

Matter 1 – Basis for the overall approach.

Issue 1.1 Overall, has the plan been prepared in accordance with the legal requirements, including the ‘duty to cooperate’ imposed by Section 33A of the Planning & Compulsory Purchase Act 2001 (as amended)?

See general comments on Question 11 of the Core Strategy consultation in our letter dated 7th June 2012: *“There is no indication in the Core Strategy of having worked with neighbouring authorities to develop their policies. There is also no indication of the authority having approached nature conservation / biodiversity on a landscape scale, or that there is an intention to do so in the Site Allocation DPD.*

Whilst there are generic biodiversity / nature conservation policies, none are pro-active spatial policies aimed at a specific strategy to enhance biodiversity / develop wildlife corridors and link habitats across the authority and between neighbouring authorities.

*The NPPF states (paragraph 117) that in order “to minimise impacts on biodiversity ... planning policies **should**:*

- *plan for biodiversity at a landscape-scale across local authority boundaries;*
- *identify and map components of the local ecological networks, including the hierarchy of international, national and locally designated sites of importance for biodiversity, wildlife corridors and stepping stones that connect them and areas identified by local partnerships for habitat restoration or creation;”*

In Policy 182 of the NPPF, the definition of **Effective** states that:

“the plan should be deliverable over its period and based on effective joint working on cross-boundary strategic priorities.”

Joint working on cross-boundary matters requires working with the adjacent local authorities including the two County Councils. As part of the submission by the Lancashire Wildlife Trust on the Core Strategy consultation, the letter dated 7th June 2012 included an assessment of whether the biodiversity and the natural environment policies in the NPPF were Effective. I have recently updated the assessment taking into account the ‘Identified changes’ and can report that of the 65 relevant policies/sub-policies to Ribble Valley, there is no evidence of joint working with adjacent authorities in 40 of the 65 cases (i.e. 72.7%), there is some evidence of joint working with adjacent authorities in 15 of the 65 cases (i.e. 27.3%) but in none of the 65 cases could I hold my hand on my heart and say the NPPF requirement was satisfied fully in terms of being based on effective joint working for biodiversity and the natural environment as a cross-boundary strategic priority between Ribble Valley and the adjacent authority areas.

The Core Strategy identifies, on page 33, 10 Strategic Objectives (paragraphs 3.11 – 3.19) to help deliver the Core Strategy Vision as outlined on pages 31-33 (paragraphs 3.1 - 3.9) but joint working on cross-boundary priorities, or working with adjacent authorities in general, is not mentioned in either the Vision or the Strategic Objectives.

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Issue 1.3 Has the formulation of the Plan been based on a sound process of sustainability appraisal and testing of reasonable alternatives?

The SA Objective '*To protect and enhance biodiversity*' does appear to have been tested for each of the options A to E. However, the appraisal results (section 5 in the Non-Technical Summary states, states, in the Nature conservation section on page 8, that:

"Cumulatively, it is likely that there will be a minor loss of biodiversity across the borough as a result of the increase in development..."

Policy 109 of the NPPF states that:

"The planning system should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by:

(Third bullet point) minimising impacts on biodiversity and providing net gains in biodiversity where possible, contributing to the Government's commitment to halt the overall decline in biodiversity, including by establishing coherent ecological networks that are more resilient to current and future pressures;"

Paragraph 9 and Policy 109 both require the planning system to achieve or provide net gains for nature. Other policies in the NPPF use the words conserve and enhance biodiversity.

Any loss of biodiversity, however minor, across the borough as a result of the proposed increase in development is in contravention of the NPPF and is clearly an example of a Local Plan, as it stands, advocating unsustainable development. This is completely and utterly unacceptable.

The potential for providing net gains in biodiversity in Ribble Valley, contributing to the Government's commitment to halt the overall decline in biodiversity, establishing coherent ecological networks by effective joint working on this cross-boundary strategic priority, is huge but the Core Strategy is weak and it does not address adequately this issue let alone embrace or grasp the potential.

Issue 1.4 How have the possible effects on European wildlife sites influenced the Plan and the assessment of alternative options?

I'm aware of the Habitat Regulations Assessment by Hyder Consulting (UK) Limited, September 2012, but haven't examined it in detail, hence I will defer its acceptance to the statutory authorities, especially Natural England.

Matter 2 – The strategy

**Issue 2.1 What are the strategic, cross-boundary issues of relevance to the plan?
How does the strategy address them?**

The 10 Strategic Objectives in 3.11 – 3.19 include:

- 3.11 *'Respect, protect and enhance the high quality environment and biodiversity in the borough', and*
- 3.19 *'Contribute to local, regional and wider sustainable development, including addressing and mitigating against the impacts on climate change'.*

Whilst not referred to in the text of 3.19 on page 35, mitigating against the impacts on climate change does include the impact of climate change on biodiversity, as stated in Policy 99 of the NPPF, as well as on people.

Hence biodiversity (comprising wildlife sites, habitats and species) is a strategic, cross-boundary issue of relevance to the plan and, as required by the NPPF, in particular Policy 156, which states that:

*"Local planning authorities should set out the **strategic priorities** for the area in the Local Plan. This should include strategic policies to deliver:*

*(fifth bullet point) Climate change mitigation and adaptation, **conservation and enhancement of the natural and historic environment, including landscape.**"*

The natural environment, the historic environment and the landscape are all cross-boundary issues.

Policy 165 of the NPPF states that:

*"Planning policies and decisions should be based on up-to-date information about the natural environment and other characteristics of the area including drawing, for example, from River Basin Management Plans. Working with Local Nature Partnerships where appropriate, this **should include an assessment of existing and potential components of ecological networks...**"*

The Core Strategy does not include an assessment of existing and potential components of ecological networks.

The Core Strategy only addresses biodiversity as a cross-boundary issue in terms of the Habitats Regulations Assessment, see Figure 1 European Sites. The core strategy does not address or meet the following requirements of the NPPF in terms:

*Paragraph 7 (third bullet point) "An environmental role – **contributing to protecting and enhancing or natural, built and historic environment; and, as part of this, helping to improve biodiversity, use natural resources prudently, minimize waste and pollution, and mitigate and adapt to climate change including moving to a low carbon economy.**"*

Policy 99 "**Local Plans should take account of climate change over the longer term, including factors such as flood risk, coastal change, water supply and changes to biodiversity and landscape. New development should be planned to avoid increased vulnerability to the range of impacts arising from climate change. When new development is brought forward in areas which are vulnerable, care should be taken to ensure that risks can be managed through suitable adaptation measures, including through the planning of green infrastructure.**"

Policy 109 (third bullet point) "*minimising impacts on biodiversity and providing net gains in biodiversity where possible, contributing to the Government's commitment to halt the overall decline in biodiversity, including by **establishing coherent ecological networks** that are more resilient to current and future pressures;*"

Policy 157 (eighth bullet point) "*contain a **clear strategy for enhancing the natural, built and historic environment....***"

The wider benefits of ecosystem services and green infrastructure should also be a strategic, cross-boundary issue(s) of relevance to the plan as required by the NPPF, i.e. as one of the 12 core planning principles in paragraph 17, and as stated in policies 99, 109 and 154.

Issue 2.8 What is the strategy's intention in relation to the Forest of Bowland AONB?

Strategic Objective 3.11 refers to the AONB.

Key Statement EN2: states that the landscape and character of the AONB will be protected, conserved and enhanced.

Policy DMH3 covers dwellings in the open Countryside and AONB.

Identified changes Nos. 7, 52, 59, 60, 63 and 83 refer to the AONB and its Landscape Character Assessment 2010, Renewable Energy Position Statement 2011 and the AONB Management Plan (2014-19 in preparation).

Issue 2.12 To deliver the strategy, is it the Council's intention to allocate land for development in a future Local Plan document, and to identify land for other purposes (for example, to prevent development on it) on a Policies Map?

See general comments on Question 11 of the Core Strategy consultation in our letter dated 7th June 2012:

"There is no map at this stage showing the local ecological network, although there may be an intention to include this in the Site Allocation DPD, which has yet to be produced, but there is no reference in the Core Strategy that there is any intention so to do."

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The Lancashire Environment Record Network (LERN), hosted by the Environment Directorate of Lancashire County Council, has been working on a Lancashire Ecological Network and has produced draft Corridor maps for Grassland, Wetland and Woodland that show Core Areas, Stepping Stones and Corridors of varying distances between land supporting the habitat type.

Policy 117 of the NPPF states that in order *"to minimise impacts on biodiversity ... planning policies should:*

- *plan for biodiversity at a landscape-scale across local authority boundaries;*
- ***identify and map components of the local ecological networks, including the hierarchy of international, national and locally designated sites of importance for biodiversity, wildlife corridors and stepping stones that connect them and areas identified by local partnerships for habitat restoration or creation;***
- ***promote the preservation, restoration and re-creation of priority habitats, ecological networks and the protection and recovery of priority species populations, linked to national and local targets, and identify suitable indicators for monitoring biodiversity in the plan;"***

LERN is managed by a core partnership comprising the Lancashire Wildlife Trust, Lancashire County Council, Natural England, Environment Agency and GeoLancashire. LERN delivers a service to the 13 partner district and unitary authorities, excluding Blackpool (see www.lancspartners.org.uk/lern). However, Ribble Valley Borough Council hasn't contributed to the LERN service level agreement for 2013/14 and they haven't requested details of the ecological network in or adjacent to the borough during the preparation of the Core Strategy.

Ends.

Notes by

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DEFINITIONS OF 'SOUNDNESS' (c/o the NPPF)

Consistent with national policy – the plan should enable the delivery of sustainable development in accordance with the policies in the Framework.

Effective – the plan should be deliverable over its period and based on effective joint working on cross-boundary strategic priorities.

Justified – the plan should be the most appropriate strategy, when considered against the reasonable alternatives, based on proportionate evidence.

Positively prepared - the plan should be prepared based on a strategy which seeks to meet objectively assessed development and infrastructure requirements, including unmet requirements from neighbouring authorities where it is reasonable to do so and consistent with achieving sustainable development.

KEY TO TRAFFIC LIGHT SYSTEM:

- RED** Requirement in the NPPF not met in the Core Strategy (Policy/wording **NOT SOUND**)
- AMBER** Requirement in the NPPF partially met in the Core Strategy (Policy/wording needs amending in order to be **SOUND**)
- GREEN** Requirement in the NPPF fully met in the Core Strategy (Policy/wording **SOUND**)

KEY TO CHANGES BETWEEN ASSESSMENTS IN 2012 & 2014:

- No. column** Requirement with yellow background show categories where changes in traffic light colour scheme have occurred.
- Category** *New/changed text in italics*. Change in colour is written at end of text, e.g. Red to Amber, Amber to Green.

No.	NPPF Policy text	Categories of Soundness (as defined in the NPPF)			Is the Core Strategy Positively Prepared?
		Is the Core Strategy Consistent with national policy?	Is the Core Strategy Effective?	Is it Justified in the Core Strategy?	
7	There are three dimensions to sustainable development: economic, social and environmental. These dimensions give rise to the need for the planning system to perform a number of roles:				

c	<p>An environmental role – contributing to protecting and enhancing or natural, built and historic environment; and, as part of this, helping to improve biodiversity, use natural resources prudently, minimize waste and pollution, and mitigate and adapt to climate change including moving to a low carbon economy.</p>	
9	<p>Pursuing sustainable development involves seeking positive improvements in the quality of the built, natural and historic environment, as well as in people's quality of life, including (but not limited to):</p>	
b	<p>Moving from a net loss of biodiversity to achieving net gains for nature.</p>	
17	<p>Within the overarching roles that the planning system ought to play, a set of core land-use planning principles should underpin both plan-making and decision-taking. These 12 principles are that planning should:</p>	

g	<p>Contribute to conserving and enhancing the natural environment and reducing pollution. Allocations of land for development should prefer land of lesser environmental value, where consistent with other policies in the Framework.</p>		
h	<p>Encourage the effective use of land by re-using land that has been previously developed (brownfield land), provided that it is not of high environmental value.</p>		
i	<p>Promote mixed developments, and encourage multiple benefits from the use of land in urban and rural areas, recognising that some open land can perform many functions (such as for wildlife, recreation, flood risk mitigation, carbon storage, or food production).</p>		
21	<p>In drawing up Local Plans, local planning authorities should:</p>		
e	<p>Identify priority areas for economic regeneration, infrastructure provision and environmental enhancement.</p>		
61	<p>Although visual appearance and the architecture of individual buildings are very important factors, securing high quality and inclusive design goes beyond aesthetic considerations. Therefore, planning policies and decisions</p>		

	should address the connection between people and places and the integration of new development into the natural, built and historic environment.				
76	Local communities through local and neighbourhood plans should be able to identify for special protection green areas of particular importance to them. By designating land as Local Green Space local communities will be able to rule out new development other than in very special circumstances. Identifying land as Local Green Space should therefore be consistent with the local planning of sustainable development and complement investment in sufficient homes, jobs and other essential services. Local Green Space should only be designated when a plan is prepared or reviewed, and be capable of enduring beyond the end of the plan period.				
77	The Local Green Space designation will not be appropriate for most green areas or open space. The designation should only be used:				
b	Where the green area is demonstrably special to a local community and holds a				

	particular local significance, for example because of its beauty, historic significance, recreational value (including as a playing field), tranquility or richness of its wildlife.
78	Local policy for managing development within a Local Green Space should be consistent with policy for Green Belts.
81	Once Green Belts have been defined, local planning authorities should plan positively to enhance the beneficial use of the Green Belt, such as looking for opportunities to provide access; to provide opportunities for outdoor sport and recreation; to retain and enhance landscapes, visual amenity and biodiversity ; or to improve damaged and derelict land.
99	Local Plans should take account of climate change over the longer term, including factors such as flood risk, coastal change, water supply and changes to biodiversity and landscape. New development should be planned to avoid increased vulnerability to the range of impacts arising from climate change. When new development is brought forward

	in areas which are vulnerable, care should be taken to ensure that risks can be managed through suitable adaptation measures, including through the planning of green infrastructure.					
105	In coastal areas, local planning authorities should take account of the UK Marine Policy Statement and marine plans and apply Integrated Coastal Zone Management across local authority and land/sea boundaries, ensuring integration of the terrestrial and marine planning regimes .	N/A to Ribble Valley	N/A to Ribble Valley.	N/A to Ribble Valley.	N/A to Ribble Valley.	N/A to Ribble Valley.
106	Local planning authorities should reduce risk from coastal change by avoiding inappropriate development in vulnerable areas or adding to the impacts of physical changes to the coast. They should identify as a Coastal Change Management Area any area likely to be affected by physical changes to the coast.	N/A to Ribble Valley	N/A to Ribble Valley	N/A to Ribble Valley	N/A to Ribble Valley	N/A to Ribble Valley
107	When assessing applications, authorities should consider development in a Coastal Change Management Area appropriate where it is demonstrated that: (see 4 sub-policies listed).	N/A to Ribble Valley	N/A to Ribble Valley	N/A to Ribble Valley	N/A to Ribble Valley	N/A to Ribble Valley
108	Local planning authorities should also ensure appropriate	N/A to Ribble Valley	N/A to Ribble Valley	N/A to Ribble Valley	N/A to Ribble Valley	N/A to Ribble Valley

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	development in a Coastal Change Management Area is not impacted by coastal change by limiting the planned life-time of the proposed development through temporary permission and restoration conditions where necessary to reduce the risk to people and the development.				
109	The planning system should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by:				
a	protecting and enhancing valued landscapes, geological conservation interests and soils;				
b	recognising the wider benefits of ecosystem services;				
c	minimising impacts on biodiversity and providing net gains in biodiversity where possible, contributing to the Government's commitment to halt the overall decline in biodiversity, including by establishing coherent ecological networks that are more resilient to current and future pressures;				

<p>110</p> <p>In preparing plans to meet development needs, the aim should be to minimise pollution and other adverse effects on the local and natural environment. Plans should allocate land with the least environmental or amenity value, where consistent with other policies in this Framework.</p>	
<p>111</p> <p>Planning policies and decisions should encourage the effective use of land by re-using land that has been previously developed (brownfield land), provided that it is not of high environmental value. Local planning authorities may continue to consider the case for setting a locally appropriate target for the use of brownfield land.</p>	
<p>113</p> <p>Local planning authorities should set criteria based policies against which proposals for any development on or affecting protected wildlife or geodiversity sites or landscape areas will be judged. Distinctions should be made between the hierarchy of international, national and locally designated sites, so that protection is commensurate with their status and gives appropriate weight to their importance and the contribution that they make to wider</p>	

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ecological networks.			
114	Local planning authorities should:		
a	set out a strategic approach in their Local Plans, planning positively for the creation, protection, enhancement and management of networks of biodiversity and green infrastructure ; and		
b	maintain the character of the undeveloped coast , protecting and enhancing its distinctive landscapes , particularly in areas defined as Heritage Coast, and improve public access to and enjoyment of the coast .	N/A to Ribble Valley.	N/A to Ribble Valley.
115	Great weight should be given to conserving landscape and scenic beauty in National Parks, the Broads and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty, which have the highest status of protection in relation to landscape and scenic beauty. The conservation of wildlife and cultural heritage are important considerations in all these areas, and should be given great weight in National Parks and the Broads.	N/A to Ribble Valley.	N/A to Ribble Valley.
116	Planning permission should be refused for major developments in these designated areas		

	except in exceptional circumstances and where it can be demonstrated they are in the public interest. Consideration of such applications should include an assessment of:				
a	the need for the development, including in terms of any national considerations , and the impact of permitting it, or refusing it, upon the local economy;	N/A to Ribble Valley.	N/A to Ribble Valley.	N/A to Ribble Valley.	N/A to Ribble Valley.
b	the cost of, and scope for, developing elsewhere outside the designated area , or meeting the need for it in some other way; and	N/A to Ribble Valley.	N/A to Ribble Valley.	N/A to Ribble Valley.	N/A to Ribble Valley.
c	any detrimental effect on the environment , the landscape and recreational opportunities, and the extent to which that could be moderated.	N/A to Ribble Valley.	N/A to Ribble Valley.	N/A to Ribble Valley.	N/A to Ribble Valley.
117	To minimise impacts on biodiversity and geodiversity , planning policies should:	No specific reference to biodiversity in 5.4 or EN4.	No reference to minimise in EN4.		
a	plan for biodiversity at a landscape-scale across local authority boundaries;				
b	identify and map components of the local ecological networks , including the hierarchy of international, national and locally designated sites of importance for biodiversity.				

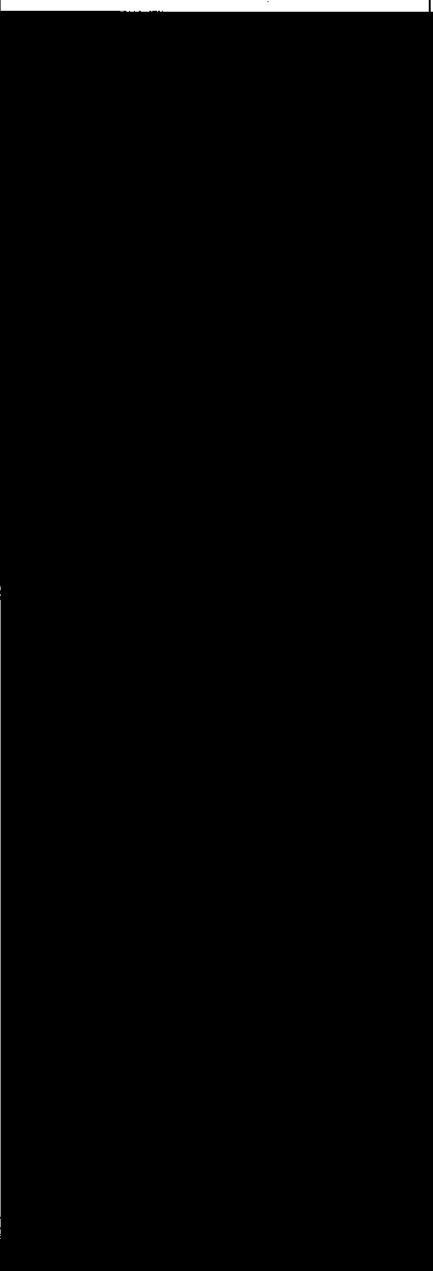
	<p>wildlife corridors and stepping stones that connect them and areas identified by local partnerships for habitat restoration or creation;</p> <p>promote the preservation, restoration and re-creation of priority habitats, ecological networks and the protection and recovery of priority species populations, linked to national and local targets, and identify suitable indicators for monitoring biodiversity in the plan;</p>				
c					
d	<p>aim to prevent harm to geological conservation interests; and</p>				
e	<p>where Nature Improvement Areas are identified in Local Plans, consider specifying the types of development that may be appropriate in these Areas.</p> <p>When determining planning applications, local planning authorities should aim to conserve and enhance biodiversity by applying the following principles:</p>	<p>No NIAs' identified in Ribble Valley as of June 2012.</p>	<p>No NIAs' identified in Ribble Valley as of June 2012.</p>	<p>No NIAs' identified in Ribble Valley as of June 2012.</p>	<p>No NIAs' identified in Ribble Valley as of June 2012.</p>
118					

<p>a if significant harm resulting from a development cannot be avoided (through locating on an alternative site with less harmful impacts), adequately mitigated, or, as a last resort, compensated for, then planning permission should be refused;</p>	
<p>b proposed development on land within or outside a Site of Special Scientific Interest likely to have an adverse effect on a Site of Special Scientific Interest (either individually or in combination with other developments) should not normally be permitted. Where an adverse effect on the site's notified special interest features is likely, an exception should only be made where the benefits of the development, at this site, clearly outweigh both the impacts that it is likely to have on the features of the site that make it of special scientific interest and any broader impacts on the national network of Sites of Special Scientific Interest;</p>	
<p>c development proposals where the primary objective is to conserve or enhance biodiversity should be permitted;</p>	
<p>d opportunities to incorporate biodiversity in and around</p>	

	<p>developments should be encouraged;</p>
e	<p>planning permission should be refused for development resulting in the loss or deterioration of irreplaceable habitats, including ancient woodland and the loss of aged or veteran trees found outside ancient woodland, unless the need for, and benefits of, the development in that location clearly outweigh the loss; and</p>
f	<p>the following wildlife sites should be given the same protection as European sites: potential Special Protection Areas and possible Special Areas of Conservation; listed or proposed Ramsar sites; and sites identified, or required, as compensatory measures for adverse effects on European sites, potential Special Protection Areas, possible</p>

<p>Special Areas of Conservation, and listed or proposed Ramsar sites.</p>	
<p>119 The presumption in favour of sustainable development (paragraph 14) does not apply where development requiring appropriate assessment under the Birds or Habitats Directives is being considered, planned or determined.</p>	
<p>120 To prevent unacceptable risks from pollution and land instability, planning policies and decisions should ensure that new development is appropriate for its location. The effects (including cumulative effects) of pollution on health, the natural environment or general amenity, and the potential sensitivity of the area or proposed development to adverse effects from pollution, should be taken into account. Where a site is affected by contamination or land stability issues, responsibility for securing a safe development rests with the developer and/or landowner.</p>	
<p>121 Planning policies and decisions should also ensure that:</p>	
<p>a the site is suitable for its new use taking account of ground conditions and land instability,</p>	

	including from natural hazards or former activities such as mining, pollution arising from previous uses and any proposals for mitigation including land remediation or impacts on the natural environment arising from that remediation;			
b	after remediation, as a minimum, land should not be capable of being determined as contaminated land under Part IIA of the Environmental Protection Act 1990; and			
c	adequate site investigation information, prepared by a competent person, is presented.			
125	By encouraging good design, planning policies and decisions should limit the impact of light pollution from artificial light on local amenity, intrinsically dark landscapes and nature conservation .			
143	In preparing Local Plans, local planning authorities should:			
a	identify and include policies for extraction of mineral resource of local and national importance in their area, but should not identify new sites or extensions to existing sites for peat extraction;	N/A to Ribble Valley in terms of peat extraction.	N/A to Ribble Valley.	N/A to Ribble Valley.

<p>f Set out environmental criteria, in line with policies in this Framework; against which planning applications will be assessed so as to ensure that permitted operations do not have unacceptable adverse impacts on the natural and historic environment or human health, including from noise, dust, visual intrusion, traffic, tip- and quarry-slope stability, differential settlement of quarry backfill, mining subsidence, increased flood risk; impacts on the flow and quantity of surface and groundwater and mitigation of contamination from the site; and take into account the cumulative effects of multiple impacts from individual sites and/or a number of sites in a locality;</p>	
<p>h Put in place policies to ensure worked land is reclaimed at the earliest opportunity, taking account of aviation safety, and that high quality restoration and aftercare of mineral sites takes place; include for agriculture (safeguarding the long term potential of best and most versatile agricultural land and conserving soil resources), geodiversity, biodiversity, native woodland, the historic environment and recreation.</p>	

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144	When determining planning applications, local planning authorities should:				
c	Ensure, in granting planning permission for mineral development, that there are no adverse impacts on the natural and historic environment, human health or aviation safety, and take into account the cumulative effect of multiple impacts from individual sites and/or a number of sites in a locality;				
e	Not grant planning permission for peat extraction from new or extended sites;	N/A to Ribble Valley.	N/A to Ribble Valley.	N/A to Ribble Valley.	N/A to Ribble Valley.
152	Local planning authorities should seek opportunities to achieve each of the economic, social and environmental dimensions of sustainable development, and net gains across all three. Significant adverse impacts on any of these dimensions should be avoided and, wherever possible, alternative options which reduce or eliminate such impacts should be pursued. Where adverse impacts are unavoidable, measures to mitigate the impact should be considered. Where adequate mitigation measures are not possible, compensatory measures may be appropriate.				

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154	Local Plans should be aspirational but realistic. They should address the spatial implications of economic, social and environmental change . Local Plans should set out the opportunities for development and clear policies on what or will not be permitted and where. Only policies that provide a clear indication of how a decision maker should react to a development proposal should be included in the plan.	
156	Local planning authorities should set out the strategic priorities for the area in the Local Plan. This should include strategic policies to deliver:	
e	Climate change mitigation and adaptation, conservation and enhancement of the natural and historic environment, including landscape.	
157	Crucially, Local Plans should:	
c	be based on co-operation with	

	<p>neighbouring authorities, public, voluntary and private sector organisations;</p>
d	<p>indicate broad locations for strategic development on a key diagram and land-use designations on a proposals map;</p>
g	<p>identify land where development would be inappropriate, for instance because of its environmental or historic significance; and</p>
h	<p>contain a clear strategy for enhancing the natural, built and historic environment, and supporting Nature Improvement Areas where</p>

	they have been identified.	
158	Each local planning authority should ensure that the Local Plan is based on adequate, up-to-date and relevant evidence about the economic, social and environmental characteristics and prospects of the area.....	
165	Planning policies and decisions should be based on up-to-date information about the natural environment and other characteristics of the area including drawing, for example, from River Basin Management Plans. Working with Local Nature Partnerships where appropriate, this should include an assessment of existing and potential components of ecological networks . A sustainability appraisal which meets the requirements of the European Directive on strategic environmental assessment should be an integral part of the plan preparation process, and should consider all the likely significant effects on the environment , economic and social factors.	
166	Local Plans may require a variety of other environmental	

	<p>assessments, including under the Habitats Regulations where there is a likely significant effect on a European wildlife site (which may not necessarily be within the same local authority area), Strategic Flood Risk Assessment and assessments of the physical constraints on land use. Wherever possible, assessments should share the same evidence base and be conducted over similar timescales, but local authorities should take care to ensure that the purposes and statutory requirements of different assessment processes are respected.</p>	N/A to Ribble Valley.	N/A to Ribble Valley.	N/A to Ribble Valley.	N/A to Ribble Valley.
168	<p>Shoreline Management Plans should inform the evidence base for planning in coastal areas. The prediction of future impacts should include the longer term nature and inherent uncertainty of coastal processes (including coastal landslip), and take account of climate change.</p>	N/A to Ribble Valley.	N/A to Ribble Valley.	N/A to Ribble Valley.	N/A to Ribble Valley.
176	<p>Where safeguards are necessary to make a particular development acceptable in planning terms (such as environmental mitigation or compensation), the development should not be approved if the measures</p>				

	<p>required cannot be secured through appropriate conditions or agreements...</p>
<p>178</p>	<p>Public bodies have a duty to cooperate on planning issues that cross administrative boundaries, particularly those which relate to the strategic priorities set out in paragraph 156. The Government expects joint working on areas of common interest to be diligently undertaken for the mutual benefit of neighbouring authorities.</p>
<p>179</p>	<p>Local planning authorities should work collaboratively with other bodies to ensure that strategic priorities across local boundaries are properly co-ordinated and clearly reflected in individual Local Plans...</p>
<p>180</p>	<p>Local planning authorities should take account of different geographic areas, including travel-to-work areas. In two tier areas, county and district authorities should cooperate with each other on relevant</p>

	<p>issues. Local planning authorities should work collaboratively on strategic planning priorities to enable delivery of sustainable development in consultation with Local Enterprise Partnerships and Local Nature Partnerships. Local planning authorities should also work collaboratively with private sector bodies, utility and infrastructure providers.</p>
181	<p>Local planning authorities will be expected to demonstrate evidence of having effectively cooperated to plan for issues with cross-boundary impacts when their Local Plans are submitted for examination...</p>
187	<p>Local planning authorities should look for solutions rather than problems, and decision-takers at every level should seek to approve applications for sustainable development where possible. Local planning authorities should work proactively with applicants to secure developments that improve the economic, social and environmental conditions of the area.</p>
192	<p>The right information is crucial to good decision-taking.</p>

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particularly where formal assessments are required (such as Environmental Impact Assessment, **Habitats Regulations Assessment** and Flood Risk Assessment). To avoid delay, applicants should discuss what information is needed with the local planning authority and expert bodies as early as possible.

COMPLIANCE SCORE for Ribble Valley's Core Strategy 2008-2028, April 2012, for biodiversity & natural environment requirements in the NPPF:

	RED	AMBER	GREEN	N/A	Total
Number of policies (excluding sub-policies)	7	30	0	7	44
%	16	68	0	16	100
Number of sub-policies & single policies	119	98	3	52	272
%	43.75	36.03	1.10	19.12	100

COMPLIANCE SCORE for Ribble Valley's Core Strategy 2008-2028, January 2014, for biodiversity & natural environment requirements in the NPPF:

	RED	AMBER	GREEN	N/A	Total
Number of policies (excluding sub-policies)	7	30	0	7	44
%	16	68	0	16	100
Number of sub-policies & single policies	112	98	10	52	272
%	41.18	36.03	3.67	19.12	100

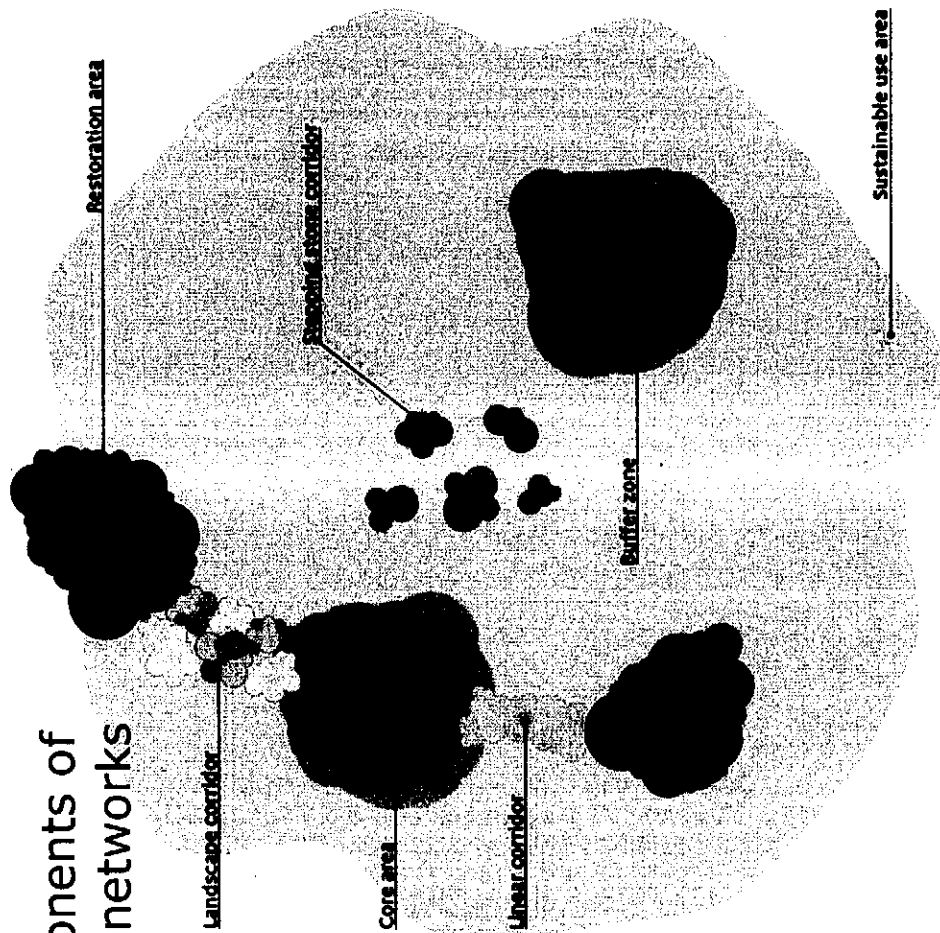
Note: This assessment primarily focuses on references to biodiversity and the natural environment in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF, March 2012) but also includes references to geological conservation, Local Green Space, Green Infrastructure, Coastal Change Management Area, Shoreline Management Plans and climate change, where relevant to biodiversity and the natural environment.

The diagram below, taken from the Lawton review (2010), is a simple and useful way of explaining how sustainable development should work to conserve and enhance the ecological network of a Borough. The core areas are Wildlife Sites (designated and non-designated sites) and Habitats of Principal Importance in England (listed in the NERC Act 2006), which are surrounded by buffer zones and connected by landscape, linear and

Ribble Valley Borough Council, A Local Plan for Ribble Valley, Regulation 19 Consultation Draft, April 2012
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stepping stone corridors. Restoration areas are identified on the ground and the rest of the Borough is a sustainable use area, with development control used to ensure that there is no net loss of biodiversity (sites, habitats and species) across the Borough.

The components of ecological networks



Slide from the Lawton Review (2010)

