



Refer to:

- Figure 5: Sustainable Movement Network

6.1 Introduction

Connectivity is a key objective of GI, and in particular connecting people within urban and rural areas to their local landscape and townscape resources. The aspiration is for everyone to have easy access to attractive, exciting urban spaces, public realm and green places within towns, and routes into and through the countryside.

To meet this aspiration, a Sustainable Movement Network has been developed with the purpose of setting out a clearly defined hierarchy of routes that, if delivered, will give communities the confidence and incentive to undertake journeys, whether for recreation, health or practical reasons such as commuting to and from work, without their cars.

The intention is to develop a network that is:

- Clearly defined and well sign posted;
- Clearly coded to give confidence of use and navigation;
- Celebrates local character, highlighting areas or features of interest; and
- Safe to use at all levels.



6.2 The Network Hierarchy

The Sustainable Movement Network presents a hierarchy of routes that provide a means by which journeys can be planned and executed with confidence. The network is described as operating from ‘Doorstep to Countryside’, but in reality it offers a framework for a multitude of route options providing connectivity to and from a wide diversity of destinations such as places of residence, work, open space assets or local features of interest.

Three tiers of the Sustainable Movement Network have been defined using existing promoted routes, public rights of way, cycle routes or parts of established cycling or walking networks. Where gaps in the existing network exist, the approximate location of new routes and route sections have been identified in order to create a continuous and coherent network.

Promoted cycling routes such as the National Cycle Network Route 2, and walking routes such as the Exe Valley Way form a key component of the Sustainable Movement Network, and in many instances their strategic importance is highlighted by their identification as Green Ways. These existing and well known routes will continue to be promoted through this initiative.

The Sustainable Movement Network is indicative at this stage, and would be developed and refined at the site scale in order to respond to local conditions and land ownership issues. It may be possible to establish legal status for new access routes, whereas others might be on a permissive basis. Further development of the initiative should be in tandem with other programmes such as Public Rights of Way Improvement Plans and Local Transport Plans.

It is also important to note that further development will seek to specify the function of different parts of the network proposed, such as if a particular route is solely for pedestrians, or includes provision for cyclists and horse riders.

In developing the network, reference will be made to local urban or rural character through the use of particular materials and design detailing of routes and furniture. Signage and interpretation will highlight points of interest where this is appropriate. The development of themed trails and waymarkers should also be encouraged during detailed route design.

While it is the intention that the Sustainable Movement Network is generally traffic free, where proposals coincide with existing roads, careful consideration will need to be given to the design of the route and/or restricting traffic movements in order to achieve the confidence and incentive for users. It may also be appropriate to make provision for public transport modes on certain sections, such as guided buses or trams. Links to sustainable transport are discussed in more detail later in this chapter.

In order to provide clarity to the structure and function of the Sustainable Movement Network a clear hierarchy of routes has been developed comprising three connected tiers. These tiers are described in more detail in the Table 3 and illustrated on Figure 5.

6.3 The Sustainable Movement Network Hierarchy

Table 3: Sustainable Movement Network Hierarchy

Network Level	Type	Function	Composition
Primary	Green Ways	Strategic links through open countryside and Exeter city	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The Shobrook to Chudleigh Green Way - The Exe Valley and Estuary Green Way - The Clyst-Killerton Green Way - The River Otter Green Way - The East Exeter, Cranbrook and Feniton Green Way - The Topsham to Harpford Green Way - The Haldon Forest to Brandy Head Green Way - The Coastal Path Green Way - Off road cycling route, national cycle network - PROW Network
Secondary	Neighbourhood Connectors (Pink)	Link neighbourhoods and destinations through urban streets, public realm, parks and open spaces	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Exeter Green Circle - Urban Streets - Off road cycling route, national cycle network - PROW Network - Urban green spaces
	Countryside Connectors (Red)	Link villages and hamlets together and to assets in the wider countryside	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - PROW Network - Access land - Un-surfaced county road network
Local (Not illustrated)	Community Connectors	Provide Access to neighbourhood facilities and links into the wider network	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Urban Streets - Urban green spaces

6.4 The Primary Network

The Primary Network forms the backbone of sustainable movement and is composed of Green Ways. The aim of the Primary Network is to link major areas of existing and future population and key assets within and beyond the core study area. Whilst the network is composed of long continuous sections, it also forms part of shorter circular routes with other tiers in the hierarchy.

6.4.1 Green Ways

The Green Way network provides a model for a continuous network of safe, attractive and well sign-posted overland routes through open countryside and the heart of Exeter. The network would be well promoted and accessible and connect attractive, culturally and visually diverse towns, villages, open spaces and other important assets.

Over much of the landscape, Green Ways would comprise footpaths and cycle lanes and be appropriate to their immediate context and designated function. In order to avoid visual clutter in the open countryside, signage and other furniture would be low key and constructed from appropriate materials. In many respects the appearance and function of Green Ways would be similar to Countryside Connectors (see below). However, their strategic importance may be reflected in differentiations in signage, furniture and materials. It may be necessary to articulate the difference through a more detailed and sensitive approach to route design and specification, although this would need to be reconciled against the requirement to respect and enhance local character and identity.

By way of example, the proposed Exe Valley Green Way would formalise the existing strategic cycle and footpath links through the city but extend these northwards along the valley of the Exe. The majority of the route sections are already in existence, although it may be appropriate to enhance some sections in response to variations in the character of the landscapes it passes through. For example, delivery may include an initiative to alter signage and surfacing materials in close proximity to the city centre to respond and reflect historic or urban character. Further to the south, a more 'low key' design response may be appropriate as the route passes

through parks and pasture. Further north, the Green Way traverses open countryside along the valley of the Exe. Here exciting opportunities to reflect the area's rural character may be used as the stimulus for the design of the route and associated signage and route-side furniture.

Such treatment of Green Ways would provide variation in the traveller's experiences and offer significant opportunities to enhance local character. Where possible, local landowners might be encouraged to undertake landscape restoration or enhancement works in proximity to these priority routeways, such as through appropriate hedgerow restoration or tree planting. Where Green Ways are located in proximity to rivers and streams, further opportunities exist to offer enhanced interaction with waterside features, habitats and facilities, as well as access to new or existing jetties and moorings for water based transport or recreation.

6.5 The Secondary Network

The Secondary Network provides a series of connective routes for the city, urban fringe and rural areas and form the link between local and strategic networks. At this level of the movement hierarchy, the network is designed to carry significant numbers of people between neighbourhoods, towns and villages and key destinations, which might range from parks and open spaces, major shopping streets, places of employment or education, or notable recreation sites/facilities. The Secondary Network functions within both urban and rural areas and therefore Pink and Red Connectors have been defined in order to differentiate between Neighbourhood Connectors (Pink), and Countryside Connectors (Red).

6.5.1 Neighbourhood Connectors

Neighbourhood Connectors build upon the local network of urban routes to provide connectivity between different neighbourhoods within urban areas, and connections into the strategic primary network of Green Ways. Neighbourhood Connectors are routed to take advantage of parks and green space assets within the urban envelope, as well as other notable features such as areas of civic space or historic character, to encourage their wider use, interpretation and enjoyment.

They would be designed to respect local distinctiveness and townscape character through the choice of paving materials and design details such as street furniture and signage. In connecting areas of urban green space, long-term possibilities exist for urban greening of these routes to provide a network of green corridors throughout the urban envelope, thus contributing to general enhancement of the fabric of the city.

6.5.2 Countryside Connectors

In rural areas, Countryside Connectors link rural communities together, and to assets within the wider countryside. They also provide connections to the primary network of Green Ways and the heart of the city via the Neighbourhood Connectors. The proposed network comprises an intricate web of routes that provide direct connections between neighbouring villages and destinations. Much of the network is located within open countryside and, as a result, significant sections have been designed to take advantage of existing rights of way.

Countryside Connectors are also designed to provide direct access to areas of open access land such as Ashclyst Forest, as well as free riding areas at Woodbury Common and Haldon Forest. It will be important to ensure that access in these areas continues to be managed to ensure adverse impact on precious and vulnerable habitats and resources will not arise. However, it is also noted that improved access provision to green space destinations in close proximity to people's homes will encourage communities to enjoy their local environment and therefore reduce pressure on sensitive habitats and landscapes, such as the Pebblebed Heaths and Exe Estuary.

Countryside Connectors would comprise footpaths, cycle lanes and bridleways where appropriate. In order to avoid visual clutter in the open countryside, signage and other furniture would be low key and constructed from materials sympathetic to the surrounding area and context.

6.6 The Local Network

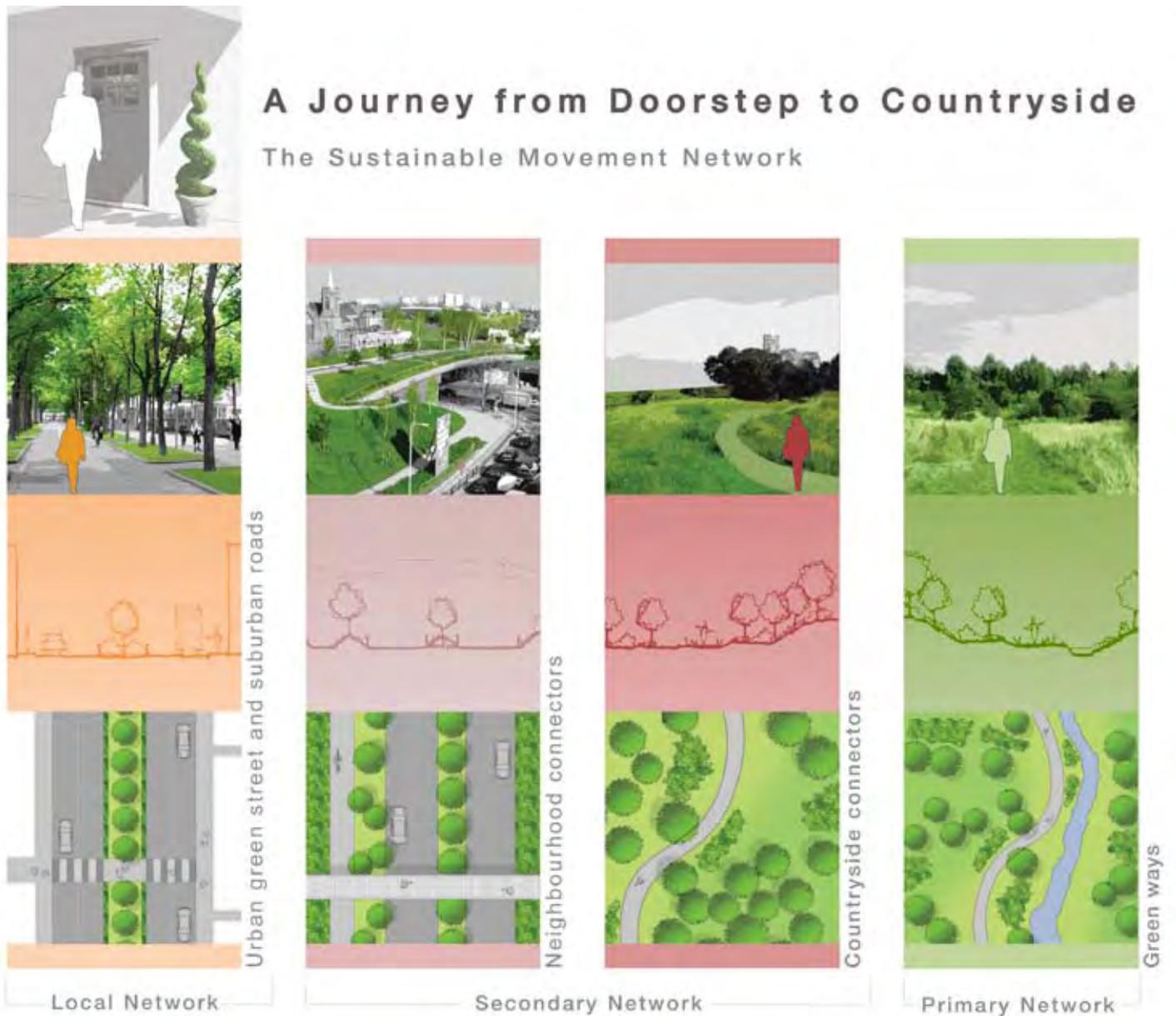
The local network provides access from the doorstep to a multitude of destinations via the wider secondary and primary networks that exist at a more strategic level.

6.6.1 Community Connectors

Community Connectors are the main arteries within a community neighbourhood of a city, town or village. These are the routes that will carry the majority of journeys made, for example between home and local park, shop or school. Essentially these represent the link between private and public spaces; between the individual resident and the community that they inhabit. Due to the scale of this study, these routes have not been identified. They may include the creation of tree lined boulevards, public realm enhancements, or the creation of pocket parks, community gardens and play areas along them, or they may represent the stimulus for the establishment of Home Zones and traffic calmed residential streets.

6.7 A Journey from Doorstep to Countryside

The diagram below illustrates the relationship between the Primary, Secondary and Local Networks, providing a 'journey from doorstep to countryside'.



6.8 Links to Sustainable Transport

The provision of sustainable transport solutions that reduce car use and increase the opportunities for pedestrian and cycle journeys, is fundamental to the successful functioning of the Sustainable Movement Network.

In time, the Sustainable Movement Network would be supported by a revitalised and fully integrated public transport system in both urban and rural areas, as well as a number of other exciting initiatives that have already proven to be successful on the continent and elsewhere in the UK. For example, this might include cycle hire facilities throughout the core study area at key destinations, bus stops and train stations, cycle ‘pick up and drop off’ initiatives, and public transport that enables return or part journeys to be made by train, bus or mini-bus under a single ticket.

Exeter is already a Cycle Friendly City and a Cycling Demonstration Town, promoting cycle use for recreation and traffic free commuting. Several cycle hire facilities and a map of cycle routes in the city together provide a useful basis on which to plan non-car journeys. The city wide cycle map also illustrates park and ride facilities and cycle crossings and shows that significant progress has already been made in moving towards an area wide sustainable movement plan. The aspiration would be to coordinate similar initiatives across the wider rural landscape to aid recreational and commuting journeys to be planned for residents in surrounding villages and towns and linking new communities and developments outside Exeter to the city.



6.9 The Need for Investment

For the Sustainable Movement Network to function, investment will be required to deliver routes that are of a suitable quality for safe and long term use. A high quality and well promoted network will be essential in giving users the confidence that their chosen journey will be achievable.

Attention would be paid to ensuring that the network is fit for purpose, with special attention paid to design to ensure compatibility with local landscape and townscape character and give due regard to safety and access for all.

Promotional maps and literature would be designed to assist local communities and visitors to plan their journeys using the Sustainable Movement Network and drive a modal shift away from reliance on the car.

6.10 The Green Ways Network

Green Ways in the core study area are described below to convey a better understanding of their character and function. This top tier of the Sustainable Movement Network has been separated into a number of sections, and the character, key features and assets, and principal destinations described. Furthermore, a number of sections of the Green Ways Network provide strategic links between the main settlements, including destinations outside of the core study area.

It is important to note that these sections do not define specific routes or journeys, as the network will be further refined at the local scale and coordinated to facilitate other local initiatives. However, each of these sections has a geographical identity that is further informed by the changing patterns of landscape and townscape character through which they pass.

6.10.1 North - South Routes

The Shobrook to Chudleigh Green Way

The Shobrook to Chudleigh Green Way is the main arterial route running through the hills and woods to the west of Exeter. To the north of Newton Cyres, it occupies the shallow, pastoral valley of the Shobrook, before crossing the River Creedy at Sweetham, and entering to rural and remote hills and valleys that define the western setting of Exeter City. The route winds through wooded hills and valleys largely along existing footpaths and bridleways, before running along the course of a dismantled rail line southwards from Farrants Farm. The route continues along the dismantled rail line to Chudleigh.

The Exe Valley and Estuary Green Way (includes the Creedy Spur)

The Exe Valley and Estuary Green Way follows the course of the River Exe from Thorverton in the north towards Dawlish on the coast. For much of its length, the route follows well established national pathways, notably the Exe Valley Way, Exe Estuary Trail, South West Coast Path and National Cycle Network Route 2. In the centre of Exeter, the route splits in two, with one spur traversing the less developed western bank of the river past Powderham Castle. The alternative route passes along the eastern bank of the river and estuary, providing a link to Topsham. Further planned sections will link to Lypstone and the existing section to Exmouth. A spur of this main arterial route to the north of Exeter provides strategic links to Newton Cyres along the valley of the River Creedy.

The Clyst-Killerton Green Way

The Clyst – Killerton Green Way begins in Silverton in the north, and runs south towards the National Trust property at Killerton Park. South of the parkland, the route traverses rural landscapes, largely along existing footpaths, to Broadclyst. South of the village, the route follows the valley of the Clyst, notably travelling through the attractive village of Sowton. The route ends at Topsham, where the Clyst meets the Exe.

The River Otter Green Way

The River Otter Green Way is the eastern-most route in the Primary Network. It originates to the north of Payhembury and follows existing footpaths to meet the Otter river valley at Ottery St Mary. South of the town, the route follows existing rights of way fringing the river valley floodplain to Newton Poppleford and on to Budleigh Salterton and the coast.

6.10.2 East - West Routes

The East Exeter, Cranbrook and Feniton Green Way

The East Exeter, Cranbrook and Feniton Green Way follows, in part, the course of the Roman Road as it traverses the rural landscape to the east of the city. It provides strategic links between Exeter and a number of key destinations, notably existing settlements at Redhayes, Clyst Honiton, Exeter Airport, Jack-in-the-Green/ Rockbeare and the Cranbrook New Community and Science Park. For much of the route, the Green Way does not occupy existing rights of way, and indicates that significant new stretches of rights of way will need to be identified. The route of the Green Way terminates at the north-south orientated River Otter Green Way at Feniton. This route is a critical link between areas of significant new development east of Exeter and the city.

The Topsham to Harpford Green Way

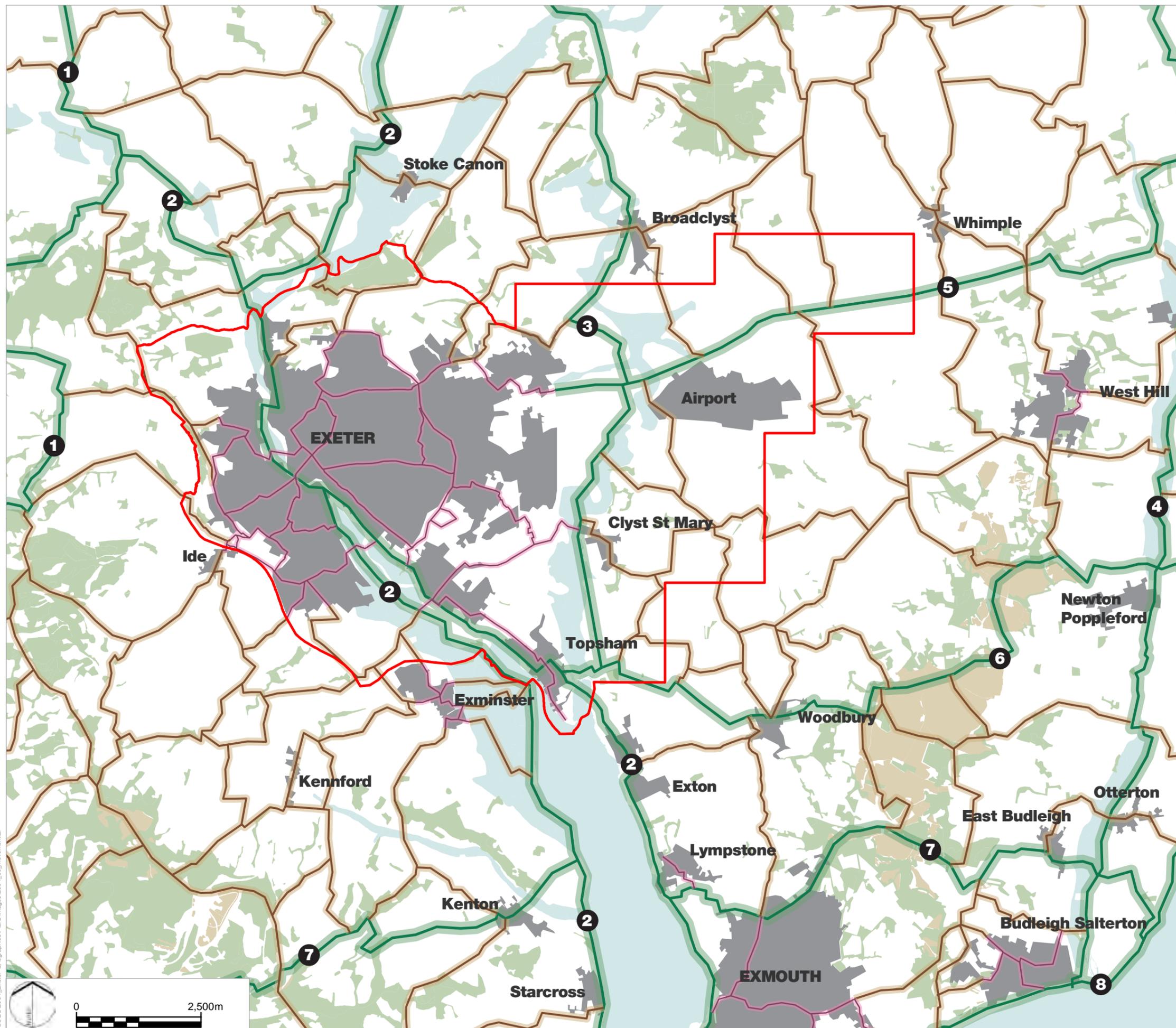
The Topsham to Harpford Green Way links two key North-south orientated Green Ways; the Clyst – Killerton Green Way and the River Otter Green Way. It links Topsham and south Exeter to Ebford and Woodbury. East of Woodbury, the route follows the fringes of the Heaths along the East Devon Way and gives access to the Pebblebed Heaths. The route continues past Harpford along the East Devon Way to Beacon Hill.

The Haldon Forest to Brandy Head Green Way

The Haldon Forest to Brandy Head Green Way is a significant route through rural landscapes to the south of Exeter, following in part the East Devon Way. Whilst it does not provide direct links between large areas of population, it does provide linkage between the three major north-south orientated routes and some of the area's major semi-natural accessible green spaces, notably Haldon Forest, the Exe Estuary, the Pebblebed Heaths and the coastal cliffs east of Otterton. To the south of Powderham Castle, the route meets the Exe Valley and Estuary Green Way to Starcross, where the summer ferry provides access across the estuary to Exmouth. At Exmouth the route again follows a short stretch of the Exe Valley and Estuary Green Way to Lympstone where it turns eastwards to rise onto Lympstone Common where it crosses the Pebblebed Heaths on to East Budleigh. It crosses the River Otter to the north of the aqueduct before heading east to Brandy Head.

The Coastal Path Green Way

The Coastal Path Green Way follows the South west Coast Path from Exmouth eastwards through Budleigh Salterton onwards towards Tortoiseshell Rocks.



Legend

- Core Study Area
 - Sustainable Movement Network
 - Green Ways
 - North - South Routes
 1. The Shobrook to Chudleigh Green Way
 2. The Exe Valley and Estuary Green Way (includes the Creedy Spur)
 3. The Clyst-Killerton Green Way
 4. The River Otter Green Way
 - East - West Routes
 5. The East Exeter, Cranbrook and Feniton Green Way
 6. The Topsham to Harpford Green Way
 7. The Haldon Forest to Brandy Head Green Way
 8. The Coastal Path Green Way
 - Countryside Connectors
 - Neighbourhood Connectors
 - Urban Areas and Exeter Airport
- Urban areas, woodlands, heathland, river valley floodplain, estuary and coast are illustrated to provide context.

Exeter
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LDA DESIGN

LANDSCAPE
URBAN
ENVIRONMENT
ECOLOGY

EXETER AREA AND EAST DEVON NEW GROWTH POINT GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE STUDY
Figure 5: Sustainable Movement Network

DATE	March 2009	DRAWN	RP
SCALE	1:75,000 at A3	CHECKED	IH
STATUS	FINAL	APPROVED	FO
DWG.NO.	2594LE/0005		





GI Projects

Refer to:

- Figure 6: Site Specific Project Opportunities

7.1 Introduction

The Biodiversity Network and Sustainable Movement Network describe landscape scale initiatives that will help guide and shape new development and change across wide areas as well as address the fragmentation of both pedestrian/cycle routes and habitats that is evident across some parts of the core study area.

In addition to these networks, a number of projects have been identified that seek to deliver multi-functional benefit across a wide range of agendas such as habitat enhancement, community action, education and interpretation. They often encompass elements of the spatial networks described earlier and many will result in new or enhanced open space provision.

All projects were developed through consultation with the project Advisory Group, stakeholders and consultees such as the Environment Agency. A distinction is made between major projects, that will require significant funding and coordination, and supportive projects that can be delivered through a coordinated programme of smaller scale initiatives,

perhaps through individual landowners, community groups, parish councils or the voluntary sector. It is anticipated that major projects will come forward from the local authorities, developers and statutory agencies. Supportive projects will be from the 'bottom up', and as such there will be a need for co-ordination and advice on funding and long term management from a GI Champion or GI Consortium, just as major projects will need coordination and ongoing support.

A number of additional GI Projects were also identified by the project Advisory Group, stakeholders and consultees. A list of these projects is presented in Appendix 9. Only those Projects that were given highest priority or that offered greatest potential for multi-functionality have been taken forward and developed in this study, however, other projects either identified in the workshop or that arise in the future should also be considered for delivery. A Multi-functionality Checklist is presented in Appendix 10 to facilitate the identification of future GI Projects.

It will be necessary to ensure that all proposed or future GI Projects are considerate of the receiving environment. For example, the Landmark Bridge (see below) has been identified as being in an area of high archaeological potential, as its exact location and design will need to reflect this.

7.2 Major Projects

7.2.1 Landmark Bridge



The M5 represents a significant physical barrier between the city and its rural hinterland, existing villages and towns and the new communities and development that are planned for areas to the east, principally along the A30 corridor.

The Sustainable Movement Network recognises the importance of establishing a Primary Green Way link between these areas of new development and the city, as well as a route into the Clyst Valley landscape and wider rural hinterland of Exeter. The exact function and course of The East Exeter, Cranbrook Whimble and Feniton Green Way would need to be developed through consultation with local communities and landowners, as well as other interested parties. However, given its importance as a route between the city and major new developments including the Cranbrook New Community, it would be envisaged that both a cycleway and footpath would be necessary, as well as incorporating sustainable transport modes.

The establishment of this link would offer an opportunity to create a new crossing over the M5, north of Junction 29, in the vicinity of the existing crossing at Tithebarn Lane. Various options exist, but given the significance of the crossing in linking the city to major new development and the airfield, it may be appropriate to consider an iconic landmark structure or 'green bridge' that could signify arrival in Exeter and highlight the Science Park

on the adjacent site. The Green Bridge option would also offer potential for delivering enhanced habitat links across the M5, along the A30 corridor and into the city, via existing green space assets.

7.2.2 Cranbrook Country Park

Proposals for the Cranbrook New Community, to the West of Exeter, include the provision of a new Country Park. This will be the most significant area of accessible green space within the new community, providing recreational opportunities for local residents and enhancement of the local environment.

Specific proposals include the provision of an interconnected network of access links, including footpaths, cyclepaths and bridleways. The potential exists to link the Country Park to assets in the surrounding countryside, including Killerton Estate to the north, East Devon AONB to the south and east, as well as neighbouring villages and Exeter city. Enhanced linkage through the provision of new access routes will deliver components of the proposed Green Ways and Countryside Connectors outlined in the Sustainable Movement Network, although it may be necessary to refine these indicative routes based on the final design of the New Community.

Similarly the proposals will enhance local wildlife, through the provision of new semi-natural habitats such as ponds and native broadleaved woodlands, and new and enhanced wildlife corridors. These rich semi-natural environments will be appropriate for context and will, alongside access routes and other green space assets such as play areas, orchards and wetlands, combine to create a great diversity of multifunctional spaces and experiences.

It is anticipated that the Country Park will have an Interpretation/Education Centre, providing learning facilities for new and existing residents of the area. This will help enhance the local communities understanding of local environmental issues and provide ‘signposts’ to other environmental and recreational resources in the vicinity such as accessible wildlife sites and countryside walks, as well as details of other ongoing GI or community initiatives, including volunteer schemes. The facilities required for an Interpretation Centre have been outlined in the S106 submission. It will be

necessary for the developers of the New Community to liaise with the Local Planning Authority and/or the proposed GI delivery body to ensure the masterplan for the Cranbrook New Community is appropriate to the GI Spatial Framework, and conforms to the overall Vision for GI, as described in Chapter 2.

7.2.3 The Clyst Meadows and Lower Clyst Projects

It is evident that the Clyst Valley is a key enhancement priority across both of the two main GI spatial initiatives described previously, as well as forming an important component of the setting of Exeter and maintaining the distinction between Exeter City and settlements located in its rural hinterland, as identified in the Spatial Framework. Therefore, given its proximity to Exeter, and the potential it has across a broad range of agendas, there is significant scope to develop exciting GI Projects that address many of the aims and objectives of this study.

In recognition of the differing characteristics of the tidal and non-tidal reaches of the Clyst Valley, two distinct projects have been identified; the Clyst Meadows Project, following the floodplain of the Clyst between Broadclyst and Clyst St Mary and the Lower Clyst Project, located along the tidal reaches of the Clyst from Clyst St Mary to the confluence with the Exe Estuary at Topsham.



Original image courtesy of Mike Williams, Environment Agency

The Clyst Meadows Project

The Clyst Meadows Project will primarily focus on strengthening the landscape character and habitat potential of the Clyst Valley from Broadclyst to Clyst St Mary and will present opportunities for improved access to the countryside and environmental research and education.

The project area is broadly coincident with the Unsettled Farmed Valley Floor Landscape Character Type as illustrated on Figure 27 and derived from the East Devon AONB, Blackdown Hills AONB and East Devon District Council Landscape Management Guidelines⁶. The Guidelines presented in the assessment make several recommendations that will form the basis for practical landscape enhancement, supplemented with other projects that will seek to enhance the legibility enjoyment of the valley landscape. The relevant guidelines presented in the report are as follows:

Boundaries: conserve and restore by:

- Encouraging maintenance of hedges by shorter hedge-laying rotation than elsewhere, to mitigate effect of rapidly growing wetland species and avoid use of flail on over-sized branches.
- Encouraging the appropriate management of ditches by infrequent or rotational management as required to conserve rare plants and insects.
- Discouraging any further enclosure of floodplains, except temporary fencing for biodiversity conservation.

Farming and land use: conserve and restore by:

- Seeking to retain unimproved permanent pasture and wet grassland.
- Promoting the management and restoration of orchards.

Semi-natural habitats: conserve and enhance by:

- Encouraging the retention and management of riparian trees for age and species diversity, promoting locally indigenous wetland species.

Woodland: conserve and enhance by:

- Encouraging woodland management for age and species diversity, promoting locally indigenous wetland species.
- Discouraging any spread of conifer plantations

Settlement and development: conserve by:

- Maintaining the inherent absence of settlement and development.

Recommendations for further action:

- Semi-natural habitats: explore the potential to restore wetland habitats along watercourses.

The Clyst Meadows Project will be a demonstrator of how the Biodiversity Network and Sustainable Movement Network can be delivered, and should be a priority area for the further refinement and delivery of network components. The exact function and course of the Sustainable Movement Network routes and Biodiversity Networks that have been identified for the Project Area would need to be developed in more detail through consultation with landowners and local communities as well as other interested parties. In addition, funding mechanisms will need to be investigated, for capital works and for long term management and maintenance of habitat features, access routes and other facilities.

The Clyst-Killerton Green Way is a key component of the Sustainable Movement Network and delivery of the section between Broadclyst and Clyst St Mary should be given priority through the Clyst Meadows Project. The delivery of improved river and road crossing points should be given priority to facilitate delivery of the local Countryside Connectors to give improved access to the river valley from local villages.

The Clyst Meadows Project should include new initiatives that seek to address learning and research agendas, perhaps through the establishment of a 'station' from which school visits can undertake field studies or other activities. It may also be possible to treat parts of the project area as a 'living laboratory' to observe the local effects of climate change, or test different methods and

⁶ East Devon, Blackdown Hills AONB and East Devon District Council Landscape Management Guidelines. November 2008.

approaches to habitat enhancement or creation, flood management or river bank stabilisation. Given the close proximity of the Weatherworld proposals, it is clear that the Clyst Meadows present a significant opportunity for understanding the impact of climate change and testing methods to ameliorate its effects, including flood water management techniques.

The project area should also be developed as a forum for engendering local support and action for environmental enhancement. A programme of environmental activities and training events could be established based on traditional skills such as coppice management, pollarding, and hedge laying. In doing so, the Clyst Meadows Project area could then be actively managed, in part, by skilled volunteers.

It is clear that a range of exciting opportunities will arise from the Clyst Meadows Project. Whilst coordination and long term management is essential, significant input of labour and skills may be derived from the local community. A 'Friends of the Clyst Meadows' group could be established as a forum for information exchange, research and communication, and also stimulate further ideas and initiatives in the future, perhaps through the establishment of a programme of training courses and events as discussed previously.

It is also apparent that within East Devon the local authority's Countryside Service has proven knowledge and expertise in the management of similar sites as well as engagement with local volunteers. This project could therefore present an exciting challenge for the local authority to adopt some areas of the project area and make the Clyst Meadows Project a regional exemplar of best practice in GI delivery and partnership working.

Within the Clyst Meadows Project Area emphasis will be given to landscape restoration and enhancement, whilst improving access and biodiversity interest as previously indicated. A low key, naturalistic approach is desirable, and all developments should be compatible with its function as a fluvial floodplain. The Environment Agency should be a key partner and advisor in the development of the project, building on their extensive local knowledge and activity in the Clyst Valley. The National Trust will also be a key project partner, the Trust being a significant land owner in the area.

The Lower Clyst Project

The Lower Clyst Project, whilst forming a physical extension of the Clyst Meadows Project, should have a different set of priorities, on account of the character of the landscape and its contrasting hydrological characteristics and patterns of land ownership. The Lower Clyst Project should also be seen as a natural evolution of existing and ongoing activity in the area, currently being led by the Environment Agency.

The Lower Clyst project is centred upon the tidal reaches of the lower Clyst, and as such is prone to sea level rise and inundations that may, in future, become increasingly regular and of greater magnitude. Managed inundation will be an important part of flood management in the locality and will clearly influence how the land can be used.

Managing water levels will allow for the creation of transitional habitats across the length of the project area, ranging from brackish and estuarine habitats around Topsham to riverine habitats further upstream. Creating a range of habitats will present significant benefits to breeding, roosting and feeding waders and wildfowl, invertebrates and a wide range of plant communities. Whilst grazing will be necessary to maintain habitats, it will reduce the number of economically viable options available to farmers. As such the key to the success of the project will be to secure adequate compensation payments for landowners and incentives to manage the land both for habitat enhancement and as part of wider flood defences.

Inundation, and a generally wetter environment will have a further influence on the accessibility of the land. Presently, the project area is largely inaccessible, with no formal rights of way identified in the floodplain. The perceived 'remoteness' of this tract of landscape should be maintained, for practical reasons, to reduce the impact of access on sensitive habitats, and in recognition of the unpredictability of flooding events. Maintaining its remoteness will also reinforce the distinctive character of the locality, which contrasts to other areas upstream.

Despite this, the Sustainable Movement Network presents the Clyst-Killerton Green Way occupying the outer fringes of the floodplain landscape. Importantly this will provide a key link in the network, but will not provide access to the valley floor or river, thus maintaining its remote and inaccessible character. Whilst enhancement of the semi-natural character of the floodplain will be a major objective, land management should also seek to provide opportunities for visitors to have views into and across the valley. The provision of hides and interpretation boards in some locations may also be appropriate.

The choice of materials for the construction of this stretch of the Clyst-Killerton Green Way will be important. Design solutions should use natural materials that are compatible with its location in the floodplain and recognise the potential for regular flooding. It should also be acknowledged that during major flood events, stretches of the Clyst-Killerton Green Way will be inaccessible, and relevant safety information will need to be presented.

Project design and planning through liaison and partnership working between the local planning authority, Environment Agency, Natural England and local landowners will be key to the success of the project. Maintaining the economic viability of the landscape will be critical, especially if sea level rise and increased emphasis on enhancing floodplain habitats locally will take priority.

7.2.4 Science Park

The proposed Science Park development may be one of the first elements of the proposed growth point to be implemented. Whilst the site is a commercial development, it also provides the opportunity to deliver an element of GI, and provide tangible evidence of GI implementation. As such it may be appropriate to regard it as a GI Project.

In conjunction with the proposed 'Landmark Bridge' project the Science Park site offers an opportunity to provide a GI resource on the ridge-top adjacent to the site of new development at Monkerton. In respect of landscape enhancement and delivering other GI aims, the retention of the historic parkland at Junction 29 and

the trees around the site of the Redahyes Country House (now demolished) should be pursued, and provide the framework for new accessible green space and enhanced terrestrial grassland and woodland habitats, forming a key part of the A30 biodiversity corridor.

The development will deliver an important part of the Sustainable Movement Network, being located at the junction of the Green Way linking the city to the new community to the east (the East Exeter, Cranbrook and Feniton Green Way) and the Green Way running north-south along the Clyst (the The Clyst – Killerton Green Way).

It will be necessary for the developers of the Science Park to liaise with the LPA and/or the proposed GI delivery body to ensure the masterplan is appropriate to the GI Spatial Framework, and conforms to the overall Vision for GI in the Exeter Fringes, as described in Chapter 2.

7.2.5 Exeter Riverside Valley Park



The sequence of parks and open spaces that run through the heart of Exeter, from Cowley to Countess Weir, are an important landscape and recreational asset contributing to the image and identity of Exeter. Together, they provide easy access from the city centre and areas of housing and employment to semi natural areas and informal and formal recreation opportunities. They are also a key part of the footpath and cycleway network, with a series of off-road route options available to explore the area and links to destinations in the wider rural landscape.

The parks and open spaces, in combination with grazing land, allotments, sports pitches and semi natural habitat areas along the Exe, combine to create a wealth of experiences, views and recreation opportunities. An ongoing programme is underway, with recent initiatives including parkland enhancement projects, cycle-path improvements and new tree planting (refer to the Riverside Enhancements pages on the Exeter City Council website for details⁷).

Over the coming years, there is an opportunity to create a coherent image of the Exeter Riverside Valley Park that meets the needs of existing and future users, but also raises the profile of the city's foremost green space asset. The aim of the project will be to raise the Exeter Riverside Valley Park to the prestige of other large parks and open spaces in major cities, such as Bos Park in Amsterdam, Central Park in New York, and the Lee Valley Regional Park in London.

In creating a new, stronger identity for the park, attention will be given to the development of a new vision and masterplan, with emphasis placed on the function and connectivity of different elements, and a consistent use of furniture, interpretation, construction materials and signage to contribute to a bold, coherent and accessible identity.

It may include the provision of new assets, such as a major outdoor events area, park café, city play zone, and sculpture area, as well as other areas where emphasis is placed on habitat enhancement and a semi natural river meadow character. Whilst attention will be paid to unifying the scheme into forming a coherent identity, special care will be taken to ensure that the choice of design responses and use of materials is sensitive to its function and the character of its surroundings. In this respect, a starting point may be to establish a series of 'character zones', each attributed with a strong local identity and function, but all guided by a coherent vision for the Exeter Riverside Valley Park.

As part of the masterplan for the Exeter Riverside Valley Park, special attention will be paid to improving access points. These will be important 'gateways' into the park, and present an opportunity to provide interpretation, navigation materials and notice of park events.

In addition to encompassing the parkland and open spaces along the Exe Valley, the initiative will also include improvements to Ludwell Valley Park, further increasing recreational opportunities and enhancing the overall image of Exeter Riverside Valley Park. However, special attention will be given to ensuring their separate identity, character and function is maintained.

7.3 Supportive Projects

7.3.1 Historic Woodland Planting Scheme

In addition to small copses and plantings arising from the Village Enhancement Zones described above, new deciduous woodland could be encouraged on former woodland sites, the locations of which have been derived through analysis of old maps such as 1st Edition Ordnance Survey mapping or older estate documents. Whilst the extent of woodland has remained relatively stable within the core study area, re-establishing lost woodlands will make a significant contribution to the wooded character of the landscape and also offer an opportunity to enhance the overall area of woodland habitat in the core study area and therefore contribute to the establishment of the Biodiversity Network.

It is unlikely that these areas will have retained a viable seed bank, and as such there is not a sound biological argument for woodland creation on these sites. However, arguments based on historic precedent and also expanding the baseline habitat resource are valid. A programme of historic map research, consultation and dialogue with land owners will help identify appropriate locations for the establishment of historic woodlands. As such, locations for new woodlands have not been identified on Figure 6.

Increased woodland areas, may also contribute wood product to a local drive towards fuelling Combined Heat and Power (CHP) plants. Coppice management, in addition to creating rich habitat resources, would also supply a regular crop of wood fuel.

⁷ <http://www.exeter.gov.uk/index.aspx?articleid=1556>

7.3.2 Parish Boundary Enhancement Scheme

Hedged field boundaries and stream courses, woodlands and ancient communications routes are an important part of the rural landscape in the core study area. In particular, parish boundaries are often of great antiquity which gives them significant historical value, not least as a tangible link to very early episodes of settlement and land management. In addition, old hedges tend to have greater wildlife value due to their diversity of component species.

Whilst the Biodiversity Network makes suggestions for the enhancement of hedgerows and other boundary features, consideration should also be given to addressing the repair and visual character of parish boundaries. This could be through the management regimes that create thicker, taller and more species rich hedgerows, or have a greater occurrence of hedgerow trees perhaps, planted at points of particular interest, or in locations where they were illustrated on old Tithe Maps.

Historically, parish boundaries were important in helping bind a community together and reinforce their identity by holding celebrations that confirmed the limits of their land. Many parishes in England, including a number in the core study area, still ‘beat their bounds’, sometimes at intervals of several years. The re-establishment of such an activity in other parishes where it is no longer practiced could help galvanise community identity, but perhaps more importantly help facilitate a greater understanding of and respect for the local environment.

A range of community projects could also be inspired by an understanding of parish boundaries. New boundstones could be commissioned and positioned to celebrate distinctive places or locations in the parish, thereby drawing in local artists and craftsmen. Projects involving school children could include an exploration of the parish boundary and its history. This could be the start of projects to create parish maps.

7.3.3 Historic Parkland Enhancement Scheme

Several historic parks are located within the core study area. Only four; comprising Rockbeare Manor (Grade II), Killerton House (Grade II*), Northernhay and Rougemont Gardens (Grade II) and St Bartholomew Cemetery (Grade II) are on the Register of Parks and Gardens of Special Historic Interest in England, maintained by English Heritage. Several sites within Exeter are listed on the City Council's local register. In the wider landscape, analysis of the Historic Landscape Character Assessment and aerial photographs has identified other surviving remnant parklands that are not listed and formally mapped.

The intrinsic character and quality of surviving areas of parkland varies, although they do contain some or all of the features that are common to English Parklands, such as a designed layout, grazed meadows, avenues of trees, specimen trees, veteran trees and formal gardens. Whilst these are often important as the setting for private residences, hotels or businesses, they are also historic and cultural elements in the landscape that display changing fashions in design and land management over many hundreds of years.

The preservation of features of intrinsic historic value is of prime importance. However, opportunities exist for the implementation of management regimes and formal projects that seek to raise the biodiversity interest and habitat value of the parklands. It might also be possible to develop ideas that make a positive contemporary contribution to the continued evolution of the designed landscape that serve to enhance the character of these parks and gardens. Clearly for any significant works, advice should be sought from English Heritage, in order to examine the appropriateness of proposals from an historic landscape perspective.

It may be appropriate to develop low key conservation ideas that seek to enhance lost or degraded views and vistas or replant ageing avenues or tree groups that are of an inappropriate species or showing serious signs of decline. Designs and ideas will vary for each estate and parkland, and should reflect a respect for the past, with commitment to contribute something from the current

generation. Such approaches should help enhance the legibility of the historic design intentions of a site in the long term. It is also important to note that the influence of parklands often extend beyond the formal parkland boundary, for example in the distribution or species of trees in the wider rural landscape. It is therefore important to ensure that the strategy extends beyond the parkland boundary and look to enhance the wider landscape.

Any works to Registered Parks and Gardens should demonstrate a clear understanding of the heritage asset and be discussed with the English Heritage Territorial Landscape Architect (TLA).

7.3.4 Community Gardens Initiative



In recent years significant emphasis has been placed on the importance of having access to fresh produce, reducing food miles, and taking exercise. Growing food, perhaps in allotments, community gardens or city farms is an ideal way of achieving these aspirations, as well as interacting with other members of the local community. There are 26 allotment sites in Exeter City, and several more are associated with villages in towns in the remainder of the study area. However, the popularity of allotments has meant that there are very few vacancies or long waiting lists. Indeed, several sites in Exeter are closed to new applications.

Opportunities for the establishment of such facilities should be sought throughout the study area, close to existing residential areas or areas of new housing development. Community gardens are often developed by local people in a voluntary capacity, and commonly retain a strong degree of volunteer involvement. Some larger community gardens employ workers whilst others are run solely by small groups of dedicated volunteers.

Most are run by a management committee of local people and some are run as partnerships with local authorities, whilst retaining strong local involvement. Most projects provide food-growing activities, training courses, school visits, community allotments and community businesses. In addition, some provide play facilities and sports facilities, and after school and holiday schemes. Whilst no sites have been identified on Figure 6, in recognition of land ownership and ongoing development issues, opportunities to develop community gardens should be sought as part of new developments and perhaps on areas of land close to existing communities that is perhaps of limited agricultural value.

7.3.5 Exeter Viewpoint Topographs



Particular locations that are accessible on existing public rights of way, or via improvements identified on the Sustainable Movement Network plan (Figure 5), provide dramatic long distance views and panoramas across Exeter and its landscape setting. These locations provide much valued opportunities to look out across large areas of the countryside and appreciate how Exeter sits within its landscape setting and relates to its surroundings, such as the river and estuary, the wooded hills to the north and west, and local infrastructure, such as the M5. Some locations also provide views to landmark features within the historic core of Exeter, and buildings and areas of the city and surrounding villages that may be of personal interest.

However, in the absence of clear interpretive materials in these locations, the relationship between features, distances and points of particular interest may be often difficult to discern.

Eight locations have been identified within the core study area where there are opportunities to enhance viewing opportunities with the establishment of view finder points or topographs. Sited adjacent to a public right of way, such structures would provide ramblers and walkers with an opportunity to understand the wider landscape and their geographic location within it. Elsewhere in the UK, for example Dovers Hill in the Cotswolds, such features act as a destination, either as an event on a long route or as a mid point on a shorter walk.

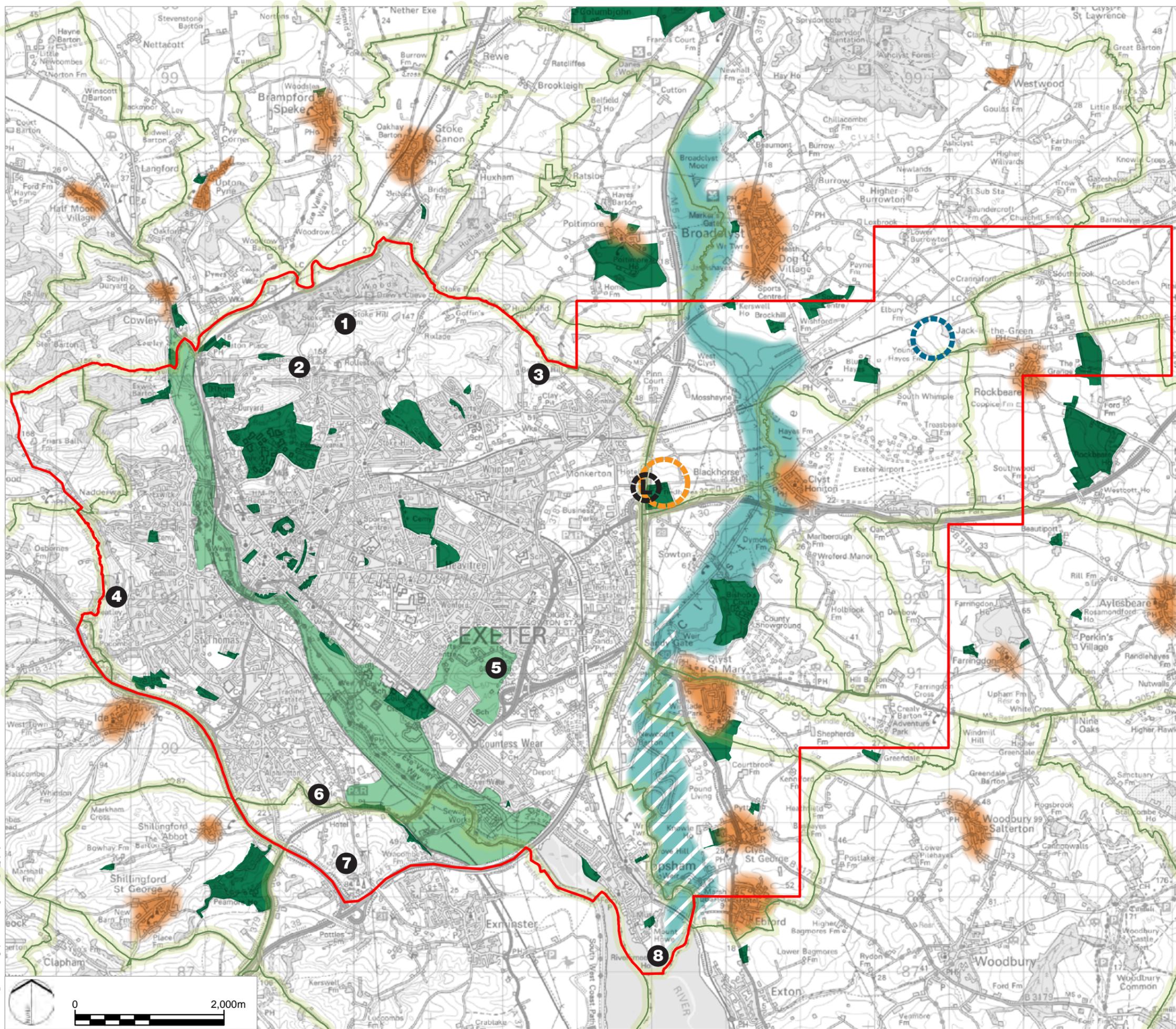
Topographs are likely to be constructed from simple materials such as stone, brick or wood, with a metal plaque into which is etched information about the area such as points of interest or landform features visible on the horizon. The orientation of the items is identified and distance to them is also often illustrated. In addition to topographical information, details of local wildlife or historic features and events could be included to aid interpretation and understanding of landscape features, such as siting interpretation relating to Iron Age settlement and defence on Stoke Hill, or the importance of river trade and communications at Topsham.

7.3.6 Village Enhancement Zones

On the fringes of villages within and immediately surrounding the core study area, consideration should be given to local landscape enhancement schemes, that seek to provide a more sympathetic and attractive setting for settlements. This may involve the planting of tree groups of an appropriate species to mark village gateways, avenues of trees along hedges bordering the main approach roads, or perhaps planting to enhance views to prominent village buildings.

Opportunities for local interest groups to become involved in the design and implementation of individual schemes should be exploited and in particular school groups are ideal as a consequence of the educational benefit the project represents. For example, the involvement of school and youth groups may be through a coordinated programme of seed collection, sponsorship and tree planting. Such plantings might be used to commemorate particular events, community groups or individuals, and as such a small plaque may be appropriate to mark the planting. If sited on a public right of way, a bench in the vicinity may also prove popular and encourage use of existing or enhanced rights of way networks in close proximity to home.

It should be noted that several villages are highlighted on Figure 6. Other villages and hamlets within and surrounding the core study area can be included within this initiative as opportunities arise.



Legend

- Core Study Area
- Major Projects:**
- L Landmark Bridge
- Exe Valley Riverside Park
- The Clyst Meadows Project
- The Lower Clyst Project
- Science Park
- C Cranbrook Country Park
- Supportive Projects:**
- Village Enhancement Zones
- 1 Exeter Viewpoint Topographs
 1. Stoke Hill
 2. Duryard Valley Park
 3. Beacon Hill
 4. Alington/Whitstone Valley Park
 5. Pynes Hill
 6. Knowle Hill
 7. Pearce's Hill
 8. Riversmeet
- Parish Boundary Enhancement Scheme
- Historic Parkland Enhancement Scheme

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EXETER AREA AND EAST DEVON NEW GROWTH POINT GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE STUDY
Figure 6: Site Specific Project Opportunities

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GI Strategic Network

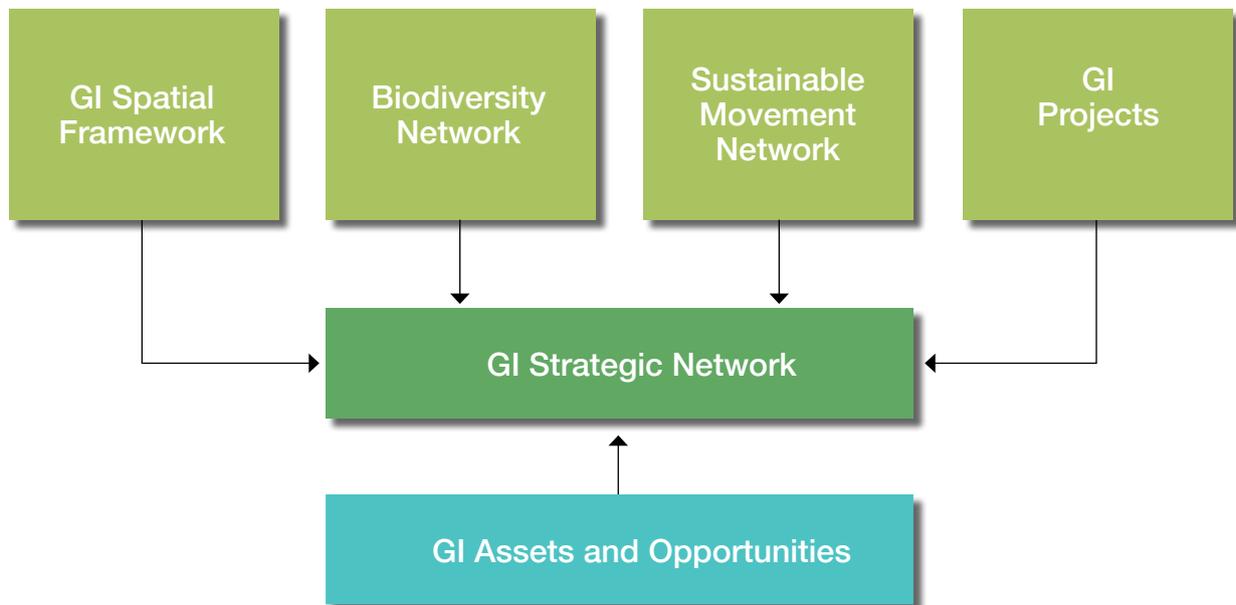
Refer to:

- Figure 7: GI Strategic Network

8.1 Identifying the GI Strategic Network

Through analysis of the resources, known development proposals, and the GI Spatial Framework, Biodiversity Network, Sustainable Movement Network and GI Projects previously described, it is evident that there are locations within and surrounding the core study area where demonstrable concentrations of GI opportunities occur. As illustrated by the diagram over the page and shown on Figure 7, these locations form part of the GI Strategic Network.

It is in these locations that the multi-functional nature of GI is particularly evident and where the interface of multiple benefits and stakeholder interests can provide a focus for prioritising areas for GI investment and delivery. Two levels of the GI Strategic Network are identified; the Sub-regional GI Network, which represents a higher priority for funding, and the Local GI Network, which represents a lower priority for funding, but remains an important focus for GI enhancement and provision.



8.2 The GI Strategic Network Plan

The GI Strategic Network (Figure 7) illustrates the interconnected relationship of Sub-Regional and Local GI. They are not intended to indicate rigid corridors for GI provision but instead identify broad zones within which GI related proposals and investment could be focused. These multi-functional zones will encompass a range of objectives, dependent upon the nature of the assets and opportunities presented.

The GI Strategic Network identified should be regarded as a conceptual framework to aid the decision making process with regards to GI delivery on the ground. It is not intended to be prescriptive or inflexible, and as a consequence the network delivered in the longer term may vary depending on a multitude of strategic and local issues, not least those relating to land ownership, pressure on land for food production and a changing development context.

To ensure the vision of a multi-functional GI Strategic Network is achieved in the long term, development and delivery should be guided by a series of core principles:

- Opportunities to deliver GI should be taken wherever they arise, whether these opportunities occur within or outside the Sub-Regional and Local GI Strategic Network, or indeed the Biodiversity Network and Sustainable Movement Network;
- Preference should be given to GI proposals which complement other GI assets and resources in the locality, enhance local landscape and townscape character and the positive identity of the area;
- Where development or landscape change results in the loss of GI assets, opportunities for reinstatement or enhancement elsewhere in the locality should be taken to ensure that there is no net loss of assets;

- Long term monitoring of GI delivery and management is important. In addition to monitoring delivery against BAP and other targets, regular reviews will ensure enhancements to existing GI assets and the provision of new GI assets are recorded. Reviews will also help identify successful methods of delivery and partnership working. Multi-agency reviews will also help identify new opportunities as they arise; and
- Coordination of activity and promotion of GI to assist support and funding from private and public sector bodies.

8.2.1 Sub-Regional GI Network

Sub-Regional GI Corridors within and immediately surrounding the core study area broadly follow the river valleys of the Exe and Clyst, emphasising their importance as major wildlife corridors, recreational assets and components of the Sustainable Movement Network. It is also notable that these strategic GI corridors contain a significant number of the major GI Projects identified for the core study area and represent the key landscape elements informing the GI Spatial Framework for Exeter, satellite communities and rural hinterland.

A Sub-regional GI corridor has also been identified on the Pebblebed Heaths, in recognition of its significance as a rich habitat resource and major strategic recreational asset. Whilst not described in detail in this study, it is important to emphasise that the Pebblebed Heaths Sub-Regional GI Corridor will be the focus of habitat protection and enhancement, and effort will be placed on ensuring that access and use of the heaths will not compromise sensitive biodiversity assets and the area's tranquil character.

The Exe Valley

The Exe Valley already functions as a GI Corridor, combining important pedestrian and cycling links with areas of outdoor recreation and biodiversity interest. The GI Study therefore seeks to enhance the existing resource through a coordinated programme of landscape, access and biodiversity enhancement, notably through the Exe Riverside Valley Park, and general enhancements to existing habitat resources and sustainable movement links.

Beyond the city, to the north and south, the Exe Valley can again be seen to perform many of the attributes of a Sub-Regional GI Corridor; It carries major pedestrian routes (Exe Valley Way and South West Coast Path), stretches of cycleways, and has a strong identity, underpinned by a rich biodiversity resource and largely intact landscape character. Therefore, emphasis is again placed on maintaining and enhancing the valley landscapes through continued management and maintenance of characteristic landscape features, habitats and routeways.

The Exe Valley also performs an important function in shaping the positive identity of Exeter. The river corridor runs through the heart of the city, and forms a key component of its character defining the limits of built development and an almost continuous ribbon of green space within the urban envelope. South of Exeter, the river also contributes to the setting of the city, and other riverside settlements such as Topsham and Exton.

The Clyst Valley

In contrast to the Exe Valley Sub-Regional Corridor, the Clyst Valley is presently not delivering its full GI potential. The GI Study identifies the valley has an important role in defining the setting of the eastern fringes of Exeter and maintaining the separate identity of several existing and future satellite communities. However, decades of agricultural improvements, hedgerow loss, and development has contributed to the weakening of the area's identity and erosion of its landscape character and biodiversity interest.

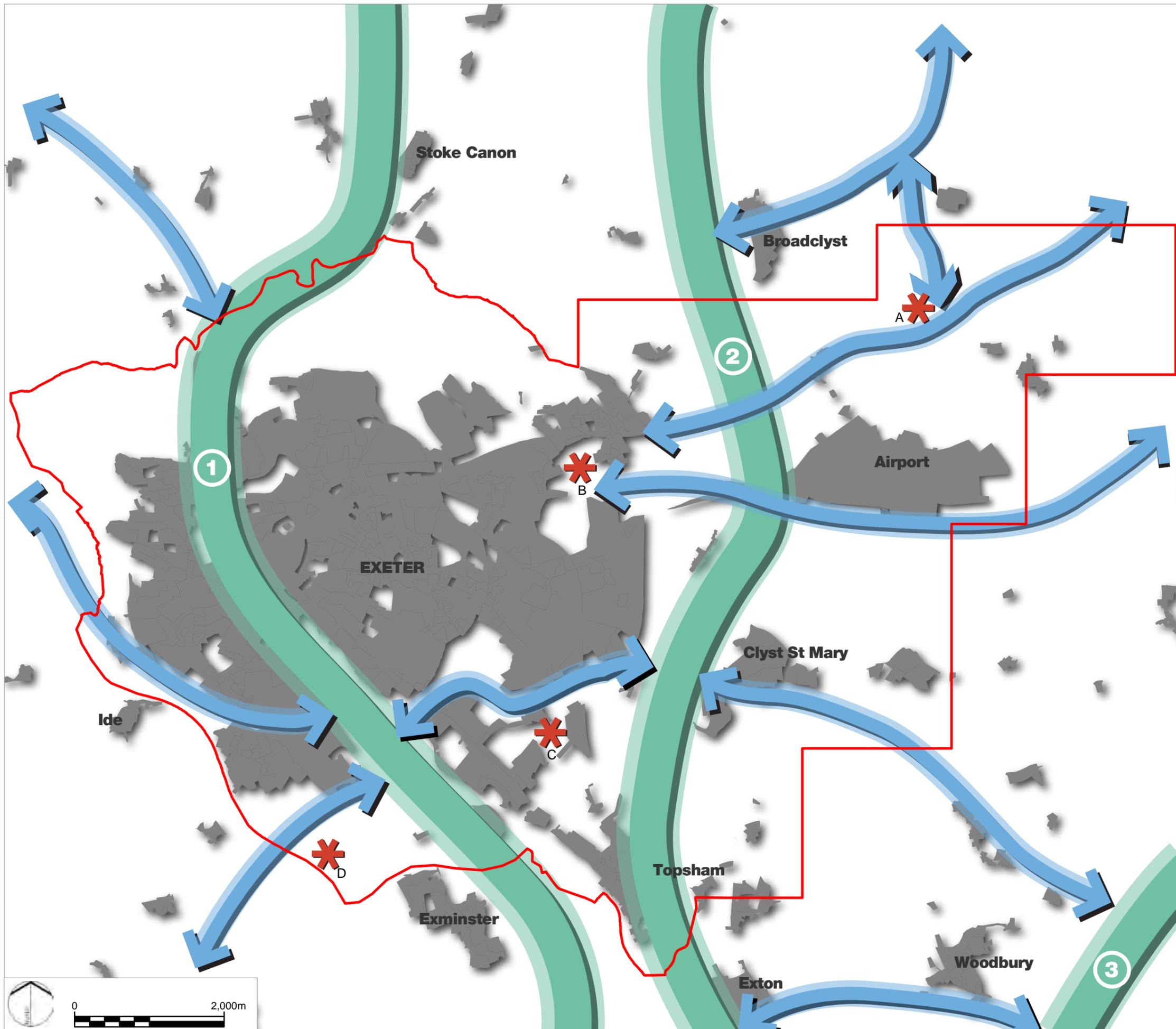
The valley corridor is highlighted as a major habitat reservoir, and key part of a wider habitat enhancement plan that seeks to address the fragmentation of landscapes to the east of the M5.

The area also displays a fragmented pattern of footpaths and cycle networks. The Sustainable Movement Network acknowledges that the river valley has an important role in providing strategic links between several towns and villages on the eastern fringes of the city, including Topsham, Clyst St Mary and Broadclyst and access to the estuary in the south and Killerton Park in the north, as well as areas of new development along the A390 corridor.

The Clyst Valley Projects seek to address these numerous issues and provide a focus for the enhancement of the Clyst Valley's GI assets whilst recognising the areas future role in addressing climate change and increased tidal and fluvial flooding. The Clyst Meadows and Lower Clyst projects identify significant areas fringing the city where habitat and landscape enhancement will be a priority, as well as tackle issues of flood water management, poor connectivity and access to learning facilities. Whilst no large new formal open spaces are proposed, improved access and general environmental enhancement will make an important contribution to drawing visitors away from more sensitive habitats on the Pebblebed Heaths and in the Exe Estuary as well as developing numerous opportunities for volunteering and outdoor/environmental education and research.

8.2.2 Local GI Network

Local GI Corridors represent a lower priority for targeting funding and activity than the Sub-Regional GI Corridors identified and described above, but remain an important focus for GI enhancement and provision. Whilst not having the breadth of opportunities and potential displayed in the Sub-Regional Corridors, they do contain important assets and opportunities that will make an important contribution to meeting the aims of the GI Study. The Local GI Corridors will also form links to other corridors identified as part of future GI studies in Sub region, and will therefore contribute to a regional map of GI priorities.



Legend

- Core Study Area
- The Strategic GI Framework
 - Sub-Regional Green Infrastructure Corridors
 1. The Exe Valley
 2. The Clyst Valley
 3. The Pebblebed Heaths
 - Local Green Infrastructure Corridors
 - Urban Areas
 - ✱ Regional Spatial Strategy Housing Growth Areas of Search
 - A. Cranbrook
 - B. Monkerton/Hill Barton
 - C. Newcourt
 - D. Alphington/South West

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Figure 7: Green Infrastructure Strategic Network

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No dimensions are to be scaled from this drawing. All dimensions are to be checked on site. Area measurements for indicative purposes only.

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GI – Making it Happen

9.1 The Next Steps

The Exeter and East Devon New Growth Point area will be the focus of significant change over the coming decades. GI will be one of several initiatives being taken forward to ensure that change will bring about benefits to new and existing residents, visitors to the area and to the wider environment.

It is acknowledged that delivery of GI will be a complex process and need long-term and coordinated commitment from a range of stakeholders and local communities. Therefore, further work is required to identify the best ways to secure the delivery of GI in the core study area.

The following section sets out various ideas that may be considered in taking forward and implementing GI in the core study area. Collectively, these can be regarded as forming a **GI Strategy** that will clearly set out where, when, how and by whom GI will be delivered.

9.2 Developing the GI Strategy

GI will be mainly delivered through the planning and development process, although some elements will be achieved through the actions of local land owners, communities and businesses.

Therefore, there will be a need to develop a range of mechanisms to secure the appropriate level of impetus and guidance. In summary these mechanisms are likely to include:

- Plans and Policy;
- Leadership, Guidance and Governance;
- Monitoring and Review; and
- Communication.

These four key areas are described in greater detail below. Some of the ideas presented are organisational; others are specific studies or areas for further research and development.

9.2.1 Plans and Policy

It will be crucial that GI is seen as an integral part of Sustainable Community Strategies and Local Area Agreements as well as spatial planning and the delivery of Local Development Frameworks (LDFs) and other supporting transport, social and economic infrastructure. This will enable GI to capture its share of private and public sector investment, without which the LDFs are unlikely to deliver their ambitions for new sustainable development.

Integral to the wider principles of spatial planning, the concept of GI should be explicitly defined and embedded in Development Plan Documents (DPDs), Open Space Strategies, Rights of Way Improvement Plans, Flood Management Plans, masterplans, development proposals and projects, and be coordinated across the different local planning authorities.

This GI Study sets out a shared Vision across the area and is a good starting point for refinement and adoption of GI into planning policy documents. **GI Policy** should seek to ensure that new development and regeneration adequately protects and enhances existing GI assets and makes provision for new GI.

LDFs, especially through their Core Strategies, Area Action Plans and other DPDs provide a strong policy rationale and mechanism to deliver GI investment from development schemes through a combination of scheme design, S106 and Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL), including SWRDA's Regional Infrastructure Fund (RIF).

A **GI Supplementary Planning Document (SPD)** should be developed that provides further detail on how to implement GI Policy. New development and regeneration should plan, locate and design new and improved GI as well as protect existing GI assets in ways that are appropriate for the scheme, but that also acknowledge the scheme's position in broader GI networks and projects. For example, where a site is located on strategic GI networks, plans for new development should seek to deliver elements of the Sustainable Movement Network or Biodiversity Network as appropriate. Where development is located beyond these networks, the 'spirit' of GI should be employed and the developer should demonstrate how proposals will contribute to the broad aspirations of GI. The GI SPD will provide guidance on how to achieve these goals.

It will be important that other spatial plans and policies inform and are informed by GI. In particular, existing and forthcoming Open Space Assessments and Strategies in the study area will be able to provide an accurate analysis of deficiency of different types of open space for existing and new communities. It may be appropriate to establish a common set of open space standards across the study area, and in doing so set out clear and consistent guidance to developers, both in what their developments should provide, and what local provision could be funded through commuted sums. However, it is acknowledged that it may be necessary to differentiate between the standards set for urban areas and rural settlements. Similarly, analysis should be undertaken as to the location and accessibility of semi-natural green space, and common standards adopted, such as those set out by English Nature (now Natural England).

9.2.2 Leadership, Guidance and Governance

Successful GI delivery will depend on establishing strong partnerships with many organisations in the commercial, planning, voluntary and community sectors.

Given the large number of stakeholders, it may be necessary to identify or recruit a **GI Champion** and establish a **GI Consortium**. Their role will be to establish a single point of contact for GI issues and ensure that stakeholders have easy access to each other and to up-to-date information. They will also provide support and guidance to anyone developing GI related projects and initiatives. In practice the GI Consortium would closely reflect the membership of the GI Advisory Group responsible for developing this study.

The GI Champion and GI Consortium will need experience in negotiating and implementing major urban design, landscape and biodiversity gains through the planning system and in winning public sector resources, whilst also having the skills to support land owner, voluntary and community initiatives through planning, design, implementation and long term maintenance.

There will also be a need for the GI Champion and GI Consortium to foster an entrepreneurial approach to GI planning and provision that identifies and realises the opportunities presented by new proposals and public sector programmes early on in their development.

Given the extent of new development in the study area, developers and their agents (such as landscape architects, planners and urban designers) are key to the implementation of GI. As such, the GI Champion and GI Consortium will need to deliver appropriate and consistent advice, building on that set out in the GI SPD on how new development should deliver GI gains, whether through the appropriate protection and enhancement of existing assets or the creation of new GI.

Notably, developers should be encouraged to identify opportunities to deliver GI Projects and elements of the Biodiversity Network and Sustainable Movement Network, where applicable, and be creative in their interpretation and role as part of contributing to sustainable and exciting new developments. If these

spatial networks are not immediately relevant for the development site, a design response at a local scale that takes forward the defining principles of GI should be encouraged. This would demonstrate a positive response to on site conditions but also display an awareness of the wider setting of the site. Developers should also be encouraged to consider creating multi-functional spaces and places. Again, the GI Champion and GI Consortium will provide advice on where opportunities may arise through their developments and the relevant parties to contact for further advice and guidance.

At the local scale, the GI Champion will encourage and enable the owners and managers of existing GI assets to align their management and improvement plans with GI enhancement. For example, landowners may be encouraged to enhance hedgerow networks or stream corridors that form part of the Biodiversity Network or open permissive paths in locations that contribute to the Sustainable Movement Network. The GI Champion will also provide advice on sources of funding for capital works and long term management.

The Consortium would take ownership of GI related targets in Local Area Agreements. The GI Consortium might also be identified as a single body to which S106 and CIL funds are passed by the local planning authorities, much in the way that happens with other infrastructure funds such as Primary Care Trusts (PCT), Local Education Authorities (LEA), and Passenger Transport Executives (PTE) in metropolitan areas. The Consortium should have the flexibility to prioritise GI implementation to maximise its impact within the study area and to determine the most effective means of governing and managing the long term use and maintenance of its investments.

It may be attractive to forward fund GI delivery in certain areas, in advance of new development, to create a quality environment that will attract higher levels of investment. The GI Consortium should be able to use its private investments as a lever to obtain public funding from a variety of agencies and to secure debt finance to forward-fund GI where necessary in advance of future private and public revenues.

It will be necessary for the GI Consortium to further investigate economic value of GI and how issues of funding GI will be dealt with, such as developing a common approach to leveraging investment for GI across the study area. A **GI Economic Assessment** will investigate the various direct and indirect economic benefits of GI, and help make the case for substantial investment in GI.

In addition to describing a series of case studies, where investment has successfully delivered GI on the ground, the GI Economic Assessment will also identify the various sources of funding and ways in which GI funding will be obtained, managed and spent across the study area. A brief list of funding sources follows:

Capital

- Section 106 Agreements;
- Regional Infrastructure Fund;
- Community Infrastructure Levy charges;
- New Growth Point Funding;
- Traditional local authority funding;
- Multi-agency public sector funding;
- Small scale grants such as parish grant capital budgets and landfill tax; and
- Commercial investment.

Revenue

- Traditional local authority funding;
- Income generating opportunities, such as franchising, licensing, entry fees and fines;
- Endowments; and
- Voluntary and community sector involvement.

Appendix 4 presents a summary of two key funding mechanisms: the Regional Infrastructure Fund (RIF) and Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL). These and other funding mechanisms should be investigated further in the GI Economic Assessment.

Once established, one of the first tasks of the GI Consortium will be to establish a **GI Portfolio** of projects and initiatives. These might be drawn from the GI Networks and Projects presented in this GI Study but could also be new initiatives that arise in the intervening period. The Multi-functionality Checklist presented in Appendix 10 offers a mechanism to identify future GI Projects and the extent to which they deliver GI aims and objectives.

In developing the GI Portfolio, projects and initiatives would be developed in greater detail. In particular, proposals would be fully quantified and costed (for both capital expenditure and revenue expenditure). In addition sources of capital and revenue funding would be identified, including any revenue generating potential.

It will be necessary to establish a **GI Delivery Plan**. This would build on the GI Portfolio, but would identify and develop key projects and initiatives and set out a phased delivery programme. The Delivery Plan would be developed in tandem with the GI Portfolio by the GI Consortium and be updated periodically, perhaps every two years. The GI Delivery Plan will also identify potential barriers to the successful planning, design, implementation and management of Green Infrastructure as well as a range of strategies to overcome these barriers.

9.2.3 Monitoring and Review

The GI Consortium should be accountable to those providing its funds for its performance in delivering quality GI on time and to budget.

The GI Consortium should therefore establish the mechanisms necessary to monitor and report on GI delivery, and provide a framework for the long term management of any future assets created.

In developing the GI Delivery Plan, the Project Board would agree and establish a robust **GI Review Framework** to monitor and record enhancements to existing GI assets and the provision of new GI assets. This should include the identification of 'indicators' to measure the quantity, quality and functionality of GI provision over the long term, and provide a means to monitor delivery against the programme set out in the

Delivery Plan. Indicators might include the area of new semi natural habitat created, or length of new rights of way developed that contribute to GI networks, over a set period of time.

The GI Consortium will be accountable to its Partners and as such should publish an [Annual Report](#). The Annual Report will inform Annual Monitoring Reports and Local Area Agreements.

9.2.4 Communication

The GI Champion and GI Consortium will need to establish an appropriate means by which to engage with the many stakeholders and interest groups involved in GI delivery.

Consideration should be given to the establishment of a dedicated [GI Website](#), perhaps developed as a 'microsite' with links to it from the main websites for East Devon, Teignbridge and Exeter City/District Councils.

The GI Website would provide an overview of how GI is being developed across the study area and give easy access to various documents, such as the GI Portfolio and Delivery Plan. As projects are being developed, information would be posted on the website requesting stakeholder input and feedback and provide updates as to progress. A plan of the study area could be hosted on the website, with a traffic light system indicating where projects are being developed (red), being implemented (orange) or are operational (green). This would be maintained and regularly updated to illustrate progress.

The promotion of GI Projects and Networks would highlight the opportunities for recreation and access to nature close to home, and as such assist in taking pressure off sensitive landscapes on the fringes of the study area such as the Pebblebed Heaths and Exe Estuary.

