

2. Background

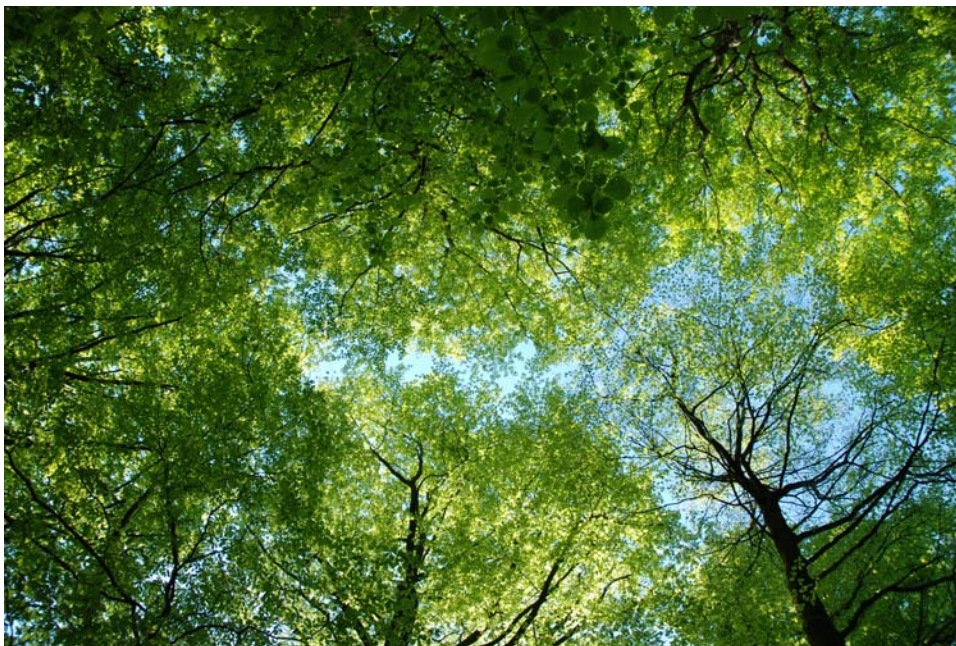
2.1 Key Findings

In order to create a robust evidence base a variety of methods were used to collect information and analyse various GI assets, including ANGST (Accessible Natural Greenspace Standards) modelling. This assessment is used to determine the catchment areas of natural greenspaces in relation to the residential population. This exercise demonstrated few deficiencies in the Borough with regard to the accessibility of natural greenspaces. However, it should be considered that these standards were not created to assess accessibility to all types of GI. The ANGST model was created to provide a set of standards, which can be used nationally for both rural and urban areas. It would therefore be expected that the rural nature of the Borough is advantageous in meeting these targets.

Within the study a number of key sites were identified due to their national and regional significance, they include:

- national trails, such as recreational routes, including Peddars Way and the Norfolk Coastal Path;
- the local river network, such as the River Nar, Great Ouse, Little Ouse, Wissey and Nene; and
- significant areas of open space, including The Wash and Norfolk Coast, The Brecks, Ouse Washes.

A number of drainage channels were also recognised as being significant in providing links across the Borough and with neighbouring authorities.



2.4 Strategic Objectives

A number of strategic objectives were identified in Stage One, which sit alongside the GI vision created for the Borough. They include:

- protecting, restoring and creating woodlands and orchards in appropriate locations;
- promoting and improving the marketing of accessible green spaces and routes;
- developing and creating recreational and orbital routes around the key centres of King's Lynn, Downham Market and Hunstanton;
- creating a range of new strategically accessible green spaces in and around King's Lynn, Downham Market and Hunstanton;
- protecting, enhancing and creating corridors for biodiversity, which link up strategic habitats, within the Borough and adjoining districts;
- seeking the creation of multi functional spaces;
- designing GI sites to mitigate and adapt to the impacts of Climate Change, integrating Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SUDS) into major development sites, plus providing appropriate planting within developments and town centres;
- maintaining and restoring historic features where possible;
- connecting urban and rural settlements and the countryside; and
- protecting and, where possible, enhancing railway lines for access and biodiversity.

2.5 Deprivation

In order to maximise the benefits of developing GI it is important to gain an understanding of its potential impact upon regeneration. The introduction and enhancement of GI can have a significant impact upon an area with regards to attracting investment, retaining residents and supporting various regeneration objectives. Figure 2.2 demonstrates where the most deprived wards in the authority are located (in relation to the ranking of Indices of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) scores).



2.2 Strategic Context

Figure 2.1 Map Demonstrating the Strategic Context of GI Provision in the West Norfolk Borough.

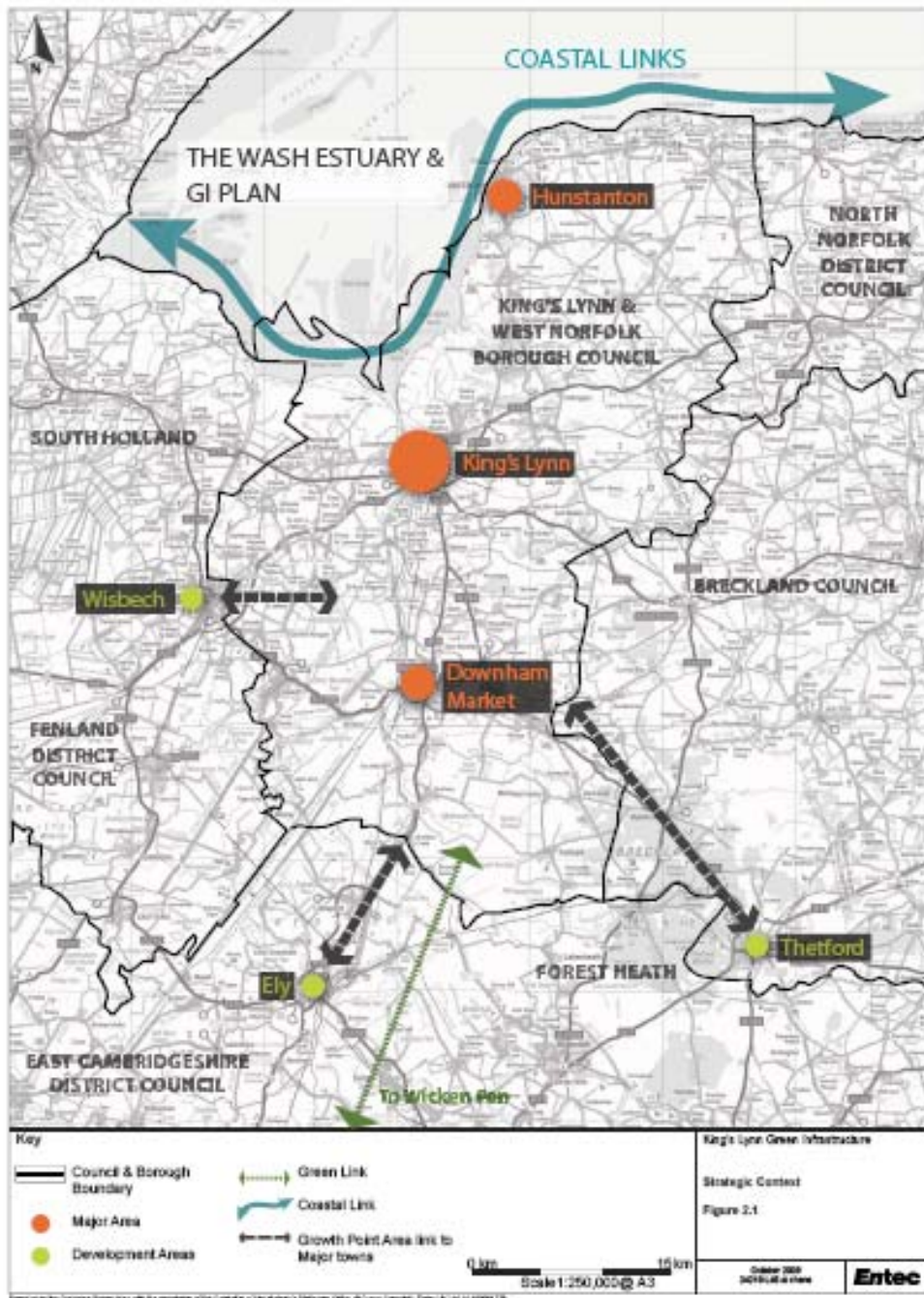


Figure 2.1 demonstrates the synergies with neighbouring local authorities and areas identified for future growth. These areas include Wisbech, Ely and Thetford. Bury St. Edmunds has been named as an area for development and is in the process of developing its own GI study. Wicken Fen is also of importance, particularly in the creation of recreation and wildlife corridors, whilst similar linkages with the Wash area to the north east of West Norfolk require consideration. The Coast to the north of the Borough also provides opportunities to create synergies between wildlife habitats and points of interest, for both residents and tourists.

A number of GI strategies are currently being completed in the area, e.g. The Wash GI Plan and a GI study by Cambridgeshire Horizons. It is important that these various studies support complementary rather than conflicting actions and further partnership working will be required to identify opportunities to increase the value of projects in this way.

2.3 Gaps in Provision



Areas of deficiency were identified using a range of information sources, including the Norfolk County Council Rights of Way Improvement Plan, the King's Lynn and West Norfolk Local Plan Proposals Map, stakeholder consultation events, plans for the development of the Fens Waterways and the Urban Renaissance Strategy Sports and Open Space Assessment. This research was used to identify projects and initiatives, which have been outlined for development. A list of identified gaps is provided within this section.

2.3.1 King's Lynn

The following gaps in the current GI network were identified through the research methodology described in section 2.3:

- opportunities to cross the A149, to access resources on the east of the town such as Leziate Country Park, Gaywood Valley and Roydon Common National Nature Reserve;
- linkages and movement corridors for recreation and wildlife between the town centre and key resources to the north, east and south of the town;
- high quality urban landscape within King's Lynn town centre;
- further GI provision in the south east of the town, especially where urban extensions are proposed; and
- a lack of provision in the north-west of King's Lynn.



A number of projects are identified later in the document (chapter 5), which aim to decrease the gaps in provision identified. They include:

- Project M, which proposes several crossings of the A149;
- the use of proposed new residential areas to include GI, which will develop the network to provide linkages cross the town;
- the creation of a Countryside Sport and Recreation Zone to the south-east of the town (Project F); and
- a number of gateway improvements in the north-west of Kings Lynn, which will incorporate GI.

Further opportunities to increase GI to the North West of the town will be sought in the future. Policies have also been identified in chapter 4, which support the management and maintenance of GI in the town centre to improve the urban landscape.

2.3.2 Downham Market

In Downham Market two strategic gaps were identified in the local GI provision. They include the requirement for a safe crossing of the A10, which is a major barrier to GI in the East, and the creation of further GI to the north of the Town, where there is considered to be a deficiency. Opportunities to develop GI between Cock Drove and Kingston's Plantation should also be considered alongside linkages across the railway line, where possible.

Projects are identified in chapter 5 to meet the deficiencies described above. They include Project W, which proposes several road crossings along the A10 and Project X (plus possible urban extensions, focused on residential development), which will provide additional GI to the north of the town and along the railways line.

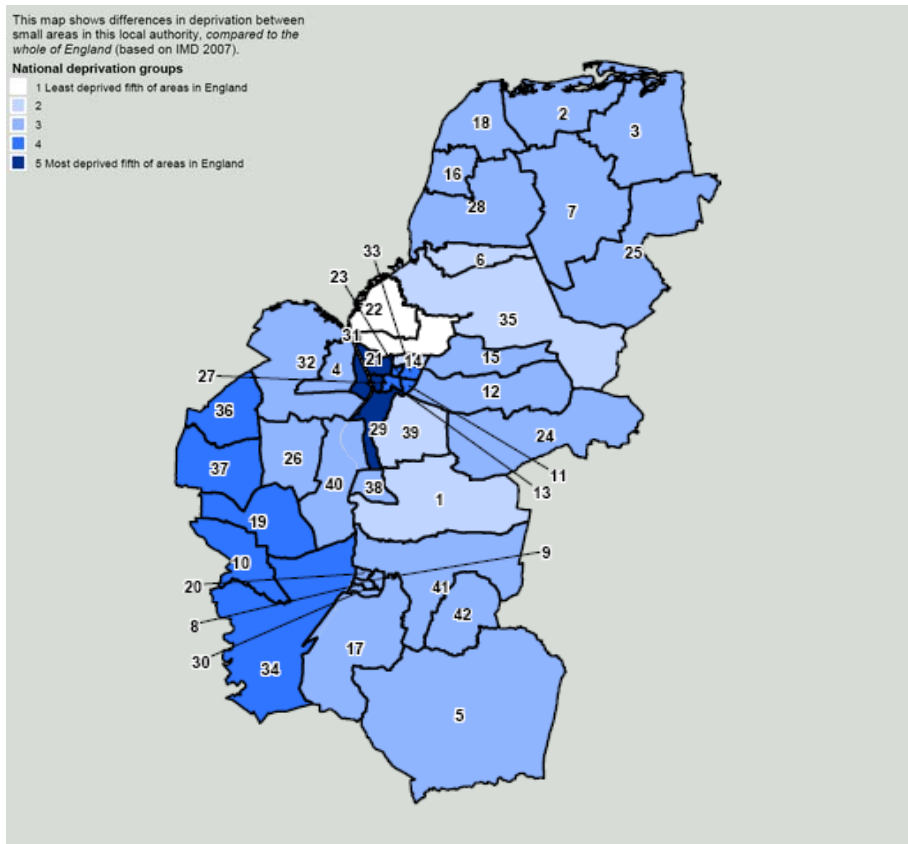
2.3.3 Hunstanton

The research completed in Stage One demonstrates a requirement to provide access to the East of Hunstanton across to Hunstanton Park and out towards Ringstead and the Peddars Way. Improving access here will enhance the connectivity of the town with the wider countryside. There was noted to be a lack of formal Accessible Natural Greenspace adjacent to the town, however the coastline and beach area was thought to alleviate this deficiency.

The Hunstanton Urban Extension will provide opportunities to increase the amount of GI to the east of the town, whilst the development of a footpath/multi-user route in this area, leading to Hunstanton Park will meet the deficiencies described.



Figure 2.2 Map of Deprivation, 2008 (by ward)



Source: Norfolk NHS, King's Lynn and West Norfolk Profile, 2008

It can be seen that the most deprived wards are located in King's Lynn and along the western fringes of the Borough. Projects located in these areas should be given a higher priority for development, where appropriate, and GI initiatives, such as street tree planting, will be considered in these areas to improve their environmental quality.

