

# Greater Norwich Green Infrastructure Strategy

## Green Infrastructure Area Profiles

for

**Greater Norwich  
Growth Board**

by



Final V2 – January 2025



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### Accessibility Conformance Statement

This PDF document conforms with the Norfolk County Council guidelines for accessible online content<sup>1</sup>. The source Word document was manually checked using the Microsoft Office Accessibility Tool.

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<sup>1</sup> [www.norfolk.gov.uk/article/44492/How-to-create-accessible-content](http://www.norfolk.gov.uk/article/44492/How-to-create-accessible-content)

# Introduction

## Purpose

This evidence document identifies spatial priorities and opportunities for enhancing and expanding the Strategic Green Infrastructure (GI) Network across Greater Norwich to inform the GI Strategy and Strategic Delivery Plan.

In addition to the GI Strategy and Strategic Delivery Plan documents, it should be read in conjunction with the supporting evidence reports and the interactive mapping on the Story Map.

This high-level assessment primarily draws on the evidence reports as listed in **Appendix 2** of the GI Strategy document. It also was informed by other key sources of evidence highlighted throughout the document, including Natural England National Character Areas and local landscape character assessments within Greater Norwich.

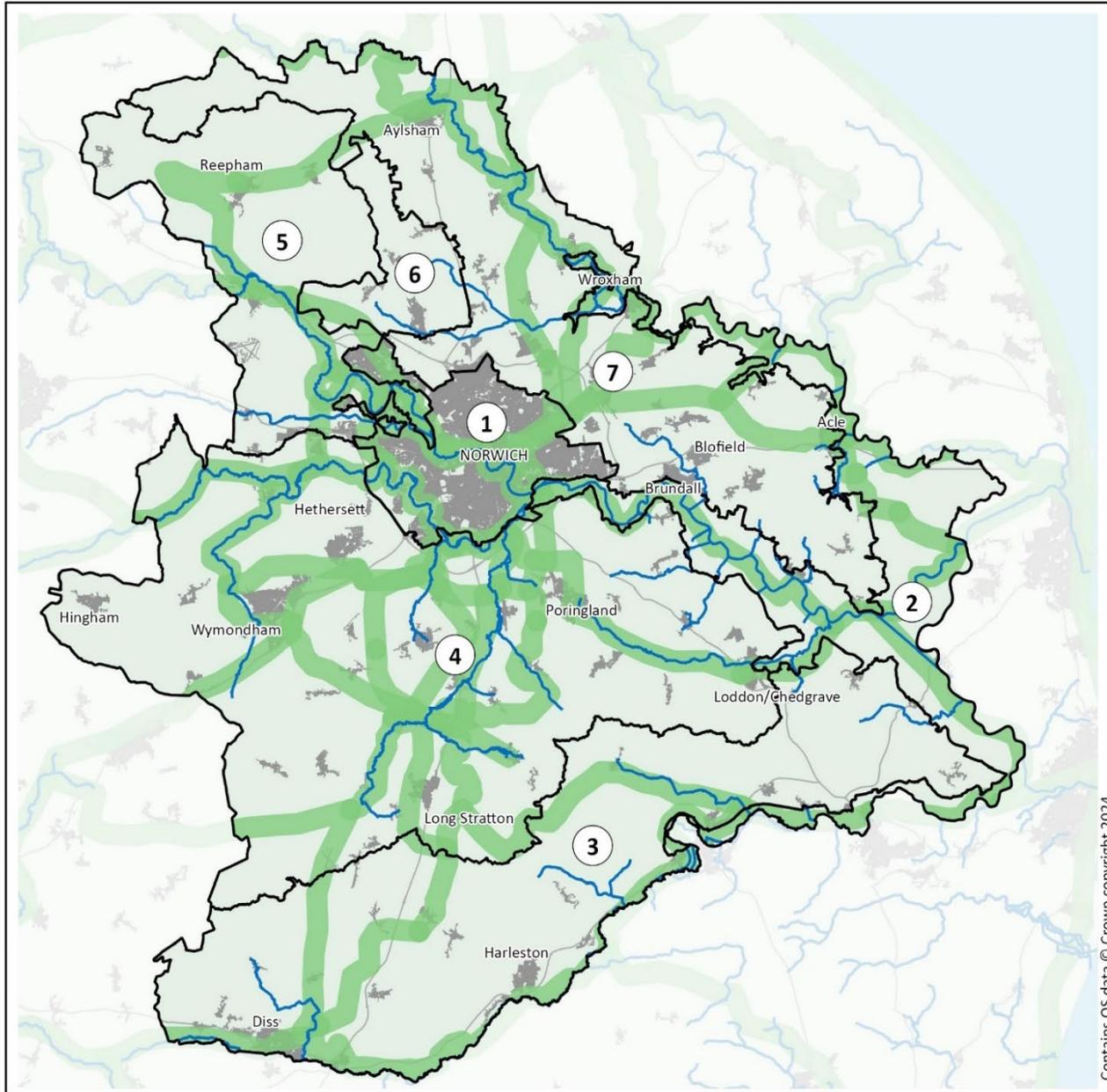
## GI Areas

For the purposes of the GI Strategy, “GI Areas” have been defined to provide a framework for this assessment (**Map A1.1**).

These reflect areas of broadly similar landscape character, habitats and other GI assets such as river catchments defined at the Greater Norwich scale.

A location plan showing the boundaries of each GI Area in relation to the Strategic GI Corridors shown on **Map A1.1** is provided.

# Map A1.1 Greater Norwich GI Areas



- 1 Norwich Urban Area
- 2 The Broads Wetlands
- 3 Waveney Farmland
- 4 Yare Farmland
- 5 Wensum Farmland
- 6 Horsford Heaths & Woods
- 7 Bure Farmland

 Strategic GI Corridors

## Identifying Strategic GI Priorities and Opportunities

Strategic priorities and opportunities for enhancing and expanding the GI network across Greater Norwich have been identified for each GI Area, focussed on the Strategic GI Corridors<sup>2</sup> shown on **Map A1.1**.

These existing and proposed Strategic GI Corridors form the backbone of our proposed Strategic GI Network. They provide a focus for delivery of enhanced and new GI provision throughout Greater Norwich, including in the key locations for growth identified by the Greater Norwich Local Plan (adopted 2024).

Opportunities are highlighted for strengthening the connectivity of urban and rural communities/countryside destinations (active places for people) and habitats (natural places for nature) within each GI Area.

The strategic priorities and opportunities reflect the findings of the GI Evidence & Opportunities Report (NCoC, 2024) with respect to recommended priority areas for accessible greenspace (see **Map A1.2**) and urban greening (see **Map A1.3**) to address identified needs and deficiencies. The priority areas for accessible greenspace are locations with the greatest demand for and deficiencies in accessible greenspace.

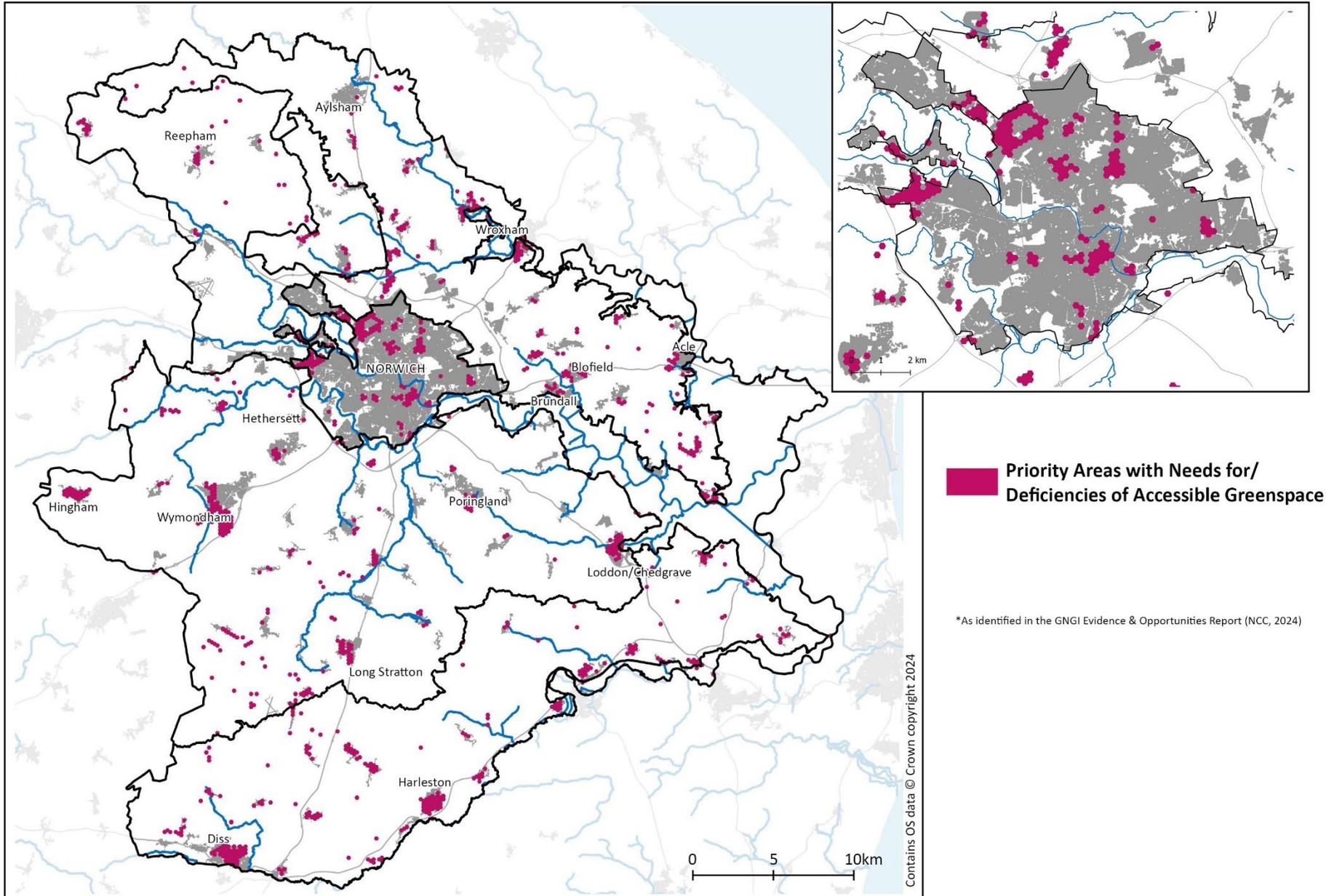
The assessment also reflects relevant Strategic Environmental Opportunities identified by the Natural England National Character Areas within Greater Norwich (see **Map A1.4**).

The strategic priorities and opportunities for GI should be considered alongside the priority areas for habitat creation and restoration within the Greater Norwich Area identified in the Norfolk Local Nature Recovery Strategy.

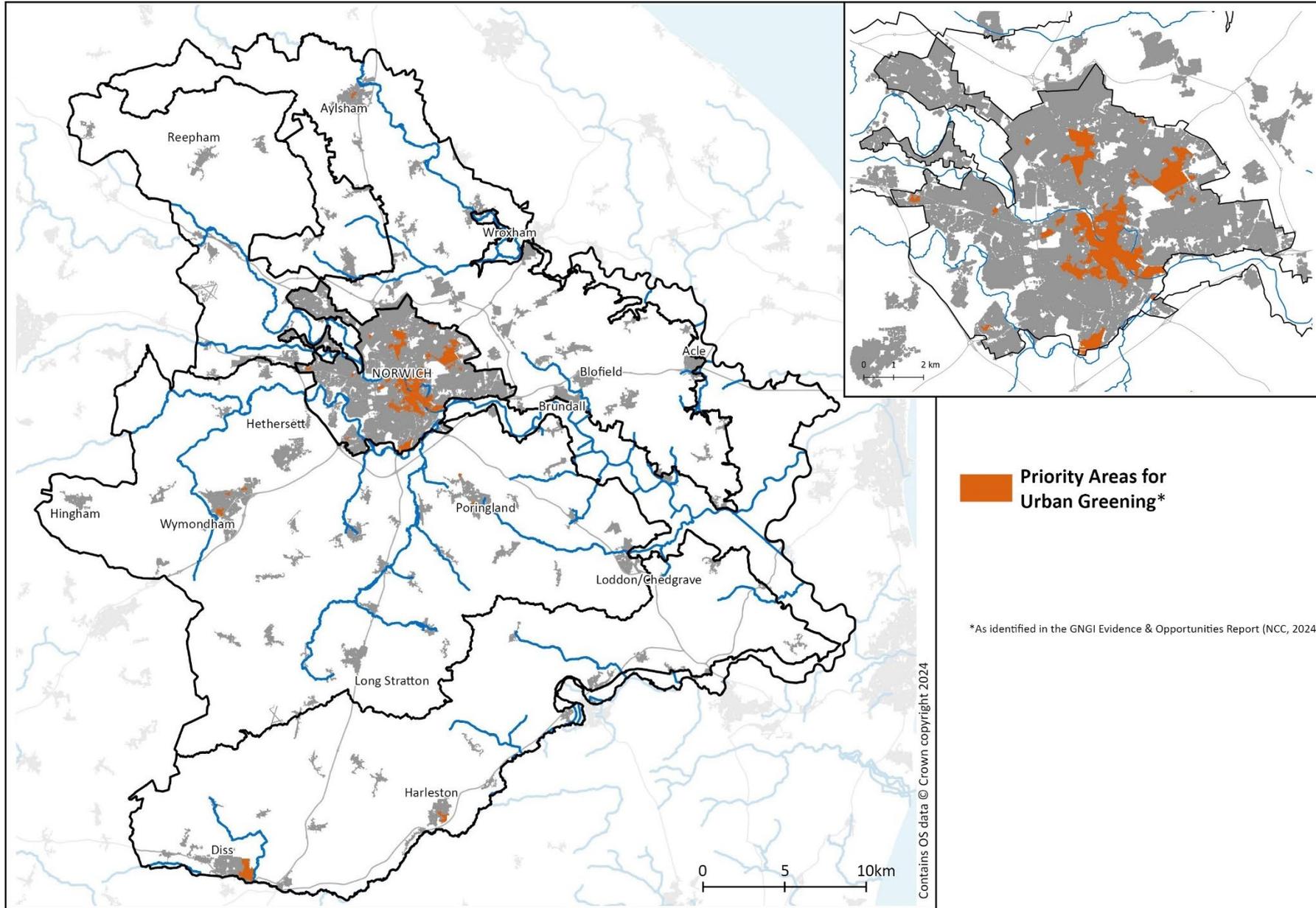
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<sup>2</sup> Source – Norfolk GI Network Mapping supporting the Norfolk Strategic Planning Framework

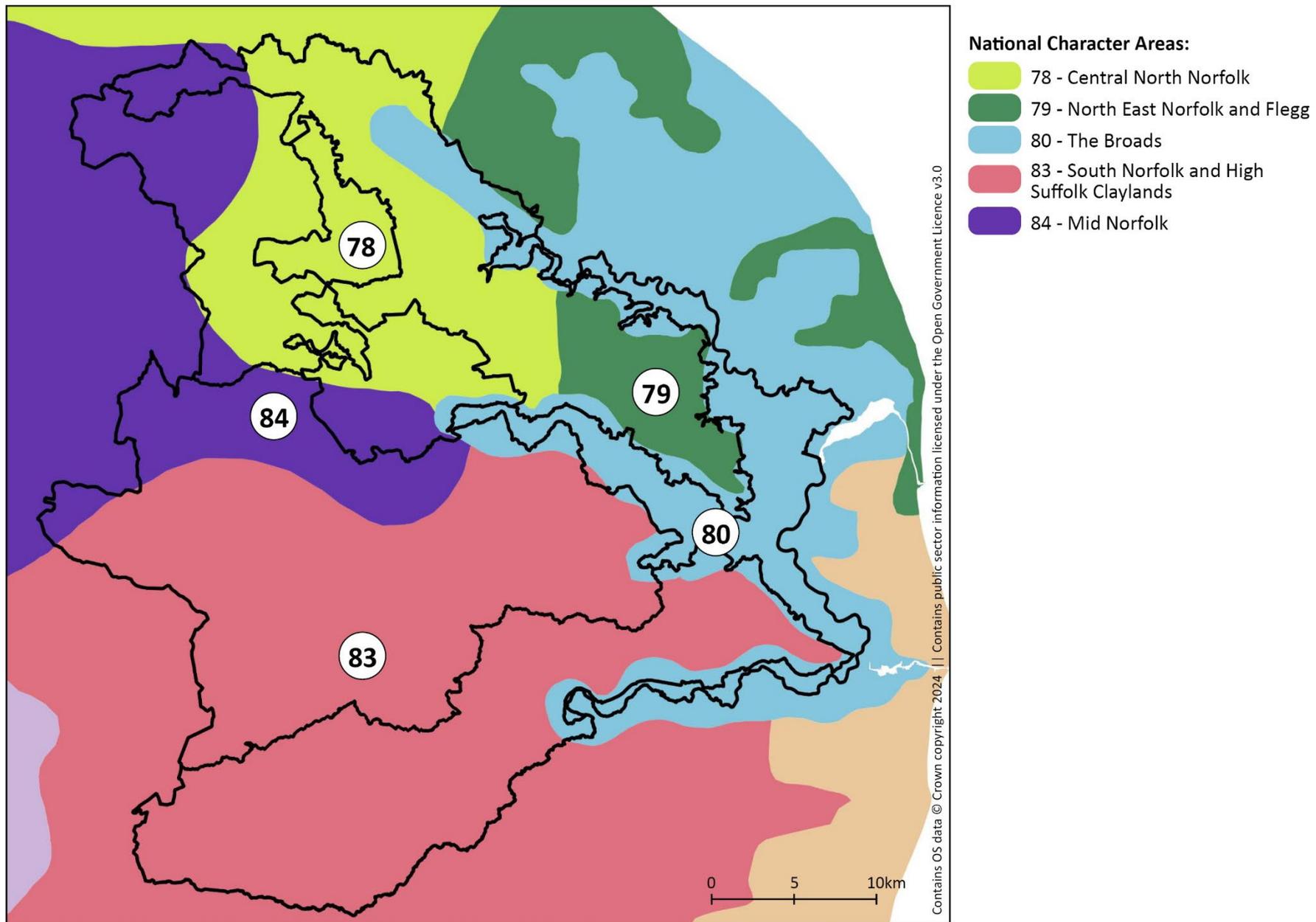
## Map A1.2 Priority Areas for Accessible Greenspace



# Map A1.3 Priority Areas for Urban Greening



# Map A1.4 National Character Areas



## **Existing Strategic GI Assets**

To provide context for the identified strategic priorities and opportunities, an overview of existing strategic GI assets within each GI Area is provided.

This includes:

- Recreational and healthy living GI assets
- Ecological and geological GI assets
- Hydrological (water) GI assets
- Heritage/cultural GI assets

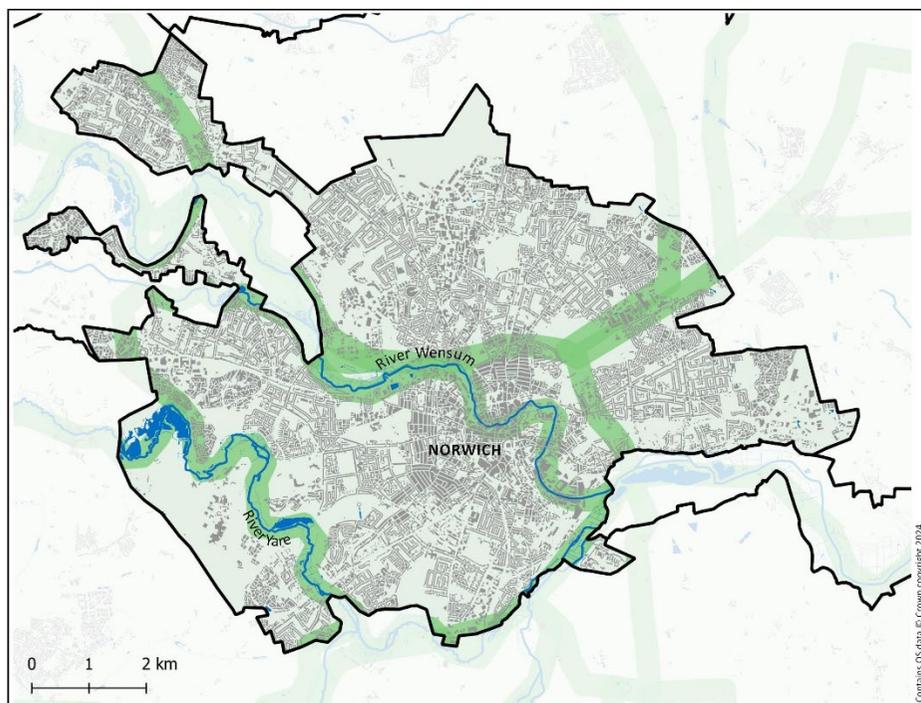
## **Landscape Character Context**

To provide context for the strategic GI assets within each GI Area, a summary overview of the area's current landscape character is also provided.

# Area 1 – Norwich Urban Area

## Location

This GI Area comprises the contiguous urban area within the City of Norwich extending into Broadland District and South Norfolk.



Strategic priorities and opportunities for enhancing and expanding the Strategic GI Corridors, and other GI features, both within and around the fringes of the Norwich Urban Area are identified.

This profile should be read in conjunction with adjoining Areas 2 (The Broads Wetlands), 4 (Yare Farmland), 5 (Wensum Farmland), 6 (Horsford Heaths & Woods) and 7 (Bure Farmland) where applicable.

## Strategic GI Priorities

- Enhance the quality of parks and green spaces in line with the Norwich Parks & Green Spaces Strategy
- Address deficiencies in accessible greenspace provision at a range of scales within the identified priority areas
- Strengthen the network of urban greenways to support active travel
- Address health inequalities for urban communities, particularly in areas experiencing high levels of deprivation
- Urban greening to increase green cover in the built environment, strengthen habitat connectivity along Green Grid Corridors and support urban nature recovery
- Embed appropriate GI into the Northern City Centre and East Norwich Strategic Regeneration Areas



## Strategic GI Opportunities

### Active Places

- Target new **accessible greenspace** at a range of scales in priority areas with identified deficiencies in provision (see **Map A1.2**) to offer opportunities for people in these areas to access greenspace for informal/formal recreation and experience nature close to where they live.
- Explore opportunities for enhancing and expanding a network of **urban greenways** providing off-road, traffic free active travel routes for walking and cycling - connecting places where people live, work and learn to green spaces, and integrating with the public transport network. For example, opportunities for greenway improvements along the River Yare and River Wensum.
- Explore opportunities for enhancing and expanding the provision of accessible green spaces to support **healthy lifestyles** in line with the Norwich Parks & Green Spaces Strategy - such as urban parks and gardens, nature reserves, allotments and other community food growing spaces - either through provision of new spaces, or enhancing/repurposing existing spaces, for informal/formal recreation activities, conservation volunteering (to support long-term stewardship) and food growing within urban areas.

### Natural Places

- Target increasing the level of green cover within the built environment in priority areas for **urban greening** within the Norwich Urban Area (see **Map A1.3**) - such as opportunities for new and/or enhanced provision of urban open spaces, woodlands, streets, squares and green roofs/walls on buildings - to strengthen habitat connectivity and support urban nature recovery.
- Target habitat creation to increase existing capacity for supplying multiple **ecosystem service benefits** in identified areas of greatest demand for these services within the Norwich Urban Area informed by the Norwich Biodiversity Baseline Study. For example, expanding the urban tree canopy to support carbon storage/sequestration, regulation of air/noise pollution and to regulate the local climate; and creating new habitat for reducing surface water runoff to reduce flood risk and regulate water quality – particularly along Green Grid Corridors.
- Explore opportunities to create, enhance and restore priority habitats in and around the Norwich Urban Area, and strengthen **ecological connectivity** to the surrounding countryside, in line with the priorities identified by the Norfolk Local Nature Recovery Strategy. For example, this may include opportunities for buffering and extending woodland around Lion Wood in east Norwich, and opportunities for small-scale wetland creation along the River Yare.
- Explore opportunities to regenerate and enhance existing GI assets, and embed new GI features such as green roofs, sustainable drainage systems and street trees, into the Northern City Centre and East Norwich **Strategic Regeneration Areas** to support urban greening.

## Existing Strategic GI Assets

### Recreational and healthy living GI assets

- **Walking and cycling routes** include, for example – Marriott's Way, a footpath, bridleway, and cycle route that runs between Aylsham and Norwich. Part of Marriott's Way also follows National Cycle Network Route 1, which runs northwest-southeast through the centre of Norwich. The Wherryman's Way and Boudicca Way both begin in the southeast of Norwich at the station, heading east and south respectively. Norwich also has a network of active travel routes which are locally known as Pedalways.
- **Recreational areas** include, for example golf courses such as Eaton Golf Course; and Local Nature Reserves, for example Mousehold Heath and Earlham Park Woods; and the Sweet Briar Marshes Wildlife Trust Site (which has a developing network of accessible paths).
- **Parks and green spaces** include a variety of spaces with various functions ranging from large city parks, to smaller amenity spaces, allotments, and religious grounds. Examples include Wensum Park, Chapelfield Gardens, Castle Gardens, Waterloo Park and Mousehold South Allotment.



Sweet Briar Marshes. © Rachel Murray

## Ecological and geological GI assets

- **Designated sites** include 4 Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs) 8 Local Nature Reserves (LNRs) - for example Sweetbriar Road Meadows SSSI, Danby Wood LNR, Lion Wood LNR and Bowthorpe Marsh LNR. The Norwich Urban Area also includes more than 40 County Wildlife Sites, such as County Hall Woods and Pinebanks.
- **Key habitats** include, for example deciduous woodland in pockets throughout the Norwich Urban Area, lowland heathland at Mousehold Heath; and lowland meadows, good quality semi-improved grassland and floodplain grazing marsh along the River Wensum and River Yare corridors.
- **Geological features** include, for example St. James' Pit SSSI, known for its Upper Cretaceous mosasaur (large marine reptile) fossil remains.



## Hydrological (water) GI assets

- **Operational catchments** – The majority of the Norwich Urban Area lies in the Yare Operational Catchment. The northwest, around Taverham lies in the Wensum Catchment, and the northeast, covering part of Sprowston is in the Bure Catchment.
- **Key waterways and features** include – the River Wensum, which flows broadly west-east through the centre of the City, and the River Yare, which flows around the south of Norwich.

Further information can be found in the [Broadland Rivers Catchment Management Plan](#).



## Heritage/cultural GI assets

- **Conservation areas** – 22 No. including for example Thorpe St. Andrews (Broadland District), Cringleford (South Norfolk District) and Norwich City Centre.
- **Important historic buildings** - in the Norwich Urban area, there are over 1,100 Statutory Listed Buildings (Grade I, II\* and II) both within and outside of Conservation Areas. These include for example the grade I listed Cathedral and Guildhall. In addition, there are also a large number of non-statutory 'Locally Listed' buildings. The majority of these are in the City centre.
- **Industrial heritage features** representing the breadth of the City's rich industrial heritage. This ranges from heavy engineering, manufacturing aircraft, making mustard, chocolate, Christmas crackers and the textile and shoe industries.
- **Registered historic parks and gardens** – 13 No. including for example Waterloo Park and The Rosary Cemetery (grade II\* listed) and Wensum Park and the Plantation Garden (grade II listed)
- **Scheduled monuments** – 29 No. illustrating the breadth of Norwich's history, including for example Norwich Castle, the City Walls and Towers, bridges, gates and sites/remains of historic buildings such as chapels and priories.

## Landscape Character Context

The Norwich Urban Area has a diverse character with a historic central area, extensive areas of open space, historic parks and gardens, wildlife sites, river valleys and wooded ridges.

Natural environment assets such as the valleys of the rivers Wensum and Yare and local nature reserves, and historic parks, gardens and other open spaces, all add to the sense of place and character of the Area. Trees in particular enhance the structure and layout of the townscape, many providing important landmarks. Described as ‘a city in an orchard’ in the C18th, Norwich continues to enjoy a well-wooded landscape setting with over 200 acres of publicly-owned woodland within the city boundary and extensive semi-natural broad-leaved woodland and heathland at Mousehold Heath. The wooded escarpments created by the river valleys are particularly important to the setting of the city.

Outside of the city centre, the Area is predominantly suburban in character with a variety of low-density neighbourhoods created as Norwich has grown beyond the city’s boundaries. The most distinctive areas are found in the historic townscape of the central area within the medieval city walls focused on the River Wensum. Several parks, ecclesiastical open spaces and school playing fields provide “green oases” within the densely built-up environment and the setting for the city’s landmark buildings (the Castle, Anglican Cathedral, Roman Catholic Cathedral, St Peter Mancroft, St Giles’ Church and Guildhall). The Broads National Park extends into the Norwich Urban Area along the tidal River Wensum.

The Norwich City Council Landscape & Trees Supplementary Planning Document (Adopted June 2016) provides design principles for creating a strong sense of place and character that are broadly applicable to the whole Norwich Urban Area, as summarised below:

- Integrating development into surroundings - new developments enhance local character and positively link to the wider landscape/townscape
- Making good use of the site and existing features - developments make efficient use of land and topography, and retain or enhance existing landscape features of value
- Incorporating open space - protection of existing open space and provision of new open space, and public/private open space is well integrated into development sites
- Environment and GI considerations – landscaped spaces increase biodiversity/enhance wildlife, include SuDs, make space for trees and provide connectivity to surrounding areas
- Street layout – landscaped spaces reinforce the street layout hierarchy to improve the legibility and usability of streets
- Future maintenance - planned maintenance operations for hard and soft landscape areas sustain attractive and successful landscape settings for the long-term



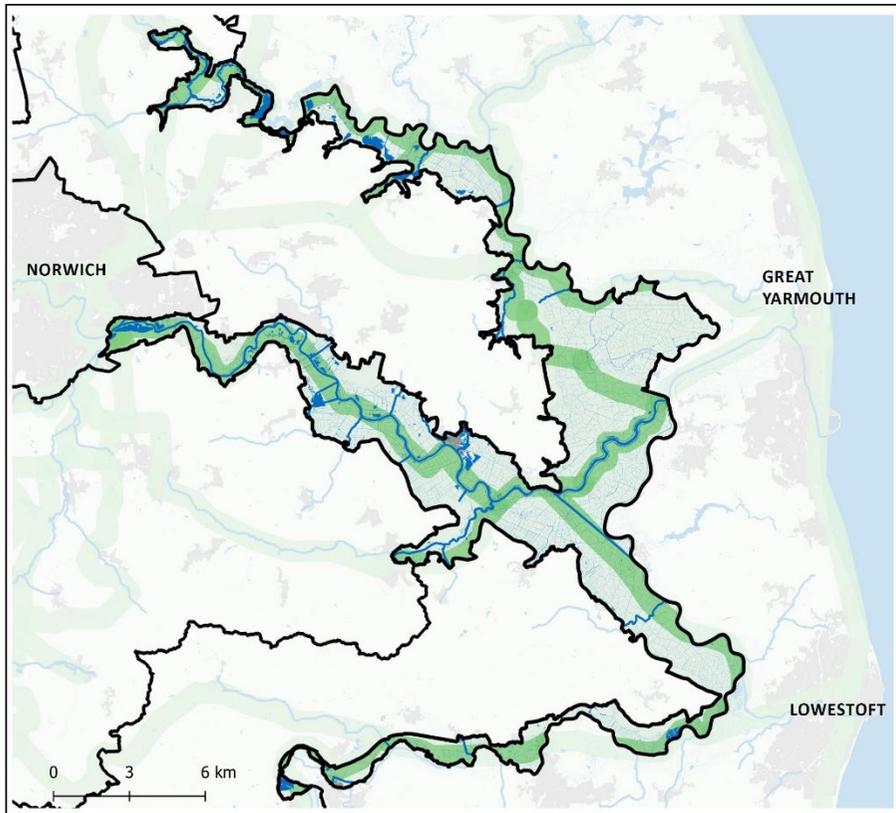


Earlham Park, Norwich. © Fisheye Images

## Area 2 – The Broads Wetlands

### Location

This GI Area comprises part of The Broads National Park within Broadland District and South Norfolk.



### Strategic GI Priorities

- Improve habitat connectivity and support nature recovery to strengthen climate change resilience in line with the [Broads Plan 2022-27](#)
- Support water quality improvements in line with the [Broads Plan 2022-27](#)
- Address deficiencies in accessible greenspace provision at a range of scales within the identified priority areas
- Strengthen the network of greenways within and between settlements to support active travel
- Address health inequalities for rural communities, particularly in areas experiencing high levels of deprivation



*The Broads, east of Reedham. © Google*

## Strategic GI Opportunities

### Active Places

- Target new **accessible greenspace** at a range of scales in priority areas with identified deficiencies in provision (see **Map A1.2**) to offer opportunities for people in these areas to access greenspace for informal/formal recreation and experience nature close to where they live. For example, parts of Wroxham are identified as areas that should be prioritised for doorstep and local scale green space provision.
- Explore opportunities for enhancing and expanding the network of **urban greenways** and routes between settlements, providing off-road, traffic free active travel routes for walking and cycling - connecting places where people live, work and learn to green spaces, and integrating with the public transport network. For example, opportunities across the area to improve inclusive access – including improving links between land and water and to the water’s edge; improving infrastructure such as a crossing point over the river at Whitlingham Country Park; and opportunities to strengthen pedestrian/cycle access to the adjacent Greater Norwich Area.
- Explore opportunities for enhancing and expanding the provision of accessible green spaces to support **healthy lifestyles** - such as parks and gardens, nature reserves, allotments and other community food growing spaces - either through provision of new spaces, or enhancing/repurposing existing spaces, for informal/formal recreation activities, conservation volunteering (to support long-term stewardship) and food growing within settlements.

### Natural Places

- Target habitat creation to increase existing capacity for supplying multiple **ecosystem service benefits** in identified areas of greatest demand for these services within the Broads Wetlands Area. For example creating new habitat for reducing surface water runoff to reduce flood risk and regulate water quality.
- Explore opportunities to create, enhance and restore priority habitats across the Broads Wetlands Area, and strengthen **ecological connectivity** to the surrounding countryside, in line with the priorities identified by the Norfolk Local Nature Recovery Strategy. For example, this may include opportunities for buffering existing wetland habitats at many of the designated sites which make up the majority of the Broads landscape. This may also include opportunities to support specific species recovery (eg. water voles).
- Explore opportunities to appropriately manage negative impacts on the Broads water environment, including invasive species, managing water quality, and recreational use of the Broads by powered vessels causing disturbance to habitats and species
- Explore opportunities to regenerate and enhance existing GI assets, and embed new GI features such as green roofs, sustainable drainage systems and street trees, into small-scale development.

## Existing Strategic GI Assets

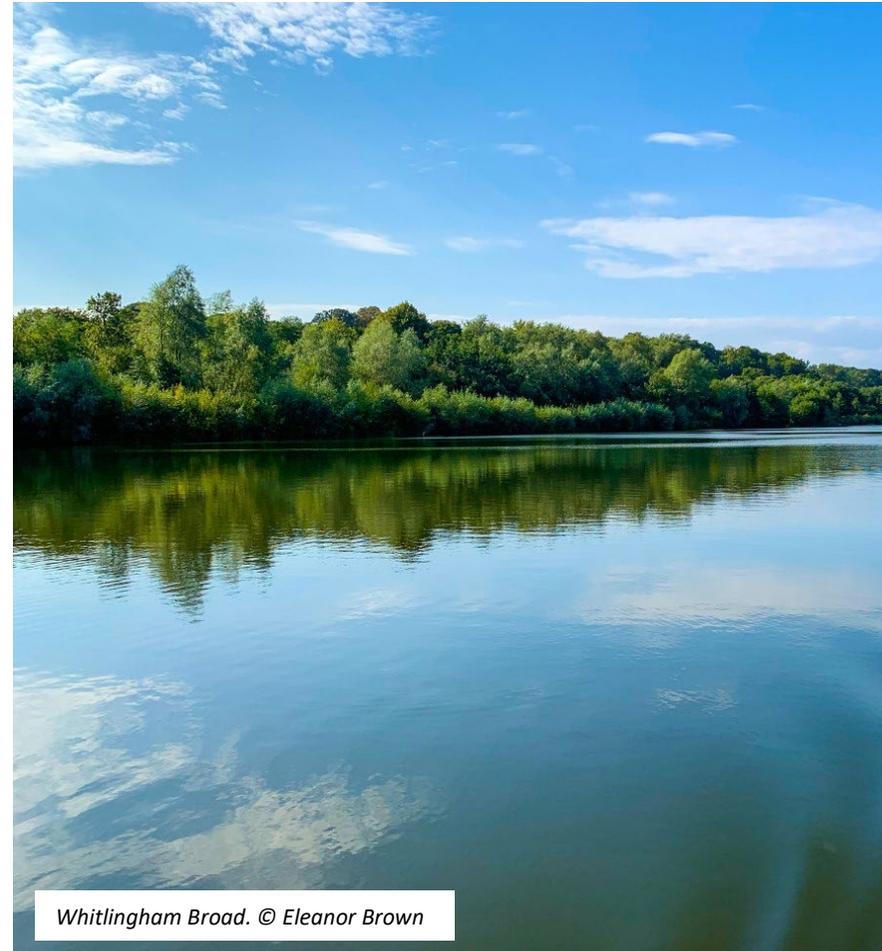
### Recreational and healthy living GI assets

- **Walking and cycling routes** include, for example – parts of the Wherryman’s Way walking route, parts of the Weavers’ Way walking route, and part of the Angles Way walking route. National Cycle Network Route 1 also links into the area near Geldeston and Beccles in the south, and at Norwich.
- **Recreational areas** include for example the Mid-Yare and Bure Marshes National Nature Reserves, and Whitlingham Local Nature Reserve. The Thorpe Marshes, Upton Broad and Marshes and Ranworth Broad and Marshes Wildlife Trust Sites also provide countryside access. The waterways of the Broads also provide a significant area for access and recreation by a range of powered and unpowered watercraft.
- **Parks and green spaces** include a small number of spaces with various functions, mostly on the periphery of settlements outside the Broads. These include parks and allotments such as Caen Meadow on the edge of Wroxham, Whitlingham Country Park on the edge of Norwich, and allotments at Gillingham.



## Ecological and geological GI assets

- **Designated sites** include 14 Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs) - for example Upton Broad & Marshes SSSI, these sites are also mostly designated as Special Protection Areas/Ramsar and as The Broads Special Area of Conservation. The area also includes the Bure Marshes and Mid-Yare National Nature Reserves, and 4 Local Nature Reserves - for example Whitlingham LNR and Bath Hills LNR. In addition the Broads area within Greater Norwich has 29 County Wildlife Sites.
- **Key habitats** include predominantly wetland habitats such as coastal and floodplain grazing marsh, which covers the majority of the area. There are also pockets of deciduous woodland and mosaic habitats on higher ground, along with very occasional pockets of good quality semi improved grassland.
- **Geological features** include, for example Bramerton Pits SSSI, known for rich, mainly marine vertebrate fossils.



Whitlingham Broad. © Eleanor Brown

## Hydrological (water) GI assets

- **Operational catchments** – The Broads Wetland Area lies across three Operational Catchments – the Bure in the north, the Yare in the west, and the Waveney in the south. The lower reaches of the Rivers Chet, Yare and Waveney (east of Loddon) and the River Bure (from South Walsham Marshes towards the sea) are covered by the ‘Norfolk East TraC’ operational catchment, due to the transitional (Estuarine) or coastal nature of these stretches of water.
- **Key waterways and features** include – the River Yare, which flows from Norwich in a broadly southeasterly direction to Reedham before turning northeastwards to the coast, the Bure, which flows broadly southeastwards from Coltishall to the coast, and the Waveney, which forms much of the boundary of Greater Norwich between Ditchingham and where it meets the River Yare at Burgh Castle. The Broads are also associated with a number of significant waterbodies adjoining the network of waterways, such as Rockland Broad and St. Andrew’s Broad.

Further information can be found in the [Broadland Rivers Catchment Management Plan](#).



Acle. © South Norfolk Council

## Heritage/cultural GI assets

- **Conservation areas** include – parts of 18 Conservation Areas, covering a number of small settlements such as Coltishall, mills and halls, and including the extensive Halvergate Marshes which contain the largest area of grazing marshes in the east of England, epitomising the marshland landscape of the Broads area.
- **Important historic buildings** include – 116 listed buildings, including for example, Langley Abbey remains (grade I), Mutton’s Mill (grade II\*) and White House Farmhouse (grade II). These assets include churches, mills, farmhouses and halls, illustrating the breath of local history in this area.
- **Industrial heritage features** - The connected broads and rivers were once part of an extensive network for communication and commerce, transporting goods such as fuel, building materials (including reed) and livestock and their products, especially wool.
- **Registered historic parks and gardens** include – Crown Point Park and Garden on the edge of Norwich, which is grade II listed, and includes mid-19<sup>th</sup> century designed gardens (altered at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century) set in a late 18<sup>th</sup>/early 19<sup>th</sup> century park.
- **Scheduled monuments** – 6 No. including, for example, Wroxham Bridge, Berney Arms windmill and Claxton Castle.



## Landscape Character Context

The Broads is a nationally unique wetland landscape associated with the flood plains of the main rivers of the Bure, Yare and Waveney, and smaller tributary valleys such as the Ant and Chet.

The distinctive lowland wetland landscapes of the Broads have a strong sense of place and cultural pattern, reflected in the special qualities underpinning its National Park status. These include its sense of tranquillity, wildness and remoteness, the simplicity of the landscape created by undeveloped big skies, areas of open water, winding waterways, its diversity of riparian and wetland habitats (including habitats unique to the Broads) and the local character of beautiful churches, windmills and quiet villages. It is these special qualities that gives the Broads its value as a 'breathing space for the cure of souls' (Ted Ellis).

Many centuries of human intervention, principally in the form of medieval peat excavation in river valleys and land drainage of estuarine marshes and flats for agriculture, has resulted in a hugely diverse and dynamic, ever changing landscape, cultural and habitat mosaic. This includes lowland river valleys, freshwater fens, reed beds, areas of regeneration by wet woodland (alder carr), heathlands and estuarine grazing marsh; as well as areas of traditional vernacular settlement using materials linked with traditional industries such as reed cutting, and servicing trades associated with boating and sailing.

The following landscape character areas (LCAs) identified by the Broads Landscape Character Assessment fall within the Greater Norwich Area:

- 1: Waveney Valley – Outney Common and Bath Hills Area
- 2: Waveney Valley – East of A143 Bungay/Ditchingham to Shipmeadow/Geldeston
- 3: Waveney Valley – Barsham, Gillingham and Beccles Marshes
- 4: Waveney Valley – Aldeby to Burgh St Peter
- 7: Waveney Valley – Burgh St Peter to Haddiscoe Dismantled Railway
- 10: Yare Valley – Whitlingham Lane and Country Park
- 11: Yare Valley – Cary's Meadow to Postwick Grove/Whitlingham Marsh
- 12: Yare Valley – Kirby/Postwick to Rockland/Strumpshaw
- 13: Yare Valley – Claxton to Hardley Marshes
- 14: Yare Valley – Buckenham and Cantley Marshes and Carrs
- 15: Yare Valley – Cantley to Reedham
- 16: Yare Valley – Norton Marshes to Haddiscoe Dismantled Railway
- 17: Chet Valley
- 18: Haddiscoe Island
- 19: Halvergate Marshes
- 22: Bure Valley – Upstream of Wroxham Railway Bridge
- 23: Bure Valley – Downstream of Wroxham to Fleet Dyke, South Walsham
- 24: Bure Valley – South Walsham to Acle Marshes and Fens
- 25: Bure Valley – Fleggburgh to Bure Loop Arable Marshlands

Guidance on local issues/opportunities for conserving and enhancing positive characteristics contributing to the sense of place/special qualities of these LCAs can be found in the Broads Landscape Character Assessment (Broads Authority, 2016).

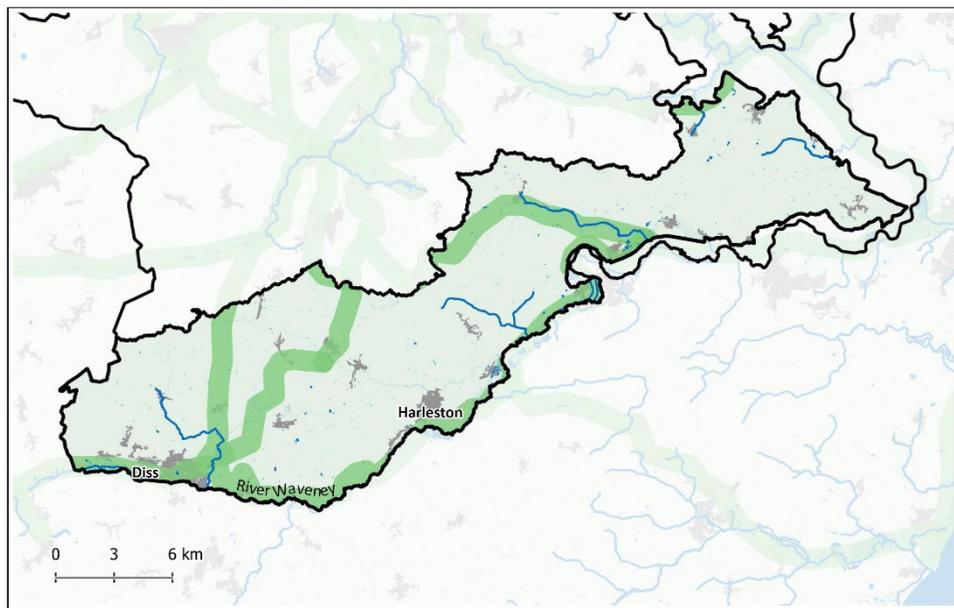


Whitlingham Broad. © Fisheye Images

## Area 3 – Waveney Farmland

### Location

This GI Area comprises the predominantly rural area associated with the Waveney catchment in the south of Greater Norwich within South Norfolk.



### Strategic GI Priorities

- Address deficiencies in accessible greenspace provision at a range of scales within the identified priority areas
- Strengthen the network of greenways within and between settlements to support active travel
- Address health inequalities for urban and rural communities, particularly in areas experiencing high levels of deprivation
- Urban greening to increase green cover in the built environment, strengthen habitat connectivity and support urban nature recovery
- Embed GI into new development sites



## Strategic GI Opportunities

### Active Places

- Target new **accessible greenspace** at a range of scales in priority areas with identified deficiencies in provision (see **Map A1.2**) to offer opportunities for people in these areas to access greenspace for informal/formal recreation and experience nature close to where they live. For example, parts of Diss and Harleston are identified as areas that should be prioritised for doorstep and local scale green space provision.
- Explore opportunities for enhancing and expanding the network of **urban greenways** and routes between settlements, providing off-road, traffic free active travel routes for walking and cycling - connecting places where people live, work and learn to green spaces, and integrating with the public transport network. For example, opportunities across the area to improve inclusive access - public rights of way in this area are frequently stretches of unpaved routes across agricultural land, with poor mobility access which could be improved; and there are opportunities to improve pedestrian/cycle connectivity (such as between Diss and Harleston, Bungay to Beccles, Beccles to Oulton Broad, and around Earsham), including links to the wider Norfolk Trails network.
- Explore opportunities for enhancing and expanding the provision of accessible green spaces to support **healthy lifestyles** - such as urban parks and gardens, nature reserves, allotments and other community food growing spaces - either through provision of new spaces, or enhancing/repurposing existing spaces, for informal/formal recreation activities, conservation volunteering (to support long-term stewardship) and food growing within urban areas. This may also include opportunities to support sustainable tourism.

### Natural Places

- Target increasing the level of green cover within the built environment in priority areas for **urban greening** within the Waveney Farmland Area (see **Map A1.3**) - such as opportunities for new and/or enhanced provision of urban open spaces, woodlands, streets, squares and green roofs/walls on buildings - to strengthen habitat connectivity and support urban nature recovery.
- Target habitat creation to increase existing capacity for supplying multiple **ecosystem service benefits** in identified areas of greatest demand for these services within the Waveney Farmland Area. For example, expanding the urban tree canopy to support carbon storage/sequestration, regulation of air/noise pollution and to regulate the local climate; and creating new habitat for reducing surface water runoff to reduce flood risk and regulate water quality.
- Explore opportunities to create, enhance and restore priority habitats across the Waveney Farmland Area, and strengthen **ecological connectivity** to the surrounding countryside, in line with the priorities identified by the Norfolk Local Nature Recovery Strategy. For example, this may include opportunities for buffering and connecting valuable ancient woodland at Gawdyhall Big Wood, Harleston (SSSI); buffering existing fen habitats at Royden Fen and restoring floodplain fen habitats; or maintaining and strengthening the wet woodland habitats in the Waveney Valley. This may also include opportunities to support specific species recovery (eg. water voles).
- Explore opportunities to regenerate and enhance existing GI assets, and embed new GI features such as green roofs, sustainable drainage systems and street trees, into small-scale **development sites** associated with settlements, to support urban greening.

## Existing Strategic GI Assets

### Recreational and healthy living GI assets

- **Walking and cycling routes** include, for example – parts of the Boudicca Way walking route, and parts of the Angles Way walking route. National Cycle Network Route 1 also links into the area near to Thwaite St. Mary/Ellingham, heading broadly north-south.
- **Recreational areas** include for example the Broome Heath and Roydon Fen Local Nature Reserves, and Frenze Beck Nature Reserve (a County Wildlife Site). There are also a number of small pockets of Access Land, such as Gissingham Common which provide countryside access.
- **Parks and green spaces** include a broad range of spaces with various functions, mostly on the periphery of or within settlements. These include parks, such as Diss Park and Mere, and The Green at Pulham Market; and allotments such as at Pulham St Mary and at Ditchingham.



*Diss Mere. © South Norfolk Council*

## Ecological and geological GI assets

- **Designated sites** include 12 Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs) - for example Geldeston Meadows SSSI and Sexton Wood SSSI. Those SSSI sites on the edge of the area which are predominantly within the Broads (eg. Geldeston Meadows SSSI) are also mostly designated as Special Protection Areas/Ramsar and as The Broads Special Area of Conservation. The area also includes 3 Local Nature Reserves - for example Broome Heath LNR. In addition the Waveney Farmland Area has 94 County Wildlife Sites.
- **Key habitats** includes a range of habitats interspersed with the farmland, such as grassland and deciduous woodland, with floodplain grazing marsh and wet woodland along the corridor of the River Waveney and its tributaries.
- **Geological features** include, for example Broome Heath Pit SSSI, which provides the only surviving exposure of the Broome Terrace, the flood plain of an ancient river.



*Broome Heath LNR. © Ashley Dace*

### Hydrological (water) GI assets

- **Operational catchments** – The Waveney Farmland Area lies predominantly within the Waveney Operational Catchment.
- **Key waterways and features** include – the River Waveney forms much of the southern boundary of the area, flowing broadly west to east, until it meets the Broads close to Bungay. A number of smaller tributaries, such as Broome Beck, flow into the Waveney.

Further information can be found in the [Broadland Rivers Catchment Management Plan](#).

### Heritage/cultural GI assets

- **Conservation areas** – parts of 21 Conservation Areas, covering the historic areas of a number of settlements of various sizes such as Diss, Scole and Ditchingham.
- **Important historic buildings** - there are over 1,250 Statutory Listed Buildings (Grade I, II\* and II) both within and outside of Conservation Areas. These include for example the grade I listed Scole Inn, Hedenham Hall, and the Church of St. Andrew, Frenze. These assets include churches, farmhouses and halls, illustrating the breath of local history in this area.
- **Registered historic parks and gardens** – Grade II\* listed Raveningham Hall - A late 18th century house surrounded by a park of the same date, with early 20th century Arts and Crafts-style gardens designed by Somers Clark; and grade II listed Ditchingham Hall.
- **Scheduled monuments** – 5 No. including for example Scole Roman settlement, and earthworks on Broome Heath.

## Landscape Character Context

The Waveney Farmland Area is a mixed farmland landscape. The dominant character type is Tributary Farmland as identified in the South Norfolk District Landscape Character Assessment (South Norfolk District Council, 2001), with Plateau Farmland to the north, and the Rural River Valley of the Waveney in the south.

The predominant land use is arable farming, including large fields, often with denuded boundaries. The open arable landscape is broken by deciduous woodland blocks.

Settlement pattern is scattered, with larger settlements along the Waveney Valley in the south, including Diss and Harleston.

Landscape character types and areas identified within the Yare Farmland Area include:

### Rural River Valley

- A5 Waveney Rural River Valley

### Tributary Farmland

- B1 Tas Tributary Farmland
- B4 Waveney Tributary Farmland
- B5 Chet Tributary Farmland

### Tributary Farmland

- C2 Thurlton Tributary Farmland with Parkland

### Plateau Farmland

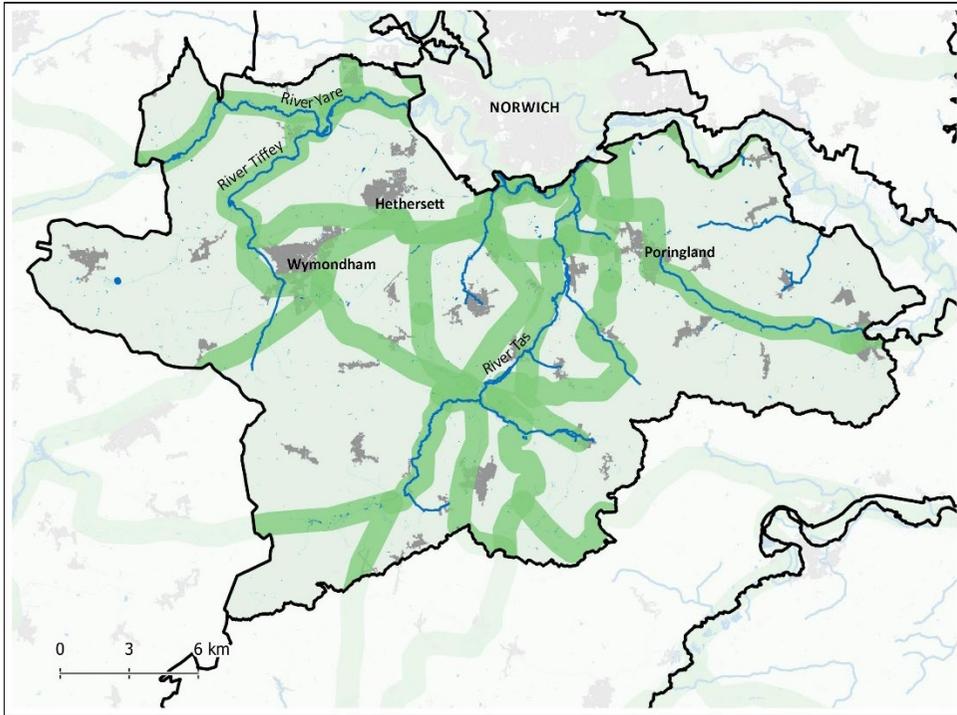
- E2 Great Moulton Plateau Farmland

Guidance on local issues/opportunities for conserving and enhancing positive characteristics contributing to the sense of place/special qualities of these landscape character types/areas can be found in the South Norfolk District Landscape Character Assessment.

## Area 4 – Yare Farmland

### Location

This GI Area comprises the predominantly rural area associated with the Yare catchment south of the City of Norwich within South Norfolk.



### Strategic GI Priorities

- Address deficiencies in accessible greenspace provision at a range of scales within the identified priority areas
- Strengthen the network of greenways within and between settlements to support active travel
- Address health inequalities for urban and rural communities, particularly in areas experiencing high levels of deprivation
- Urban greening to increase green cover in the built environment, strengthen habitat connectivity and support urban nature recovery
- Embed GI into the Cambridge-Norwich Tech Corridor Strategic Growth Area



## Strategic GI Opportunities

### Active Places

- Target new **accessible greenspace** at a range of scales in priority areas with identified deficiencies in provision (see **Map A1.2**) to offer opportunities for people in these areas to access greenspace for informal/formal recreation and experience nature close to where they live. For example, parts of Hethersett are identified as areas that should be prioritised for doorstep and local scale green space provision, particularly in the south of the town where there is higher deprivation.
- Explore opportunities for enhancing and expanding the network of **urban greenways** and routes between settlements, providing off-road, traffic free active travel routes for walking and cycling - connecting places where people live, work and learn to green spaces, and integrating with the public transport network. For example, opportunities across the area to improve inclusive access - public rights of way in this area are frequently stretches of unpaved routes across agricultural land, with poor mobility access which could be improved; and there are opportunities to improve pedestrian/cycle connectivity (such as at Wymondham, Hethersett and Long Stratton, as well as between and around smaller settlements, for example Kimberley to Carleton Forehoe, or Tasburgh to Saxlingham) including links to the wider Norfolk Trails network.
- Explore opportunities for enhancing and expanding the provision of accessible green spaces to support **healthy lifestyles** - such as urban parks and gardens, nature reserves, allotments and other community food growing spaces - either through provision of new spaces, or enhancing/repurposing existing spaces, for informal/formal recreation

activities, conservation volunteering (to support long-term stewardship) and food growing within urban areas.

### Natural Places

- Target increasing the level of green cover within the built environment in priority areas for **urban greening** within the Yare Farmland Area (see **Map A1.3**) - such as opportunities for new and/or enhanced provision of urban open spaces, woodlands, streets, squares and green roofs/walls on buildings - to strengthen habitat connectivity and support urban nature recovery.
- Target habitat creation to increase existing capacity for supplying multiple **ecosystem service benefits** in identified areas of greatest demand for these services within the Yare Farmland Area. For example, expanding the urban tree canopy to support carbon storage/sequestration, regulation of air/noise pollution and to regulate the local climate; and creating new habitat for reducing surface water runoff to reduce flood risk and regulate water quality.
- Explore opportunities to create, enhance and restore priority habitats across the Yare Farmland Area, and strengthen **ecological connectivity** to the surrounding countryside, in line with the priorities identified by the Norfolk Local Nature Recovery Strategy. For example, this may include opportunities for buffering and connecting existing ancient woodland in Spring Wood, south of Hempnall Green; or buffering existing wet grassland habitats at Shotesham Common. This may also include opportunities to support specific species recovery.
- Explore opportunities to regenerate and enhance existing GI assets, and embed new GI features such as green roofs, sustainable drainage systems and street trees, into the Cambridge Norwich Tech Corridor **Strategic Growth Area** to support urban greening.

## Existing Strategic GI Assets

### Recreational and healthy living GI assets

- **Walking and cycling routes** include, for example – parts of the Boudicca Way walking route, and parts of the Wherryman’s Way walking route. National Cycle Network Route 1 also links into the area at Norwich, broadly following the northeastern edge of the Area until Loddon.
- **Recreational areas** include for example golf courses such as Barnham Broom Golf Club and Bawburgh Golf Club; and the Smockhill Common, Dunston Common and Marston Marshes Local Nature Reserves. The Lower Wood (Ashwellthorpe) Wildlife Trust Site also provides countryside access.
- **Parks and green spaces** include a broad range of spaces with various functions, mostly on the periphery of or within settlements. These include parks, such as Ketts Park in Wymondham and Hetherset Memorial Ground; and allotments such as at Saxlingham Nethergate and Mulbarton Oakley Park South Allotments.



*Smockhill Common LNR. © South Norfolk Council*

## Ecological and geological GI assets

- **Designated sites** include 15 Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs) - for example Lower Wood Ashwellthorpe SSSI, Flordon Common SSSI and Forncett Meadows SSSI. Those SSSI sites on the edge of the area which are predominantly within the Broads (eg. Yare Broads and Marshes SSSI) are also mostly designated as Special Protection Areas/Ramsar and as The Broads Special Area of Conservation (SAC). Flordon Common SSSI and Coston Fen, Runhall SSSI are also designated as part of the Norfolk Valley Fens SAC. The area also includes a small part of the Mid-Yare National Nature Reserve near to Surlingham, and 7 Local Nature Reserves - for example Toll's Meadow, Wymondham LNR and Marston Marshes LNR. In addition, the Yare Farmland Area has 177 County Wildlife Sites.
- **Key habitats** includes a range of habitats interspersed with the farmland, such as grassland and deciduous woodland, with coastal and floodplain grazing marsh along river and stream corridors. There are also mosaic habitats, and a small pocket of heathland at Furze Hill.
- **Geological features** include for example the Caistor St. Edmund Chalk Pit SSSI, which provides exposure of the late Campanian Beeston Chalk, dated to around 75 million years ago. It has many fossils of molluscs and sea urchins.



*Lower Wood Ashwellthorpe SSSI. © Elizabeth Dack*

## Hydrological (water) GI assets

- **Operational catchments** – the Yare Farmland Area lies predominantly within the Yare Operational Catchment.
- **Key waterways and features** include – the River Yare flows through the north of the area, from Coston to Bawburgh, before following the edge of Norwich City (partly outside this area). The River Yare then joins the Broads area close to Trowse Newton. A number of smaller tributaries, such as the River Tas, flow into the Yare from this area.

Further information can be found in the [Broadland Rivers Catchment Management Plan](#).



Wymondham Abbey. © South Norfolk Council

## Heritage/cultural GI assets

- **Conservation areas** – parts of 28 Conservation Areas, covering the historic areas of a number of settlements of various sizes such as Wymondham, Fritton and Bergh Apton.
- **Important historic buildings** - there are nearly 1600 Statutory Listed Buildings (Grade I, II\* and II) both within and outside of Conservation Areas. These include for example the grade I listed Hales Hall, Kirstead Hall, and the Church of St. Ethelbert, Thurton. These assets include churches, farmhouses, cottages and halls, illustrating the breath of local history in this area.
- **Registered historic parks and gardens** – 5 No including for example the grade II\* listed Intwood Hall, a manor house with walled gardens of 16th century origins set in a mid-18th century park; and Kimberley Hall, an early 18th century house with formal garden, set in a park laid out between 1762 and 1778.
- **Scheduled monuments** – 28 No. including a range of features such as moated sites, Abbeys (for example Wymondham Abbey), bowl barrows, tumuli and henges (for example Arminghall Henge) as well as Moot Hill, a ring motte, and Venta Icenorum, a Roman town with associated prehistoric, Anglo-Saxon and medieval remains at Caistor.

## Landscape Character Context

The Yare Farmland Area is a mixed farmland landscape. The dominant character types include Plateau/Settled Plateau Farmland and Tributary Farmland interspersed with Rural River Valleys as identified in the South Norfolk District Landscape Character Assessment (South Norfolk District Council, 2001).

The predominant land use is arable farming, which occupy large fields, often with denuded boundaries. Associated with the valleys there are some occasional small areas of pasture which are used for cattle grazing. The open arable landscape is broken by deciduous woodland blocks, particularly following the tributary corridors, which impart a semi-wooded, semi-enclosed character to parts of the area.

There are a number of settlements in the area, including the town of Wymondham and large village of Hethersett.

Landscape character types and areas identified within the Yare Farmland Area include:

### Rural River Valley

- A1 Tas Rural River Valley
- A2 Yare/Tiffany Rural River Valley

### Plateau Farmland

- E1 Ashwellthorpe Plateau Farmland
- E2 Great Moulton Plateau Farmland
- E3 Hingham - Mattishall Plateau Farmland

### Tributary Farmland

- B1 Tas Tributary Farmland
- B2 Tiffany Tributary Farmland
- B3 Rockland Tributary Farmland
- B5 Chet Tributary Farmland
- B6 Yare Tributary Farmland

### Tributary Farmland with Parkland

- C1 Yare Tributary Farmland with Parkland

### Settled Plateau Farmland

- D1 Wymondham Settled Plateau Farmland
- D2 Poringland Settled Plateau Farmland

### Valley Urban Fringe

- F1 Yare Valley Urban Fringe

### Fringe Farmland

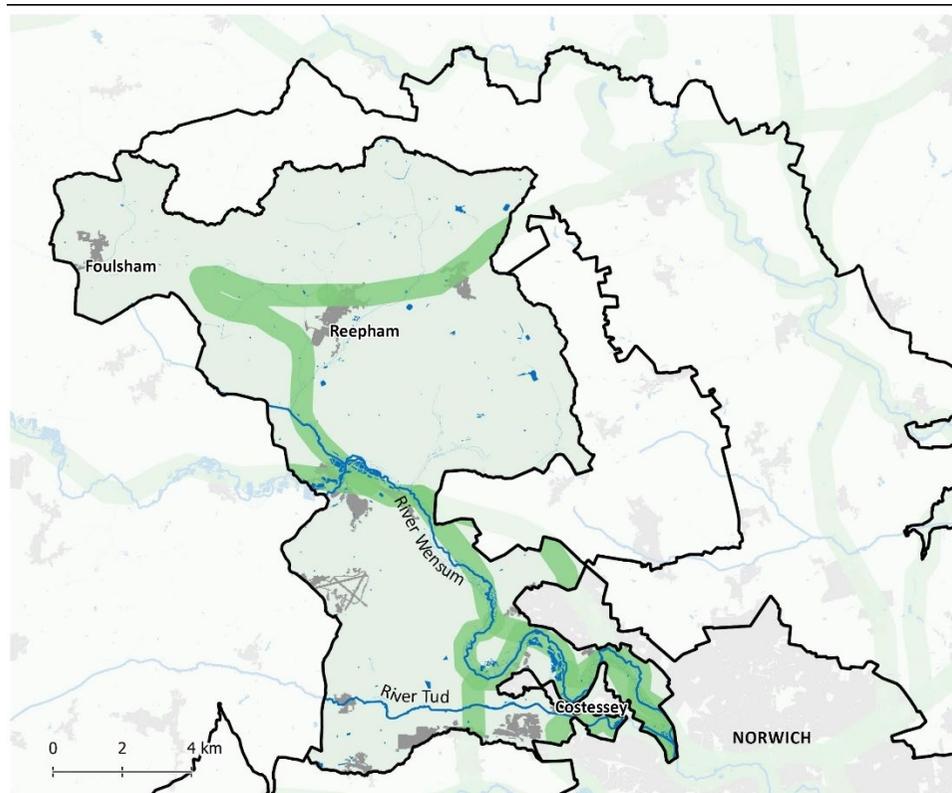
- G1 Easton Fringe Farmland

Guidance on local issues/opportunities for conserving and enhancing positive characteristics contributing to the sense of place/special qualities of these landscape character types/areas can be found in the South Norfolk District Landscape Character Assessment.

## Area 5 – Wensum Farmland

### Location

This GI Area comprises the predominantly rural area associated with the Wensum catchment to the northwest of the City of Norwich within Broadland District.



### Strategic GI Priorities

- Address deficiencies in accessible greenspace provision at a range of scales within the identified priority areas
- Strengthen the network of greenways within and between settlements to support active travel
- Address health inequalities for urban and rural communities, particularly in areas experiencing high levels of deprivation
- Strengthen habitat connectivity and support nature recovery
- Embed GI into new development sites



## Strategic GI Opportunities

### Active Places

- Target new **accessible greenspace** at a range of scales in priority areas with identified deficiencies in provision (see **Map A1.2**) to offer opportunities for people in these areas to access greenspace for informal/formal recreation and experience nature close to where they live. For example, parts of Foulsham have been identified as a priority for the provision of green space within the 'Close to Home' standard, particularly sites that meet the Neighbourhood standard of provision.
- Explore opportunities for enhancing and expanding the network of **urban greenways** and routes between settlements, providing off-road, traffic free active travel routes for walking and cycling - connecting places where people live, work and learn to green spaces, and integrating with the public transport network. For example, opportunities across the area to improve inclusive access – the area contains a number of public rights of way which are not accessible paths; and there are opportunities to improve pedestrian/cycle connectivity, particularly in settlements to the west of Norwich, including links to the wider Norfolk Trails network.
- Explore opportunities for enhancing and expanding the provision of accessible green spaces to support **healthy lifestyles** - such as urban parks and gardens, nature reserves, allotments and other community food growing spaces - either through provision of new spaces, or enhancing/repurposing existing spaces, for informal/formal recreation activities, conservation volunteering (to support long-term stewardship) and food growing within urban areas.

### Natural Places

- Target habitat creation to increase existing capacity for supplying multiple **ecosystem service benefits** in identified areas of greatest demand for these services within the Wensum Farmland Area. For example, expanding the urban tree canopy to support carbon storage/sequestration, regulation of air/noise pollution and to regulate the local climate; and creating new habitat for reducing surface water runoff to reduce flood risk and regulate water quality.
- Explore opportunities to create, enhance and restore priority habitats across the Wensum Farmland Area, and strengthen **ecological connectivity** to the surrounding countryside, in line with the priorities identified by the Norfolk Local Nature Recovery Strategy. For example, this may include opportunities for buffering and connecting existing woodland around Queen's Hills; buffering existing fen habitats at Whitwell Common (SSSI); or linking important grasslands on the upper slopes above the floodplain. This may also include opportunities to support specific species recovery (eg. bats).
- Explore opportunities to regenerate and enhance existing GI assets, and embed new GI features such as green roofs, sustainable drainage systems and street trees, into small-scale **development sites** associated with settlements, to support urban greening.

## Existing Strategic GI Assets

### Recreational and healthy living GI assets

- **Walking and cycling routes** include, for example – parts of the Marriott's Way, a footpath, bridleway, and cycle route that runs between Aylsham and Norwich. Part of Marriott's Way also follows National Cycle Network Route 1, an extensive nationwide route, which in this area connects Foulsham and Reepham to Norwich.
- **Recreational areas** include, for example golf courses such as Weston Park Golf Club and Costessey Park Golf Club. The Forestry Commission Woodland at Great Wood, Haveringland, as well as a number of other areas of Access Land such as Alderford Common also provide countryside access.
- **Parks and green spaces** include a broad range of spaces with various functions, mostly on the periphery of or within settlements. These include parks, such as Queen's Hills Community Park; and allotments such as at Reepham where there are 3 allotment sites.



## Ecological and geological GI assets

- **Designated sites** include 6 Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs) - for example Foxley Wood SSSI and the River Wensum SSSI. Booton Common SSSI designated as part of the Norfolk Valley Fens Special Area of Conservation (SAC), and the River Wensum SSSI is also a designated SAC. The area also includes a small part of the Foxley Wood National Nature Reserve near to Themelthorpe. In addition the Wensum Farmland Area has 76 County Wildlife Sites.
- **Key habitats** includes a range of habitats interspersed with the farmland, such as grassland and deciduous woodland. There are also significant areas of wetland habitats including coastal and floodplain grazing marsh, which is primarily found along the corridor of the River Wensum and its tributaries.



## Hydrological (water) GI assets

- **Operational catchments** – the Wensum Farmland Area lies predominantly within the Wensum Operational Catchment.
- **Key waterways and features** include – the River Wensum which meanders through the area, from Lenwade to Costessey, before flowing eastwards through Norwich City (outside this area). The River Tud also flows west-east through the area from Honingham to Costessey, where it joins the Wensum. The Wensum is associated with a number of waterbodies along its floodplains, such as those at Costessey Pits.

Further information can be found in the [Broadland Rivers Catchment Management Plan](#).



Salle Park. © Evelyn Simak

## Heritage/cultural GI assets

- **Conservation areas** – parts of 7 Conservation Areas, covering the historic areas of a number of small settlements such as Foulsham and Cawston.
- **Important historic buildings** - over 300 Statutory Listed Buildings (Grade I, II\* and II) both within and outside of Conservation Areas. These include for example the grade I listed Haydon Hall, and the Church of Holy Innocents, Foulsham, as well as grade II\* listed Old Hall Farmhouse, Foulsham. These assets include churches, farmhouses, cottages and halls, illustrating the breath of local history in this area.
- **Registered historic parks and gardens** – grade II\* listed Heydon Hall, an early 18th century landscape park and woodland, further developed in the 19th century, with formal gardens and lawns beside the house; and grade II listed Salle Park.
- **Scheduled monuments** – 3 No. including a round barrow southeast of the Lodges, a tumulus in the Warren, and a wayside cross northwest of Stump Cross Farm

## Landscape Character Context

The Wensum Farmland Area is a mixed farmland landscape. The dominant character types include Plateau and Tributary Farmland, cut by the Wensum River Valley as identified in the Broadland District Landscape Character Assessment (Broadland District Council, 2013).

The River Wensum and its valley slopes form a strong division between Wooded Heath Mosaic and Tributary Farmland. The Wensum meanders through a confined valley floodplain. It is enclosed to the south by wooded rolling slopes, and to the north by less dramatic, gentler arable slopes. The Valley has a shallow V-shape, and the valley sides contain an intimate landscape.

Woodland is a particular feature of the valley; most commonly associated with large mixed blocks that blanket the river valley sides; interspersed with a predominantly arable farmland landscape.

Landscape character types and areas identified within the Wensum Farmland Area include:

### Plateau Farmland

- C1 Foulsham and Reepham Plateau Farmland

### Tributary Farmland

- D1 Cawston Tributary Farmland
- D2 Weston Green Tributary Farmland

### Wooded Estatelands

- E1 Blickling and Oulton Wooded Estatelands

### River Valley

- A1 River Wensum River Valley

### Rural River Valley

- A3 Tud Rural River Valley (South Norfolk District LCA)
- A4 Wensum Rural River Valley (South Norfolk District LCA)

### Fringe Farmland

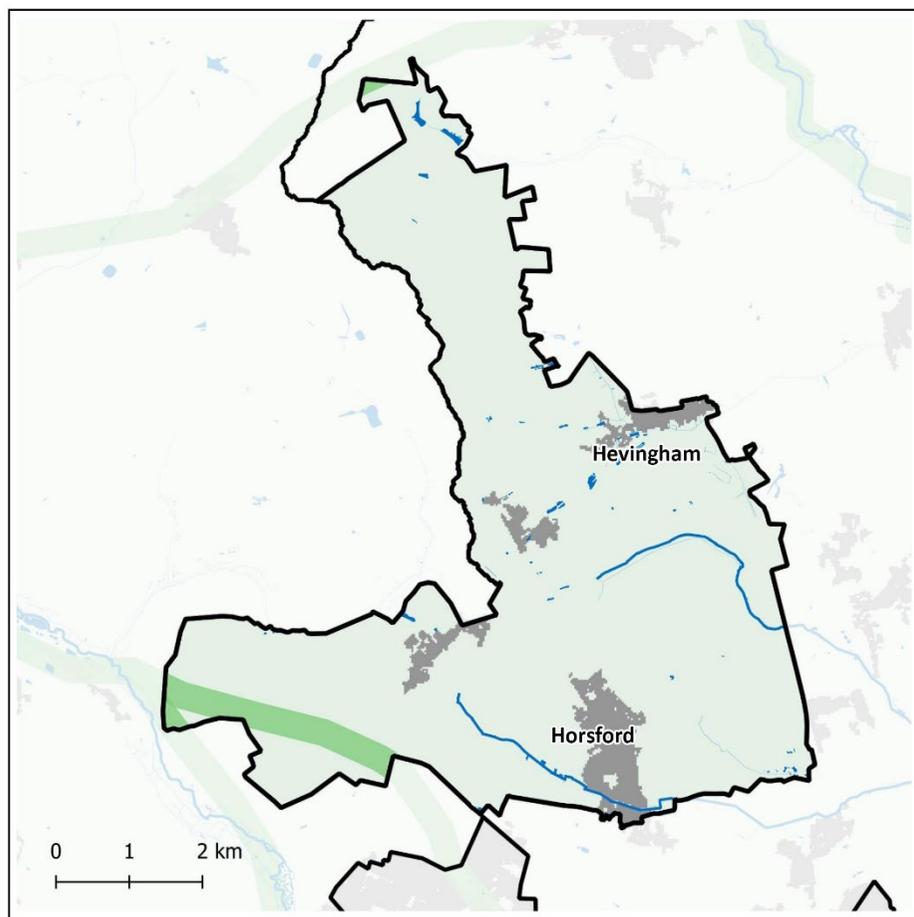
- G1 Easton Fringe Farmland (South Norfolk District LCA)

Guidance on local issues/opportunities for conserving and enhancing positive characteristics contributing to the sense of place/special qualities of these landscape character types/areas can be found in the Broadland District Landscape Character Assessment.

## Area 6 – Horsford Heaths & Woods

### Location

This GI Area comprises the predominantly rural and wooded area to the north of the City of Norwich within Broadland District.



### Strategic GI Priorities

- Address deficiencies in accessible greenspace provision at a range of scales within the identified priority areas
- Strengthen the network of greenways within and between settlements to support active travel
- Address health inequalities for urban and rural communities, particularly in areas experiencing high levels of deprivation
- Strengthen habitat connectivity and support nature recovery
- Embed GI into new development sites



## Strategic GI Opportunities

### Active Places

- Target new **accessible greenspace** at a range of scales in priority areas with identified deficiencies in provision (see **Map A1.2**) to offer opportunities for people in these areas to access greenspace for informal/formal recreation and experience nature close to where they live. For example, parts of both Horsford and Felthorpe are identified as areas that should be prioritised for doorstep and local scale green space provision.
- Explore opportunities for enhancing and expanding the network of **urban greenways** and routes between settlements, providing off-road, traffic free active travel routes for walking and cycling - connecting places where people live, work and learn to green spaces, and integrating with the public transport network. For example, opportunities across the area to improve pedestrian/cycle connectivity and inclusive access – particularly to strategic assets such as Broadland Country Park.
- Explore opportunities for enhancing and expanding the provision of accessible green spaces to support **healthy lifestyles** - such as parks and gardens, nature reserves, allotments and other community food growing spaces - either through provision of new spaces, or enhancing/repurposing existing spaces, for informal/formal recreation activities, conservation volunteering (to support long-term stewardship) and food growing within settlements.

### Natural Places

- Target habitat creation to increase existing capacity for supplying multiple **ecosystem service benefits** in identified areas of greatest demand for these services within the Horsford Heaths and Woods Area. For example, expanding the tree canopy where appropriate to support carbon storage/sequestration, regulation of air/noise pollution and to regulate the local climate; and creating new habitat for reducing surface water runoff to reduce flood risk and regulate water quality.
- Explore opportunities to create, enhance and restore priority habitats across the Horsford Heaths and Woods Area, and strengthen **ecological connectivity** to the surrounding countryside, in line with the priorities identified by the Norfolk Local Nature Recovery Strategy. For example, this may include opportunities for buffering existing heathland at Buxton Heath (SSSI/SAC) and Cawston and Marsham Heaths (SSSI). This may also include opportunities to support specific species recovery.
- Explore opportunities to regenerate and enhance existing GI assets, and embed new GI features such as green roofs, sustainable drainage systems and street trees, into small-scale **development sites** associated with settlements, to support urban greening.

## Existing Strategic GI Assets

### Recreational and healthy living GI assets

- **Walking and cycling routes** include, for example – parts of the Marriott's Way, a footpath, bridleway, and cycle route that runs between Aylsham and Norwich.
- **Recreational areas** include, for example Broadland Country Park at Horsford. The Forestry Commission Woodland at Hevingham Park, and Buxton Heath, as well as a number of other areas of Access Land on woodland and heath also provide countryside access.
- **Parks and green spaces** include a broad range of spaces with various functions, mostly on the periphery of or within settlements. These include parks and recreation grounds, such as the playing fields at Hevingham and Recreation Ground at Horsford; and allotments such as at Horsford.



*Broadland Country Park. © Broadland District Council*

## Ecological and geological GI assets

- **Designated sites** include 4 Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs) - for example Alderford Common SSSI, and Buxton Heath SSSI. Buxton Heath is also designated as part of the Norfolk Valley Fens Special Area of Conservation (SAC). In addition, the Horsford Heaths and Woods Area has 21 County Wildlife Sites.
- **Key habitats** include significant areas of heathland, with grassland, woodland and mosaic habitats. There are also small areas of lowland fen.



### Hydrological (water) GI assets

- **Operational catchments** – much of the Horsford Heaths and Woods Area lies within the Bure Operational Catchment. The part of the area west of Felthorpe lies in the Wensum Operational Catchment.
- **Key waterways and features** – there are no main rivers in this area. There are two small watercourses (which drain into the River Bure to the east), and a number of small streams/ditches and waterbodies.

Further information can be found in the [Broadland Rivers Catchment Management Plan](#).

### Heritage/cultural GI assets

- **Important historic buildings** - 18 Statutory Listed Buildings (Grade II\* and II). These include for example the grade II\* listed Parish Church of St. Margaret, Felthorpe, as well as grade II listed Felthorpe Hall, and the Dog Public House, Horsford. These assets include churches, farmhouses and halls, illustrating the breath of local history in this area.
- **Scheduled monuments** – 2 No, including two round barrows on Horsford Heath and a round barrow north of Sandy Lane



Felthorpe Hall. © Adrian S Pye

## Landscape Character Context

The Horsford Heaths and Woods Area is predominantly comprised of a Woodland Heath Mosaic landscape as identified in the Broadland District Landscape Character Assessment (Broadland District Council, 2013). This is a simple plateau landscape, with few variations in topography.

The area was once entirely covered by heathland, and now includes a mixture of arable farmland, old deciduous woodland and recent coniferous plantations. Only small remnant patches of heathland and fen remain, often protected by European designations for their high ecological value.

Large rectangular arable fields abut the woodland in northern and southern parts of the area. Woodland cover is more intermittent in central parts, and small arable fields are interspersed with small-scale industrial units and isolated 20th century residential developments.

Landscape character types and areas identified within the Bure Farmland Area include:

### Woodland Heath Mosaic

- B1 Horsford Woodland Heath Mosaic

Guidance on local issues/opportunities for conserving and enhancing positive characteristics contributing to the sense of place/special qualities of this landscape character types/areas can be found in the Broadland District Landscape Character Assessment.



Paths at Broadland Country Park. © Fisheye Images

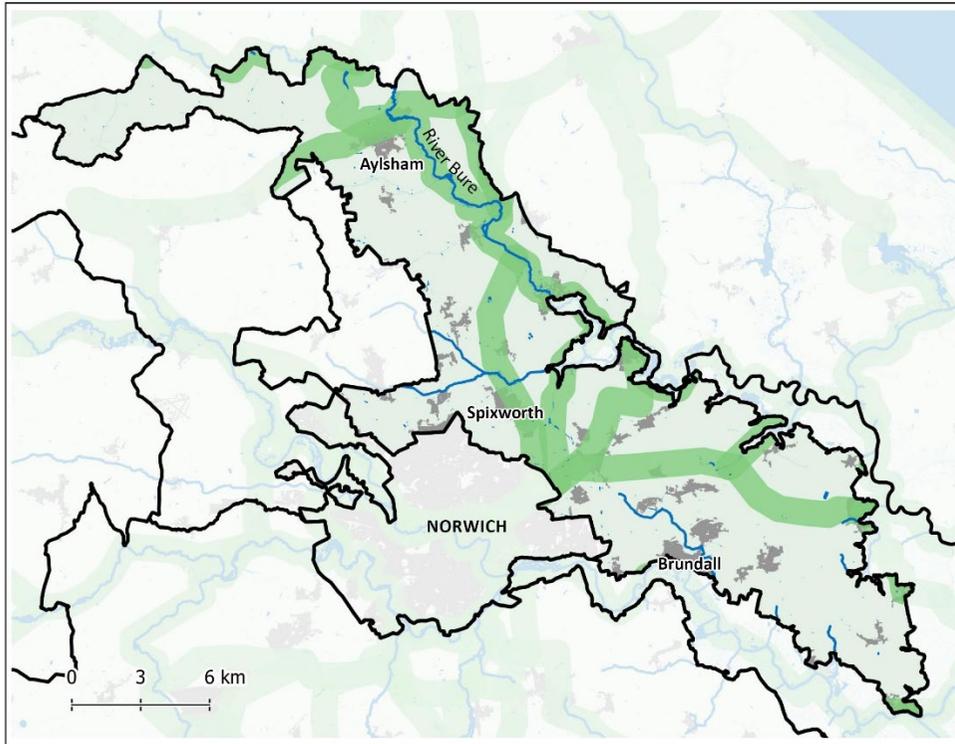


Broadland Country Park. © Fisheye Images

## Area 7 – Bure Farmland

### Location

This GI Area comprises the predominantly rural area associated with the Bure catchment to the northeast of the City of Norwich within Broadland District.



### Strategic GI Priorities

- Address deficiencies in accessible greenspace provision at a range of scales within the identified priority areas
- Strengthen the network of greenways within and between settlements to support active travel
- Address health inequalities for urban and rural communities, particularly in areas experiencing high levels of deprivation
- Urban greening to increase green cover in the built environment, strengthen habitat connectivity and support urban nature recovery
- Embed GI into the North-East Norwich Strategic Growth Area



## Strategic GI Opportunities

### Active Places

- Target new **accessible greenspace** at a range of scales in priority areas with identified deficiencies in provision (see **Map A1.2**) to offer opportunities for people in these areas to access greenspace for informal/formal recreation and experience nature close to where they live. For example, the villages of Blofield and Brundall are identified as priorities for provision of the Neighbourhood standard of greenspace.
- Explore opportunities for enhancing and expanding the network of **urban greenways** and routes between settlements, providing off-road, traffic free active travel routes for walking and cycling - connecting places where people live, work and learn to green spaces, and integrating with the public transport network. For example, opportunities to improve inclusive access – both as part of any new GI provision provided by Strategic Growth, and for existing routes and connections. This may include enhancing pedestrian/cycle connectivity between Wroxham and Norwich (the Broadland Way) linking with Marriott’s Way and the Bure Valley Path.
- Explore opportunities for enhancing and expanding the provision of accessible green spaces to support **healthy lifestyles** - such as urban parks and gardens, nature reserves, allotments and other community food growing spaces - either through provision of new spaces, or enhancing/repurposing existing spaces, for informal/formal recreation activities, conservation volunteering (to support long-term stewardship) and food growing within urban areas.

### Natural Places

- Target increasing the level of green cover within the built environment in priority areas for **urban greening** within the Bure Farmland Area (see **Map A1.3**) - such as opportunities for new and/or enhanced provision of urban open spaces, woodlands, streets, squares and green roofs/walls on buildings - to strengthen habitat connectivity and support urban nature recovery.
- Target habitat creation to increase existing capacity for supplying multiple **ecosystem service benefits** in identified areas of greatest demand for these services within the Bure Farmland Area. For example, expanding the urban tree canopy to support carbon storage/sequestration, regulation of air/noise pollution and to regulate the local climate; and creating new habitat for reducing surface water runoff to reduce flood risk and regulate water quality.
- Explore opportunities to create, enhance and restore priority habitats across the Bure Farmland Area, and strengthen **ecological connectivity** to the surrounding countryside, in line with the priorities identified by the Norfolk Local Nature Recovery Strategy. For example, this may include opportunities for buffering and connecting existing woodland to the west of Rackheath; or buffering existing wet grassland habitats at Crostwick Marsh (SSSI). This may also include opportunities to support specific species recovery.
- Explore opportunities to regenerate and enhance existing GI assets, and embed new GI features such as green roofs, sustainable drainage systems and street trees, into the into the North-East Norwich **Strategic Growth Area** to support urban greening.

## Existing Strategic GI Assets

### Recreational and healthy living GI assets

- **Walking and cycling routes** include, for example – parts of the Marriott's Way, a footpath, bridleway, and cycle route that runs between Aylsham and Norwich. At Aylsham Station, the Marriott's Way route becomes the Bure Valley Path, a nine mile footpath and cycle path running through to Hoveton and Wroxham. The path runs alongside the entire length of the narrow gauge Bure Valley Railway.
- **Recreational areas** include, for example golf courses such as Sprowston Manor Golf Club; and the South Walsham Fen Local Nature Reserve. The access land (which also has public footpaths) at Crostwick Common also provides countryside access.
- **Parks and green spaces** include a broad range of spaces with various functions, mostly on the periphery of or within settlements. These include parks and recreation grounds, such as Brundall Countryside Park, Balay Park - Buxton, and Aylsham Recreation Ground; churchyards such as St. Edmund's Church, Acle; and allotments such as at Coltishall.



*St. Edmund's Church and Churchyard, Acle. © J Bass*

## Ecological and geological GI assets

- **Designated sites** include small parts of 8 Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs) - for example Crostwick Marsh SSSI. Most of the SSSIs only lie on the edge of the area as they fall predominantly within the Broads. Those sites on the edge of the area which are predominantly within the Broads are also mostly designated as Special Protection Areas/Ramsar and as The Broads Special Area of Conservation. The area also includes the South Walsham Fen Local Nature Reserve and 78 County Wildlife Sites.
- **Key habitats** include a range of habitats such as grassland and deciduous woodland, with coastal and floodplain grazing marsh along the corridor of the River Bure and its tributaries. There are also very occasional small pockets of heathland, such as at Abel Heath.



## Hydrological (water) GI assets

- **Operational catchments** – much of the Bure Farmland Area lies within the Bure Operational Catchment. The southwestern part of the area, around Great/Little Plumstead, Brundall and Strumpshaw lies in the Yare Operational Catchment.
- **Key waterways and features** include – the River Bure which flows southwards through the north of this area, from Aylsham to Coltishall where it joins the Broads. A number of smaller tributaries, such as the Stone Beck, drain into the Broads.

Further information can be found in the [Broadland Rivers Catchment Management Plan](#).



Buxton Mill and the River Bure. © South Norfolk Council

## Heritage/cultural GI assets

- **Conservation areas** – parts of 17 Conservation Areas, covering the historic area of a number of settlements of various sizes, such as Aylsham and Salhouse, and including the extensive Blickling Estate.
- **Important historic buildings** - over 600 Statutory Listed Buildings (Grade I, II\* and II) both within and outside of Conservation Areas. These include for example the grade I listed Blickling Hall, and the Church of St. Mary, Wroxham, as well as grade II\* listed Little Hautbois Hall, near Buxton and the grade II listed Buxton Mill. These assets include churches, farmhouses, cottages and halls, illustrating the breath of local history in this area.
- **Registered historic parks and gardens** – grade II\* listed Blickling Hall, an extensive area of 18th century parkland surrounding a 17th and 18th century formal garden with mid-19th century development, and further garden work in the 1930s, with a 17th century moated country house; and also grade II\* listed Heydon Hall.
- **Scheduled monuments** – 10 No. including, for example Horsford Castle, St Faith Priory, and a Roman camp and settlement site west of Horstead.

## Landscape Character Context

The Bure Farmland Area is a mixed farmland landscape. The dominant character type is Wooded Estatelands as identified in the Broadland District Landscape Character Assessment (Broadland District Council, 2013), which is a gently rolling landscape of predominantly arable farmland with numerous copses, woodlands and small plantations providing a sense of enclosure.

There is a settlement pattern of small manor houses, isolated halls and larger estates. Large historic halls are dominant landscape features, often with associated parkland and designed landscapes, which contrast with the adjacent farmed landscapes.

Plateau Farmland, Tributary Farmland and River Valleys also feature in this area with the Marshes Fringe adjoining the adjacent landscape of the Broads.

Landscape character types and areas identified within the Bure Farmland Area include:

### Plateau Farmland

- C1 Foulsham and Reepham Plateau Farmland
- C2 Freethorpe Plateau Farmland

### Wooded Estatelands

- E1 Blickling and Oulton Wooded Estatelands
- E2 Marsham and Hainford Wooded Estatelands
- E3 Spixworth Wooded Estatelands
- E4 Rackheath and Salhouse Wooded Estatelands

### River Valley

- A2 River Bure River Valley

### Tributary Farmland

- D3 Coltishall Tributary Farmland
- D4 Blofield Tributary Farmland

### Marshes Fringe

- F1 Wroxham to Rainworth Marshes Fringe
- F2 South Walsham to Reedham Marshes Fringe
- F3 Reedham to Thorpe Marshes Fringe

Guidance on local issues/opportunities for conserving and enhancing positive characteristics contributing to the sense of place/special qualities of this landscape character types/areas can be found in the Broadland District Landscape Character Assessment.



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