

Communities Scrutiny Panel

DATE	08/01/2026
REPORT OF	Cllr Henry Hudson, Portfolio Holder for Environment and Net Zero
RESPONSIBLE OFFICER	Carolina Borgstrom Director of Economy, Environment and Infrastructure
SUBJECT	Greater Lincolnshire Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS) Update
STATUS	Open

CONTRIBUTION TO OUR AIMS

North East Lincolnshire's Council Plan 2025-28 sets out our aim to create stronger economies and stronger communities and to balance economic growth alongside the importance of protecting and enhancing the environment. This vision is outlined in strategic documents including the Cleethorpes Habitat Management Plan, Cleethorpes Masterplan, Carbon Road Map, Natural Assets Plan and Creativity Strategy and will make sure that we take our community with us and enable the best outcomes for the families that live, work, and visit here.

The Greater Lincolnshire Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS) aligns to NELC's strategic priorities by setting out the strategic priorities for nature recovery and improvement across Greater Lincolnshire while also aiding with local development through supporting the delivery of statutory biodiversity net gain (BNG).

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The LNRS is a statutory document that each local planning authority must adopt. NELC is working closely with North Lincolnshire Council and Lincolnshire County Council (LCC) to deliver the LNRS across Greater Lincolnshire. Funding has been provided to LCC by the government to deliver the LNRS on our behalf. We are currently finalising the public consultation draft of the LNRS document and mapping and will begin the public consultation imminently. A timeline for approval and adoption has been set for the LNRS but may be subject to change depending on LCC timescales and any objections that are raised during the approvals process.

MATTERS FOR CONSIDERATION

The Communities Scrutiny Panel is asked to note the progress of the Local Nature Recovery Strategy.

1. BACKGROUND AND ISSUES

- 1.1 In 2021 the government enacted the Environment Act. The Act included a provision for each region across England to create a Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS). The strategy replaces the old Biodiversity Action Plan and is intended to set out the priorities for Nature Recovery across Greater Lincolnshire.
- 1.2 It is intended that the strategy will also be used as a basis for Local Planning

Authorities to deliver Biodiversity Net Gain. This will be achieved through extensive mapping, surveying, and consultation with stakeholders to identify land that would be best suited to deliver nature recovery and potentially be used as best suited sites for Biodiversity Net Gain.

- 1.3 Within each region, a lead authority has been chosen by the government to deliver the Local Nature Recovery Strategy with consultation from supporting upper tier authorities. In Greater Lincolnshire the lead authority is Lincolnshire County Council who are supported in the delivery of the Nature Recovery Strategy by North Lincolnshire Council and North East Lincolnshire Council.
- 1.4 The LNRS Board was set up in 2022 with a single representative from each responsible authority, North Lincolnshire Council, North East Lincolnshire Council, Lincolnshire County Council and Natural England.
- 1.5 The management board for the LNRS have contracted the Greater Lincolnshire Nature Partnership (GLNP) to write the LNRS with oversight from the management board. Previously the GLNP have written the Biodiversity Action Plan for greater Lincolnshire and are experienced in working with partners to deliver ecological advice and improvement across Greater Lincolnshire.
- 1.6 The management board has also acquired regional survey data on land across greater Lincolnshire via the environmental records centre; this will be the basis for the development of the LNRS, and have gathered more up to date data through surveys and through stakeholder engagement.
- 1.7 Various stakeholders have been engaged, ranging from environmental specialists to landholders and farmers. Small stakeholder groups have been established which have provided us with input on what they feel our priorities should be for nature recovery in greater Lincolnshire.
- 1.8 Stakeholder engagement has also aided in assessing which areas of land are the best fit for nature recovery, both from an ecological perspective and from a practical perspective on where there is actual potential to best deliver the LNRS alongside other local priorities.
- 1.9 A public survey was also carried out at the start of the LNRS project to ensure local people across Greater Lincolnshire could input into the priorities of the strategy. The survey ran between October 2023 to December 2023. We received 1,631 responses from the public survey with the highest number of responses across Greater Lincolnshire coming from North East Lincolnshire, where 348 people responded.
- 1.10 To help with our wider community and stakeholder engagement a website (<https://www.glincslnrs.org.uk/>) and social media accounts (<https://linktr.ee/glincslnrs>) have been set up.
- 1.11 Following the public survey and engagement sessions with stakeholders, priorities for action for the LNRS were set out which are included in appendix 1 as part of the pre consultation draft. Most priorities will also be mapped, where we have data available to map them, so people can see where actions can be taken that will provide a strategic benefit for nature.

- 1.12 While there is no guarantee of LNRS actions being delivered, the LNRS is required to set out achievable actions. Therefore, the actions set out as part of the LNRS are those that the LNRS management board believe are achievable within the lifespan of the LNRS (3-10 years). There is also a benefit to delivering these actions through Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) from developments, as BNG delivering LNRS actions will provide a strategic uplift of 15%. Meaning for example that the same area of land delivering a woodland for BNG within an identified area in the LNRS that provides strategic uplift, will be worth 15% more BNG credits than an area of woodland that isn't providing strategic uplift.
- 1.13 The LNRS is expected to be published by Lincolnshire County Council for public consultation on the week commencing 12th January 2026. An early draft version of the LNRS has been attached with this report, appendix 1, as a closed appendix. The public consultation draft will be more detailed than this, however, the attached draft is provided to give members a greater understanding of what the LNRS is and will look like, prior to them being able to access it during the public consultation.
- 1.14 A current provisional timeline, based on statutory requirements for consultation on the LNRS and subject to change by LCC, of the LNRS approval process is set out below:

Public Consultation w/c 12 th January 2025 – w/c 16 th February 2026 (6 weeks)
Changes following consultation (6 weeks)
Proposed final LNRS to Supporting Authorities w/c 6 th April 2026 – w/c 27 th April 2026 (4 weeks)
Secretary of State approval
LNRS Publication by LCC w/c 29th June 2026
LNRS Adoption by NELC Cabinet July 2026

- 1.15 Delivery of the LNRS will be overseen by LCC and the LNRS Management Board, with Defra still yet to set out what their expectations for delivery will be outside of BNG.
- 1.16 Delivery of the LNRS will take place during its lifespan which is expected to be between 3-10 years. A review will be ordered by the Secretary of State within this period, and it is for them to determine when a review of LNRS's across England should be carried out.

2. RISKS AND OPPORTUNITIES

- 2.1 The Greater Lincolnshire LNRS provides the strategic priorities for nature's recovery across Greater Lincolnshire, including North East Lincolnshire. The LNRS identifies areas of opportunity and actions to conserve and enhance nature and biodiversity. The LNRS also outlines co-benefits for doing so which include flood risk alleviation and benefits to public health.

- 2.2 If adopted the LNRS will identify areas of strategic uplift for BNG units which may help to reduce the cost of delivering BNG for developers while also ensure biodiversity and nature related benefits are realised in the most strategically beneficial areas.
- 2.3 If the LNRS is not adopted, developers will not benefit from the BNG strategic uplift the strategy will provide, increasing the pressure on local developers. Nature benefits will also not be realised, with a less strategic approach to nature recovery leading to the full benefits of nature and ecosystem services not being provided, leaving NELC residents unlikely to benefit from the LNRS.
- 2.4 Should NELC reject the LNRS or refuse to adopt it, there is a risk the Secretary of State will intervene and enforce its adoption.

3. REPUTATION AND COMMUNICATIONS CONSIDERATIONS

- 3.1 There are potential positive reputational implications for the council resulting from the delivery of the LNRS. This is due to the opportunity to enhance and protect our natural environment further, which further demonstrates the council's commitment to improve biodiversity and ecology. Further positive reputational implications for the council could result from positive engagement with all stakeholders, visitors and residents whereby their views directly input into the development the LNRS.

4. FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS

- 4.1 There are no financial implications on the Council resulting from the LNRS.

5. CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 The LNRS will deliver improvement to nature across North East Lincolnshire, which will benefit children and young people. The delivery of nature recovery will also ensure children and young people can benefit from nature into the future.

6. CLIMATE CHANGE AND ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 There are no expected negative environmental implications from the Local Nature Recovery Strategy. The strategy aims to enhance biodiversity and local natural environment.

7. MONITORING COMMENTS

In the opinion of the author, this report does not contain recommended changes to policy or resources (people, finance or physical assets). As a result no monitoring comments have been sought from the Council's Monitoring Officer (Chief Legal Officer), Section 151 Officer (Director of Finance) or Strategic Workforce Lead.

8. WARD IMPLICATIONS

- 11.1 All Wards

9.CONTACT OFFICER(S)

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