery of green infrastructure in the region, culminating in four objectives to aid the roll out of green infrastructure across the region:

- To develop a clear spatial framework for GI delivery at regional and sub-regional levels to help guide prioritisation
- To provide clear guidance on how to deliver a high quality biodiversity network as part of multifunctional GI
- To recognise opportunities for delivering GI and support through reliable funding and data provision
- To ensure that economic regeneration initiatives, biodiversity projects and multi-functional GI delivery are developed in an integrated way

Melton Climate Change Strategy (2006) Entec

This strategy recognises that the Borough will likely be subject to less water available, at risk of more extensive and frequent flooding and increased summer temperatures. It also identifies the risks associated with these changes to public health, biodiversity, transport, agriculture and the wider economy. To combat this, the strategy suggests an increase in cycling and walking as well as a number of other measures. It also recommends a number of measures to help adapt to climate change, including greenspace management changes and increased tree planting.

Melton Community Strategy 2008-2013

Melton's Community Strategy has a number of objectives to which well-planned and managed Green Infrastructure can contribute towards, such as increased physical activity, rejuvenating the town centre, reducing traffic congestion and improving the health and well-being of local people.

Leicestershire Rights of Way Improvement Plan 2006-2011

This Plan is fully supportive of the kind of access improvement measures that this Green Infrastructure Strategy recommends. It also recognises that improvements are needed to the access network to ensure that the future needs of the community are met.

Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (2008)

This assessment recommends that Sustainable Drainage Systems should be considered to reduce the risk of surface water flooding and that development should consider such measures at the outset. It also recognises that SuDs can improve biodiversity, amenity and improve water quality, a key issue for the Rivers Eye and Wreake. Buffer strips along water courses are also recommended as a method of reducing run-off from agricultural land.

Space for Wildlife: Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland Biodiversity Action Plan 2010-2015

The LLR BAP has three components, to restore BAP Priority Habitats, Create new wildlife habitats in the wider countryside and to monitor and promote existing good sites (Local Wildlife Sites). It also supports the increase in connectivity of habitats across the landscape.

Appendix 3 – Bibliography

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Leicestershire’s Children and Young People’s Plan (2008-2011), Leicestershire County Council

Leicestershire, Leicester and Rutland Biodiversity Action Plan Annual Report (2009-2010), Leicestershire, Leicester and Rutland Wildlife Trust

Leicestershire Local Minerals Plan (1995), Leicestershire County Council

Space for Wildlife - Leicestershire, Leicester and Rutland Biodiversity Action Plan (2010-2015), Leicestershire, Leicester and Rutland Wildlife Trust

Rights of Way Improvement Plan for Leicestershire 2006-2011, (2006), Leicestershire county Council

Making Space for Nature: A review of England’s Wildlife Sites and Ecological Network, (2010), Lawton for Defra

Melton Borough Biodiversity and Geodiversity Study (2008), Entec UK Limited

Melton Climate Change Strategy, (2006), Entec UK Limited

Melton Sustainable Community Strategy 2008-2013, (2008), Melton Community Partnership

Melton Borough Landscape and Historic Character Assessment Report, (2006), ADAS

Melton Mowbray Sustainable Transport Strategy, (2009), MVA Consultancy

**Melton Mowbray Sustainable Urban Extension Viability Report, (2009), Savills
Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment SHLAA Report 2010, (2010),
Melton Borough Council**

**Melton Borough Council – Strategic Flood Risk Assessment Stage 2 – Updated
to PPS25, (2008), Entec**

**A Flourishing Region – Regional Economic Strategy for the East Midlands 2006-
2020, (2006), East Midlands Development Agency**

Open Space Assessment, (2011), Knight, Kavannah and Page

Appendix 4 – Stakeholder Consultation Summary

The consultation for Melton's green infrastructure strategy was undertaken in two stages: a questionnaire was sent to wide group of stakeholders during the early stages of the study. The questionnaires involved a series of questions regarding green infrastructure needs and provision within the District and to what extent a strategy could help organisations achieve their objectives. The responses are summarised below. This was followed by a stakeholder workshop held during April. The purpose of the workshop was to present the emerging green infrastructure strategy and to elicit feedback from the attendees.

Questionnaire (February 2011)

The questionnaire was sent out to a range of officers from Melton Borough Council and Leicestershire County Council with an interest in green infrastructure. Other stakeholders identified were: English Heritage, Natural England, Sport England, Ramblers Association, Leicestershire & Rutland Wildlife Trust, Environment Agency, Groundwork Trust, developers associated with the sustainable urban extension, CPRE, NFU, Woodland Trust, Forestry Commission, Parish Councils and other local interest groups. 17 completed questionnaires were returned.

Question 1: What is your role within Melton Borough regarding green infrastructure provision?

The responses established the stakeholder's interest in green infrastructure.

Question 2: What are the key issues facing the Borough's green space/natural resources?

Multi-functionality of green spaces was seen as important to enable efficient use of land, where pressures of development could mean that land resources become scarcer.

Climate change, including flooding were seen as key factors in affecting planning for green space.

The ability to provide *connectivity* and *good access* to quality green space near to where people live.

Increased pressure on the borough's green spaces was seen as key issue with the predicted population and economic growth.

Risks to *biodiversity* through loss of natural habitats and habitat fragmentation.

Question 3: Green infrastructure includes habitats, landscapes, waterways, access routes, parks & other assets.

- **Which do you think are the most important assets in the Borough ?**

Water bodies (rivers, lakes, ponds, groundwater), as these have helped define the landscape of the borough. Their linear, interconnectedness are a resource for recreational, amenity and biodiversity.

The extensive public rights of way network (680km within the borough) provides the only means for many to people access to the natural environment.

Nature reserves, SSSI's and local wildlife sites encompass the best habitats for wildlife, however need to be part of a linking network for future sustainability.

- **Which do you think are most at risk ?**

The ecological health of water bodies needs to be addressed through the Water Directive Framework objectives.

Wildlife and habitats due to development and agricultural practices.

- **What do you think the area needs more of & why ?**

Development of a coherent, realistic and balanced approach to the provision of green infrastructure.

Question 4: What do you consider to be the priorities for a green infrastructure strategy for Melton Borough ?

Create greater awareness across the borough as to what green infrastructure is and the need to protect it.

The importance of maintaining and enhancing green corridors, particularly for biodiversity.

Practical management & delivery of green infrastructure that develops community involvement & skills/training development.

Importance of cross border working as green infrastructure cuts across admin boundaries.

Suitable green infrastructure linkages to the sustainable urban extension.

The strategy should take into account the policy and recommendations of the 6C's sub region GI Strategy and the Leicestershire & Rutland Landscape & Woodland Strategy 2001.

Question 5: Do you think a Green Infrastructure Strategy & Action Plan will help your Council department or organisation achieve its objectives? If so, how ?

Natural England - Potential improved condition of SSSI's through the strategy could help to meet targets.

Leicestershire & Rutland Wildlife Trust – it could contribute to nature conservation & environmental protection.

Leicestershire County Council – help meet targets set within the local transport plan & rights of way improvement plan.

Environment Agency – provide support to the River Humber & Trent Catchment Flood Management Plan.

Planning Consultant to Melton Council – provision of a coherent structure to the delivery of green infrastructure across the borough and wider area.

Groundwork Leicester & Leicestershire – yes, as long as it works alongside other strategic plans such as the Leicester, Leicestershire & Rutland Biodiversity Action Plan.

Question 6: How do you think you and/or your organisation can help in developing & delivering green infrastructure in Melton Borough ?

Natural England – NE can provide continued advice through the planning consultation process

Leicestershire & Rutland Wildlife Trust – LRWT has interest in a number of sites across the borough through management and providing advice to landowners.

Leicestershire County Council (LCC) – LCC plans, manages & provides the majority of walking, riding and cycling network around the Borough

Environment Agency – working with Natural England on the OnTrent initiative to develop an integrated land management programme across the River Trent catchment known as *Farming & Water for the Future*

Planning Consultant to Melton Council – linking strategic objectives to delivery on the ground

Groundwork Leicester & Leicestershire – track record in engaging, training, planning & delivering green infrastructure on the ground. Also, as a charity more access to funding streams than the local authority.

Parish Councils – assist in identifying local assets and used to inform the Melton Local Development Framework.

**MELTON GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE STRATEGY
STAKEHOLDERS WORKSHOP AGENDA (5th April '11)**

10:30	Arrival & Refreshments	
10:40	Welcome & Introduction	Introduction: Melton Council
10:40	Purpose of today <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What do we aim to do and why? • What are the objectives for today ? 	Presentation: TEP <i>Tim Johns</i>
10:45	Aims & Objectives of the Strategy <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assets • Opportunities/Challenges • Town & Borough Spatial Priorities • Case Study – Stamford Brook (700 home sustainable development) 	Presentation: TEP <i>Chris Marrs/ Tim Johns</i>
11:15	GROUP SESSION: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is the mapping & analysis accurate ? • Are the priorities & vision right ? 	
11:45	Break	
12:00	Delivery Framework <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Informing Policy • Implementation • Introduction to GI Action Plan 	Presentation: TEP
12:20	GROUP SESSION <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review of delivery framework & GI issues • Discussion on scope & objectives of GI action plan 	
12:50	Next Steps & GI Action Plan	Presentation:TEP
13:00	Lunch	

Stakeholder Event - Attendees		
Paul Gilding	MBC	Planning Policy Officer
Nick Sandford	Woodland Trust	
Tony Lockley	Leicestershire County Council	Environmental Action Team Leader
Shaza Mark	MBC	Planning Policy Officer
Tim Johns	TEP	
Ian Dickinson	British Waterways	Area Planner (East Midlands)
Peter Stone	Grantham Canal Partnership	
Edwin McWilliam	Leicestershire County Council	Countryside and Rights of Way
Dinah Rudman	Melton Civic Society	
John Rudman	Melton Heritage Group	
Ruth Rolls	Greenspace East Midlands	Forum Manager
Benita Key	Natural England	Planning and Conservation Adviser
Daniel Clancy	Environment Agency	Development and Flood Risk Officer
Nick Wakefield	Environment Agency	Planning Liaison Officer
Claire Matchett	Melton Borough Council	Environment Officer
Raman Selvon	Melton Borough Council	Environment Team Leader
James Martin	Melton Ramblers Society	
Beth Johnson	CPRE	
Paul McKim	Paul McKim Consulting	Melton SUE Project Manager

MELTON BOROUGH GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE STRATEGY STAKEHOLDERS WORKSHOP – 5th April 2011

FACILITATORS NOTES

Morning Group Session:

Assets, opportunities, challenges & spatial priorities for Green Infrastructure

(11.15am, 30 minutes discussion)

Aim:

To comment on the priorities, opportunities & challenges for green infrastructure

Plans :

- Melton Borough GI Assets
- Melton Borough Biodiversity
- Melton Borough Access
- Melton Mowbray Open Spaces
- Melton Mowbray Access
- Melton Borough spatial priorities

Ask each member of the group to provide a 10 second introduction of themselves !

Each group should then comment on the identified priorities & opportunities:

- Have all the assets been mapped ?
- Are there any more gaps ?
- Any other current GI initiatives that need mapping ?
- Comments on spatial priorities

RECORD COMMENTS

Afternoon Group Session:

Delivery Framework & Action Plans

(12:20pm, 30 minutes discussion)

Aim:

To discuss the type of initiatives & proposals that will form the Action Plan to & get a better understanding of how GI can be delivered on the ground

Materials:

- Map of Melton Borough Strategic GI proposals
- Map of Melton Mowbray Draft GI Initiatives

There are two parts to this session:

1. Action Plan

Each group should discuss:

- The type of initiatives & proposals for inclusion within the Action Plan
- For each initiative/proposal, who would be the lead organisation ?
- For each initiative/proposal, what would be the funding sources ?
- For each initiative/proposal, what would be the timescales for delivery?

Discussion on the action plans will lead into the second part of the session.

2. Identifying GI delivery areas:

- Who is responsible for GI policy – both developing and ‘owning’ this strategy and for GI objectives within other policies. Should there be a GI champion/s, and if so, who?
- Who will pay for GI interventions – encourage creative thinking, e.g. economic development funds may pay for gateway greening, derelict land regeneration
- Who will physically deliver GI projects – again, encourage creative thinking, e.g. community action groups, developers, existing landowners
- Who will be responsible for long term management of GI assets – e.g. adoption by communities (residential or business), government agencies/local authorities

RECORD COMMENTS



Morning Group Session Comments

Melton Borough Access Plan

- The rights of way network is weak east of Melton Mowbray, however there are a number of 'quiet lanes' within the area that could provide a facility for local ramblers/pedestrians
- LCC are working to secure sections of 'unclaimed' public highway to the west of the Melton Mowbray for the purpose of the ROW network

Melton Borough GI assets

- Importance of waterways – canals & rivers
- Tension with management of Grantham Canal as certain sections are designated as SSSI, while also providing pedestrian route along towpath. Currently any improvements for navigation purposes would be incompatible with the current situation
- Melton Mowbray Park dependant on the river as an asset
- Value of volunteer base to manage & deliver assets
- Volunteers able to tap into more funding streams
- Existing parks & open spaces, tend to be focussed on day to day running issues

Spatial Priorities Plan

- Need to be more opportunistic, with more focus on tourism & rural economy

Afternoon Group Session Comments

Melton Borough Strategic Green Infrastructure Plan

- A1 Newark to Market Harborough dismantled railway corridor – ownership issues in terms of promoting a continuous/connected route, potential adjacent to Bottesford, however constraints north & south of Melton Mowbray. Nevertheless, in places natural habitats may have colonised the corridor & this should be encouraged.

Action Plan

- Consider initiative linking promotion of heritage of Melton Mowbray with park. More untapped potential of the park; eg. Boat tours on the river

- New director of health at Leicestershire Health Authority keen to promote green spaces as important resources for managing health related issues
- Melton Mowbray Estate Trust able to tap into community networks for potential delivery of green infrastructure
- Tap into active parish networks for delivery of green infrastructure
- The Grantham Canal Partnership are bidding for Heritage Lottery Funding; while also a number of wealthy individuals are involved with the Partnership & can contribute to funding
- Virtuous circle of tourism & rural enterprise & assets – more visits to an assets generate more income for investment in the asset. The improved asset is likely to attract more visits.