

Hartlepool Local Development Framework

Hartlepool Green Infrastructure

Supplementary Planning Document - Action Plan



February 2014



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Hartlepool Green Infrastructure Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) - Action Plan

Introduction

Green infrastructure (GI) planning involves the provision of strategically planned networks that link existing (and proposed) green spaces with green corridors running through urban, suburban, urban fringe, and rural areas. Through the maintenance, enhancement and extension of these networks multi-functional benefits can be realised for local communities, businesses, visitors and the environment. Appropriate strategies, plans and programmes led by the Council and involving local partnerships and individual organisations can help to maintain existing GI, and promote solutions to remedy deficiencies and create new opportunities.

The Green Infrastructure SPD has explored the benefits that can be gained from developing a successful GI network. It is highlighted that whilst Hartlepool currently has many elements of GI that are of great value it also has areas which are not as well served by green space as others, there are links between certain elements of GI that could be created or greatly enhanced and there will always be a need for ongoing investment and enhancement in the facilities and habitats that already exist.

This Action Plan sets out areas of investment and improvement that are needed in the coming years to help develop and grow the GI systems in Hartlepool. It is envisaged that this Action Plan will be a living document that will be updated every two years to reflect where works are carried out or where new schemes and improvements are identified. The schemes within this document will allow funding to be sought towards their implementation and will also be useful in directing developer contributions, which are sought through planning applications, to schemes relevant to the application. The Action Plan sets out the costs of schemes where the information is available and, where the elements of specific funding are known, lists where funding has already been secured. It also includes some more aspirational schemes which will rely on a number of sources of funding to help with their implementation. It should also be noted that the schemes which have been included in the Action Plan are not the only schemes where contributions may be sought towards their implementation, they are simply the schemes where there is currently the most information available. There are wider, more strategic, aspirations set out in the SPD which are equally as important in terms of the future delivery of GI in Hartlepool.

It will be important that where schemes may have an impact on other important assets or infrastructure, such as heritage assets, that the proposals are developed in a way which will safeguard, enhance or even re-establish those assets. For example the creation of priority habitats which support the objectives of the Tees Valley BAP will be sought on developments which will impact on the species. The involvement of key stakeholders in the development of GI will help to ensure that the proposals in this Action Plan are delivered in a sustainable manner, helping to ensure a better future for Hartlepool and its residents.

The Action Plan forms an integral part of the Green Infrastructure SPD and, once adopted, will form part of the Local Development Framework, linking with the Hartlepool Local Plan to drive forward the development of Green Infrastructure in the town. It will enable the Council to seek funding to help implement distinct elements of the Action. The Council will ensure that the SPD stays relevant and up-to-date through monitoring and review.



(Figure 1: North Burn Marsh)

Project Areas to meet the Objectives and Vision

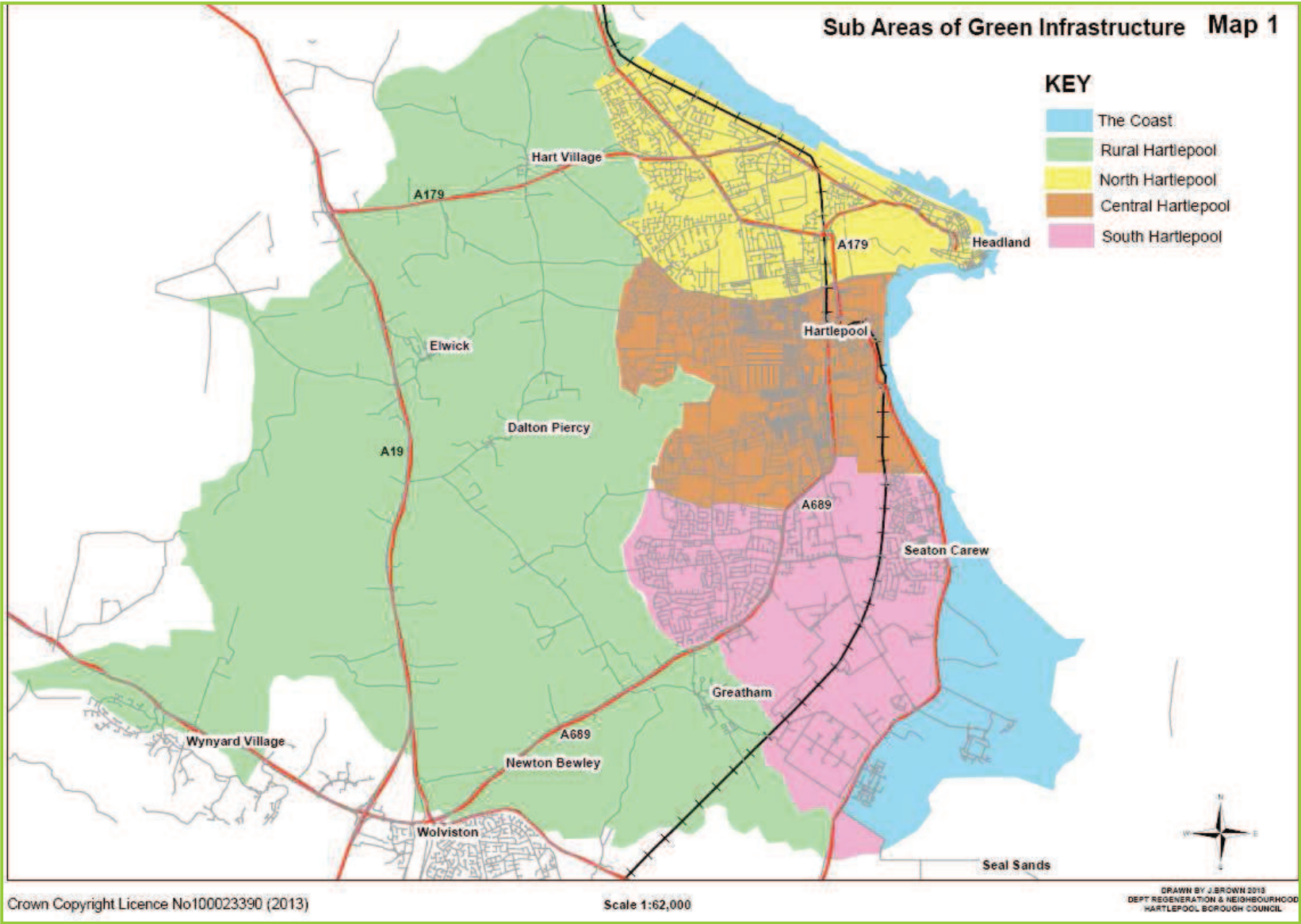
This section looks at the areas within the Green Infrastructure Strategy and looks at project ideas and costs which are needed over the coming years to develop the GI network within Hartlepool. Where schemes will meet an objective set out within the SPD the appropriate symbol is shown alongside the project description. Where available, project designs are included to help people to visualise the potential improvements that may be seen on the ground. Maps of corridors are also included to show the wider impact for areas of the town that certain projects could have in the future. Importantly, where known, costs of improvements are included to help secure funding packages which will be vital to the future development of GI, especially over the next few years where the economy is likely to remain in a depressed state. Over time however, as the economy improves, and, as the GI develops and enhances, the benefits of the investments will be seen not only in the health of the community but also in prices of homes and the improved successes of businesses. This intrinsic link between good quality GI (from tree lined streets and incidental open space through to parks, waterways and flood alleviation features, natural and semi-natural spaces and the coast) and the prices of homes and businesses has been illustrated in a number of national studies over the past few years. The provision of a range of GI, in particular eco-system services which will help in tackling the impacts of climate change, in all new developments will be critical to help complement the existing GI network. There may also be developments which are asked to contribute to the provision of GI in the vicinity of the development where it is considered that it will meet the strategic aspirations of the Green Infrastructure SPD.

In order to keep this Action Plan manageable it has split the town into sub areas looking at the GI within these areas but, importantly, also considers how the sub areas are linked together by GI. The sub areas have been divided into the following:

1. The Coast and its Margins
2. Rural Hartlepool
3. North Hartlepool
4. Central Hartlepool
5. South Hartlepool

These areas are shown on Map 1 on the following page. Those sub areas are then illustrated in more detailed maps showing more localised GI. These more detailed maps help to form a view for where there are gaps in the GI provision in certain areas of the town but also help to demonstrate how movement between these areas is possible.

Map 1: Sub Areas of Green Infrastructure



Area 1: The Coast and its Margins

The coast of Hartlepool borough continues to attract people to explore the pathways and scenery that are characteristic of the town and its coastline. Walkers and, in certain areas, cyclists and equestrians, are able to access the entire Hartlepool coastline as well as the majority of its beaches and dunes.

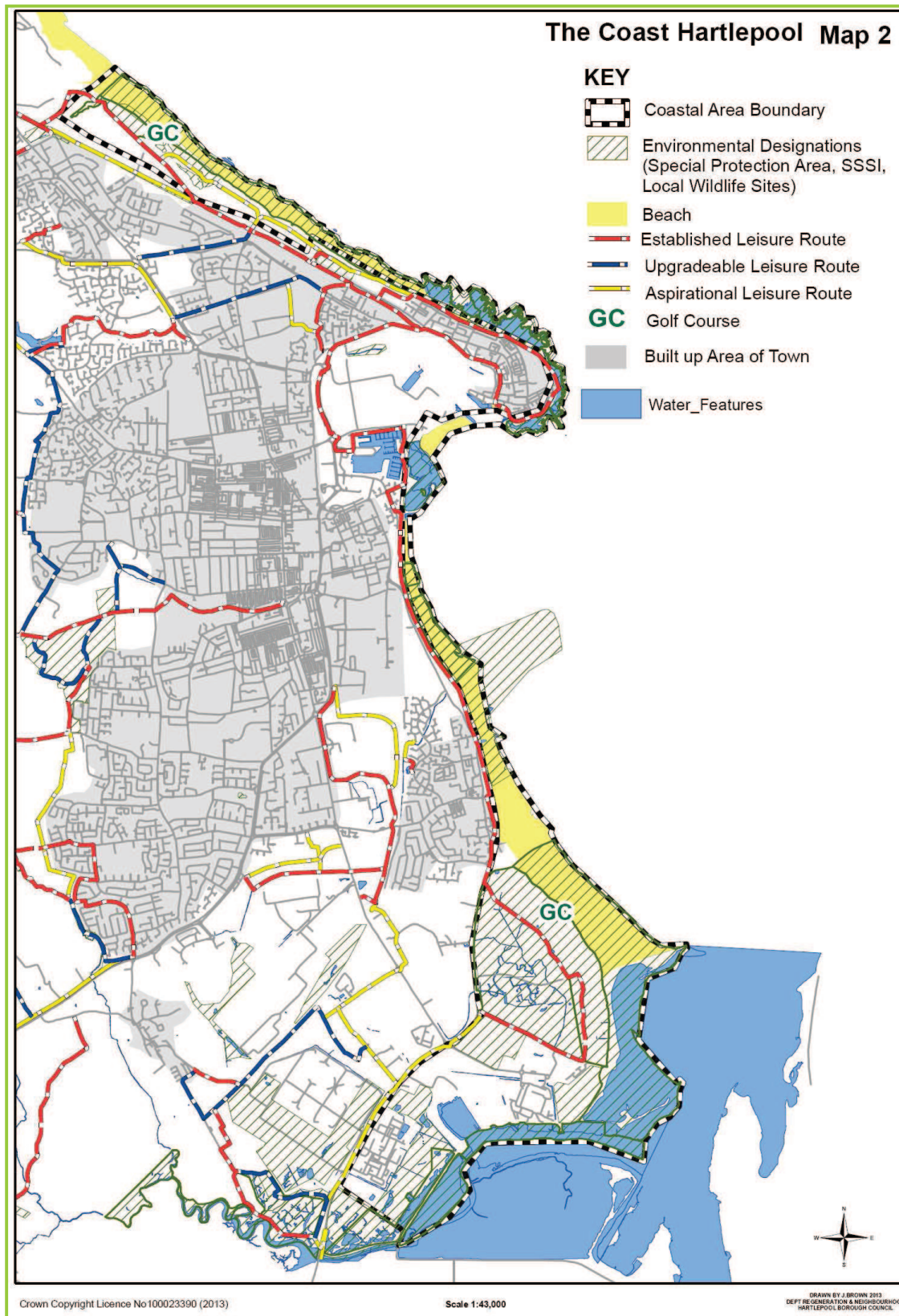
There are a number of rights of way that are located on or close to the coastline; they range from public footpaths to public bridleways and in one case a public byway. The coastline is, for most of its length, an urban environment and as such the majority of the paths and promenades are formally surfaced and maintained at public expense.

At Seaton Carew a new stage of sea defence works will provide new and formal equestrian access to Seaton beach. As part of the flood defence a Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) was undertaken which illustrated there would be no detrimental impact on the wildlife or ecosystems in the area. The Council is continuing to work with the Environment Agency and NWL in order to improve the standards of the bathing waters in and around Seaton Carew.

A recent development has been the enactment of the Marine and Coastal Access Path Act 2009; Part 9 of this act placed a duty for a coastal path to be created along the whole of the English coastline. One of the first stages is being developed between Seaton Common and South Bents, Sunderland. This path primarily runs on pedestrian routes with occasional sections running over routes with multi-user rights. When approved and adopted by the Secretary of State (Defra) this route will have the legal status of a Coastal Access Path and will be recognised as part of the England Coast Path and a National Trail. Again, as part of this work, Natural England undertook a HRA which indicated no negative impact.

The Council is aware of the sensitivities that exist between the natural environment and its users, especially in these very delicate ecosystems, many of which are protected by international, national and local designations. The challenge that exists in the future is to ensure that users can continue to enjoy the beauty and variety of these areas whilst at the same time protecting the natural environment from harm. The Council will continue to work with key organisations such as Natural England, the Environment Agency and the Tees Valley Wildlife Trust to identify funding sources for enhancement schemes along the coast. Should schemes be identified these would need to be the subject of a HRA at that time. Where developments are proposed in areas along the coast, contributions will be sought to ensure that these delicate habitats continue to be protected and wherever possible enhanced. Collaborative working with the organisations named above will be crucial to ensure any works do not harm or damage these areas of vital biodiversity importance.

Map 2: The Coast and its Margins



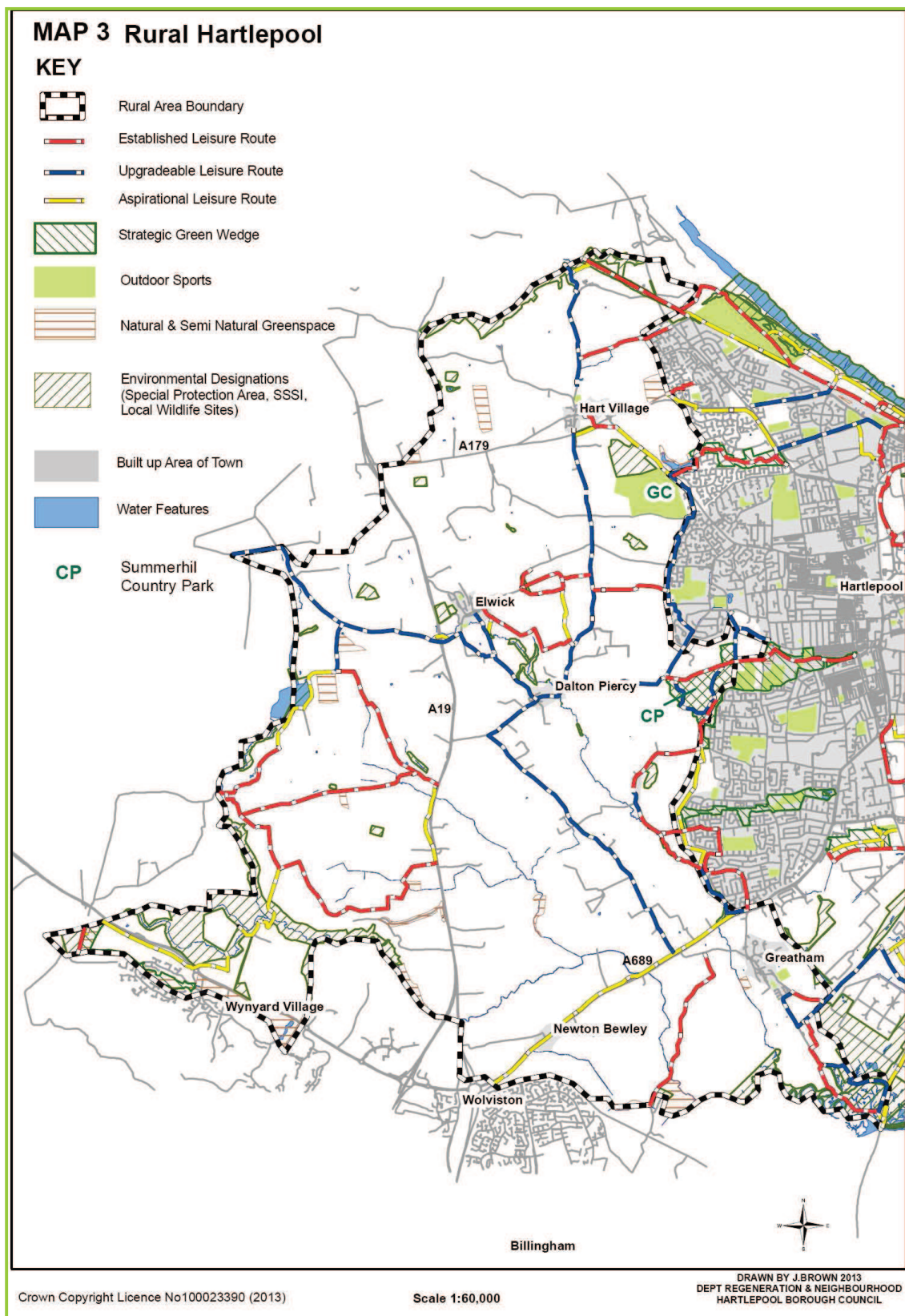
Area 2: Rural Hartlepool

The rural area of Hartlepool covers over 50% of the Borough. There are six villages, but the majority of the area is undulating farm land. There are a number of footpaths, bridleways, links and access routes which allow access to the rural area. The existing routes along with the aspirational routes can be seen on the map 3 on page 8. One of the main issues which impacts on the rural area is the severing impact the A19 dual carriageway has and this continues to be not only an issue for the creation of circular routes but also a major safety issue. A longer term aspiration of the Council, which is also identified in the Local Infrastructure Plan 2012 and the Rights of Way Improvement Plan 2007, is to create a safe link over the A19 in the vicinity of Elwick in the form of a bridge. The creation of such a bridge would vastly improve safety and would allow people to access the western parts of the borough and in particular the employment opportunities at Wynyard. Currently there are no plans drawn up for such a bridge however it has been estimated a multi-user pedestrian bridge could cost in the region of £2m.

There is a need to provide a key route which would run from the Sappers Corner at the south west of the town out to Wynyard. This route will be particularly important in coming years to provide the opportunity of sustainable travel to Wynyard which is one of the main employment areas in the Borough and is likely to be the location of a new hospital to serve the town and surrounding areas. There are no footpaths or cycleways which currently exist along this corridor and it is likely that such a route would cost in the region of £1m to provide. Developments in the Wynyard area could be required to contribute a significant percentage of the overall cost to ensure developments are seen as sustainable.

There are also a number of cycleways in the rural area including the national cycle route one which runs through the western part of the rural area along the Castle Eden Walkway. Developments which occur in and around the Wynyard area will need to link into the green network in this area to ensure that residents have access to key green spaces such as the Wynyard Woodland Park in Stockton.

Map 3: Rural Hartlepool



Summerhill Country Park



Summerhill Country Park lies in the rural area immediately to the west of the Burn Valley Green Wedge, in effect acting as a gateway into the countryside. Summerhill is owned and operated by the Council and offers a wide variety of outdoor activities. Key elements of the management of Summerhill are shown in table 1 below. In addition to this, the Council developed a scheme to create a Myths, Monsters and Legends Trail at Summerhill which is an aspiration of the Council's to deliver subject to funding. The concept is to develop a Trail around Summerhill with some key features in relation to Hartlepool myths and folklore. This would create a significant visitor attraction. The Council also wants to further develop the outdoor sports provision at the site and £60k current investment in the BMX track will help to develop it into a track that can stage national league events.

Table 1: Summerhill – Green Infrastructure Action Plan

1 Woodland management			
Item	Details	Funding	Current status
Existing coppicing of selected areas	5 locations identified within Summerhill two of which are cut in rotation	Supported under the Woodland Grant scheme 5 year programme	Year 2 works have been completed.
Future coppicing	Further possible locations have been identified	Funding would be required to support implementation (e.g. staff to work with volunteer groups or funding to support private contractors)	Initial ideas only – coppicing management plan to be updated.
Existing thinning of woodland areas	4 locations have been identified within Summerhill	Supported under the Woodland Grant scheme 5 year programme	Two locations have been completed. One location has included further works to create small wetlands
Future woodland thinning	Other areas throughout the developing woodland of Summerhill	Funding would be required to support implementation (e.g. staff to work with volunteer groups or funding to support private contractors)	Initial ideas only – thinning management plan to be updated.
2 Hedgerow management			
Item	Details	Funding	Current status
Gap planting	Small amounts of planting to attend to	Supported under the Woodland Grant scheme 5 year	One area completed, another to be

	gaps within existing hedgerows. 3 areas identified	programme	completed before the end of March 2013.
Hedge laying	Annual programme of hedge laying for hedges around Summerhill including those planted during the sites' early development	Funding required to support implementation (e.g. staff to work with and organise volunteer groups or funding to support private contractors)	Two key hedges completed, further locations identified for future years.
3 Wetland management			
Item	Details	Funding	Current status
Management of existing wetlands	At present 9 wetland sites have been identified including areas recently excavated	Funding required to support implementation (e.g. staff to work with and organise volunteer groups)	2 small wetland sites recently excavated, one site re-shaped. Small scale species introduction carried out on one site.
Excavation of new or existing wetlands	At present one new pond site has been identified and 3 existing sites that could benefit from further excavations. Plans are subject to management advice regarding the presence of Great Crested Newts	No funding has been identified but as some of the operations could involve heavy machinery funding in the region of £3,000 to 5,000 may be required.	Plans drafted in outline
Watercourse management	Management of 2 streams that run through Summerhill	Funding required to support implementation (e.g. staff to work with and organise volunteer groups)	Work ongoing including clearing streams of litter, planting small scale reed beds and minor excavations
Ditching work	Excavation and management of ditches in and around Summerhill. This includes new ditches and re-excavating existing ditches	Funding required for larger excavations involving bringing in heavy plant. Est £2,000 to 5,000.	Full site ditching plan to be updated.
4 Grassland management			
Item	Details	Funding	Current status
Amenity grassland	Regular amenity	Work currently carried out by	Ongoing programme

management	mowing of 9 identified grasslands throughout Summerhill	Regeneration and Neighbourhoods work teams	carried out between April to October
Meadow management	Low intensity management of 6 meadow areas within Summerhill. Preferred management is by taking an annual cut of hay	Operations can potentially generate a small amount of income subject to identifying someone who wants the hay. Some meadows may have to be cut for amenity purposes	No hay was cut in 2012 due to not being able to identify someone who was interested.
Meadow management through low intensity grazing	One meadow has been identified where management for conservation aims could be carried out by low intensity grazing (grazing over selected summer months by horses).	In order to make the meadow area suitable fencing would be required. Cost would be in the region of £2,500. No funding has been identified. Once set up the grazing could generate income	Meadow area and fencing requirements identified.
5 Access management			
Item	Details	Funding	Current status
Countryside routes vegetation control	Vegetation control of tracks and paths throughout Summerhill. In total there are about 6.8km of tracks and paths	Work part supported under the 5 year Woodland Grant Scheme. Resources will continue to be required to support cut back by utilising works teams or staff/volunteers	Year 2 of Woodland Grant Scheme works completed. Ongoing programme undertaken throughout the summer months and to assist cross-country running events.
Resurfacing of main site route	Shared walkers/cyclists section of the main route that travels around Summerhill. Route is 2km long x 2.5m wide with two sections of non-slip tarmac	The full route requires re-surfacing. Costs depend on specifications and designs and could range from £80,000 to £250,000	Top surface has fully eroded.
Stile and gate works	Upgrading of stile, gates and access points throughout the site.	Most of the works are being funded under the existing 5 year Woodland Grant Scheme programme. Additional works would need in the region of	Year 2 of Woodland Grant scheme works completed including new stiles and kissing gates.

		£2,000	
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The Countryside & Wildlife Habitats



A diverse range of attractive sites and places of importance for wildlife are located within this rural area and improving access to and enjoyment of these areas is a key aspiration of the Council. These improvements need to be developed in a sensitive manner so as not to impinge on the quality or ecological value of these natural areas. Information and signposting will be an important element of any improvements to ensure that walks provide educational as well as physical enjoyment. Where appropriate, developer contributions from developments nearby these areas (in particular Local Nature Reserves) will be sought to implement these improvements.



(Figure 2: Close Wood, Wynyard)

Area 3: North Hartlepool

As is highlighted in the main SPD, there are a wide variety of elements of GI in this part of Hartlepool. The aim of the Action Plan is to ensure that these key elements of GI are enhanced whilst also considered movement to and between these areas.

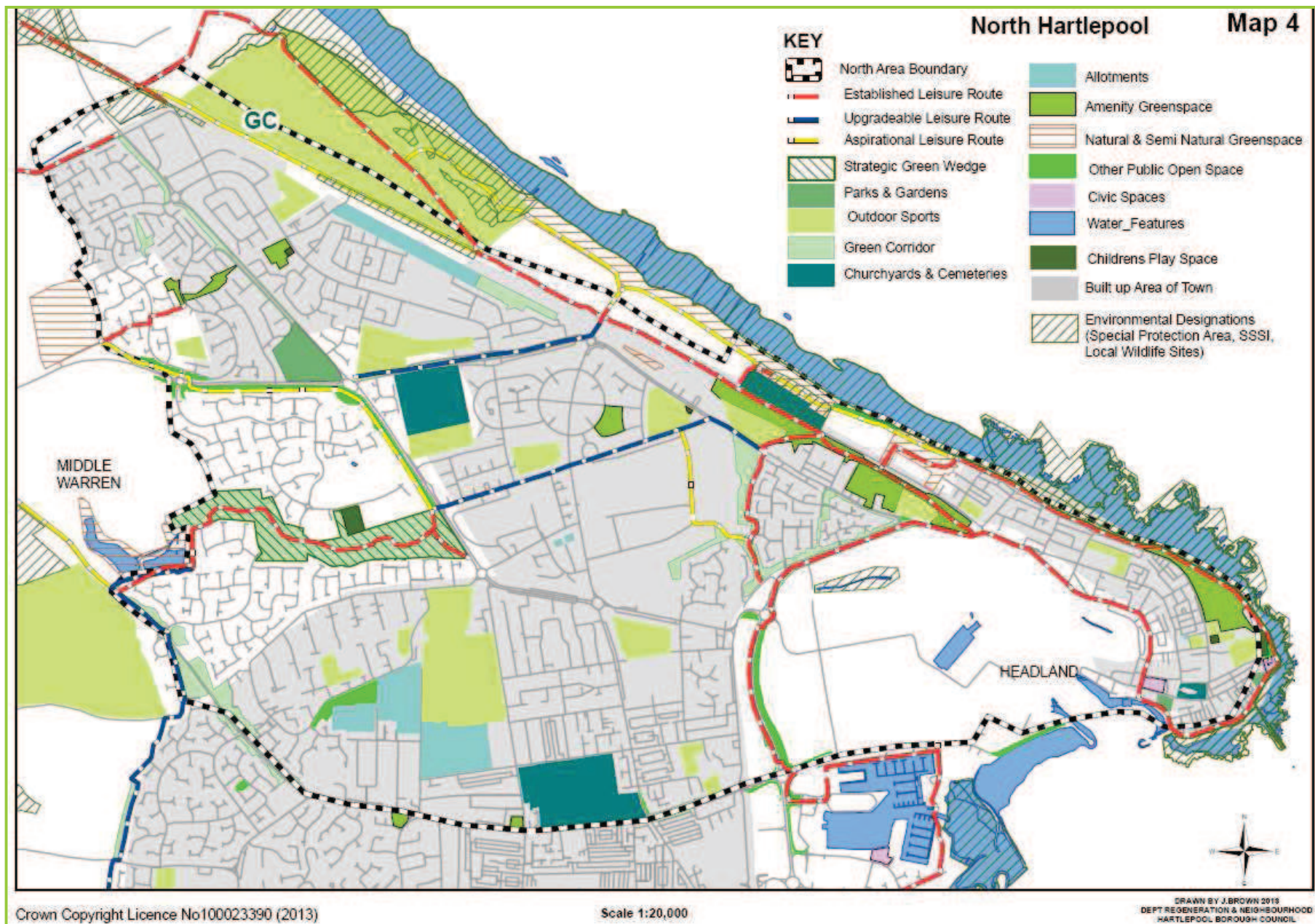
One of the key elements of the North Linear Park concept is the Middle Warren Green Wedge. It is a linear green space that extends from the Easington Road (A179) in the east to the Hart reservoirs in the west. It cuts through the Middle Warren housing development and is a major recreational resource for the area. The wedge has a main housing estate road, Merlin Way, dividing it into two distinct areas.

The eastern area is the more formal of the two with a number of surfaced paths that extend east west and south and north into various areas of housing. It is well used and is regarded as a vital access and recreational link by all of the users. This area is primarily a grassed area with sections planted up with young broadleaved trees. Part of a developer agreement in relation to housing in the area requires the developers to provide a play park to the north linking into this element of the green wedge which will diversify the attractions that this element of GI provides.

The western area is informal in nature with a central path running through the site, extending beyond the wedge, past the reservoir to Hart Lane. The vegetation is natural in character with formal planted areas of semi-mature broadleaf trees. All connecting paths, to the central surfaced path, are natural/unsurfaced. They, like the formal area paths, link to various parts of the housing estate and are vital to the users as they provide the potential to create circular walks.

All of the surfaced paths are used by cyclists as well as pedestrians and are regarded as important links to and from amenities and employment. There are plans to consider dedicating the surfaced paths as public footpaths in the future. At present all of the paths, whether surfaced or otherwise are permissive in nature. The importance of the green wedge to the overall North Linear Park concept can be appreciated in Map 4 on the following page.

Map 4: North Hartlepool



Another critical element of the linear park is the open space at Clavering. This area has seen investment over the past few years to provide a modern “play builder” space. This form of play area uses undulations in the land to help create natural play equipment which uses wood to help blend in with the surrounding environment. These recent works have helped to dramatically improve the quality of this green space and formed the first element of a masterplan for the area.

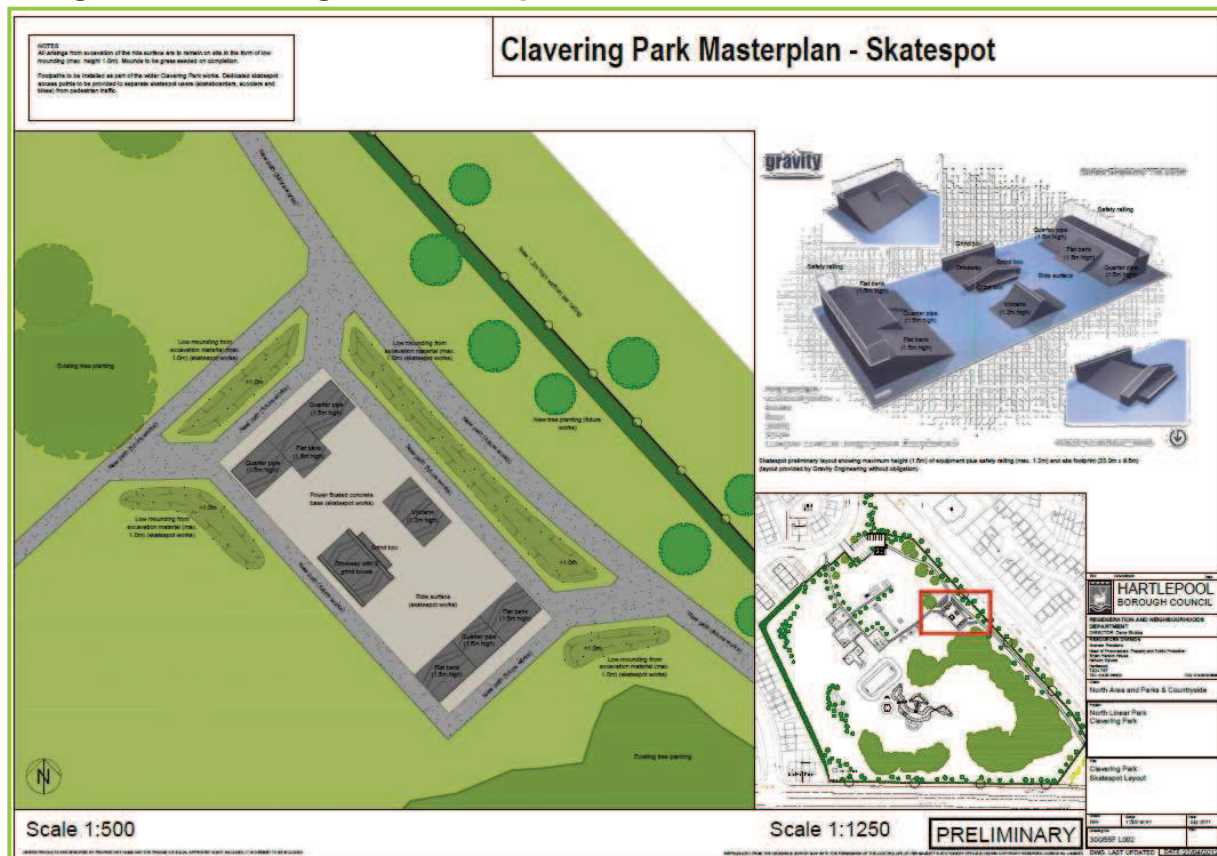
Diagram 1: Clavering Park Masterplan



Further works included within the Masterplan include tree planting, a shallow wetland scrape, fencing and gateway to improve security and safety as well as a skate park. The provision of the access at the south of the park will make the area accessible to people living to the south and east of the park. This is seen as a priority for the North Linear Park steering group as a skate park will cater for older children for older children who are currently not well provided for.

The skate park, whilst not GI in its own right, will form an important element of the masterplan as its provision will help to give older children a sense of ownership in a facility they value and will help to ensure the wider Clavering green space is well used and cared for.

Diagram 2: Clavering Park Skatespot



Works to this area will be funded from a variety of sources and is likely to take a couple of years to realise the overall vision. The works to the play builder scheme cost in the region of £120k and were an important first phase to kickstart the investment in the area. The skate park is another substantial cost of the scheme but the steering group, in association with Groundwork North East and the Council, were successful in obtaining funding from Britvic (£25,000), the Council's Communities Activity Network (CAN) (£10,000), the Council's Parks and Countryside Team (£5,000) and Mondgreen (20k) to implement the Skate Spot. Funding from the Big Tree Plant (£14,350) was also secured towards the costs of some tree planting. There are still major costs to be met and the steering group will continue to work with partner organisations to secure the funds needed to implement the overall masterplan.

Table 2: Remaining Clavering Park Masterplan Costs

REMAINING CLAVERING PARK MASTERPLAN COST ESTIMATES				
Boundary Fence				
Item	Unit	Est. rate	Quantity	Works Total
Railings	Lm	90.00	592	53,280.00
Gates - double 2.4m	No.	1,500.00	3	4,500.00
Gates double 4.0m	No.	2,500.00	1	2,500.00
			Total	60,280.00
			Contingency	6,028.00
			Fees	3,978.48
			Total Budget	70,286.48
New Pathways				
Item	Unit	Est. rate	Quantity	Works Total
Pin kerb	Lm	16.00	738	11,808.00
Block paving kerb	Lm	30.00	40	1,200.00
Bitmac	m2	45.00	630	28,350.00
Drop-kerb works	Item	600.00	2	1,200.00
			Total	42,558.00
			Contingency	4,255.80
			Fees	4,681.38
			Total Budget	51,495.18
Wetland Area				
Item	Unit	Est. rate	Quantity	Works Total
Wetland scrape excavation	m3	45.00	85	3,825.00
Wetland scrape finishing	m2	10.00	200	2,000.00
			Total	5,825.00
			Contingency	582.50
			Fees	640.75
			Total Budget	7,048.25
Planting Works				
Item	Unit	Est. rate	Quantity	Works Total
Hedge planting	No.	1.20	2400	2,880.00
			Total	2,880.00
			Contingency	288.00
			Fees	316.80
			Total Budget	3,484.80
			TOTAL WORKS BUDGET	132,314.71

Central Park Improvements



This area forms a critical linkage between the Headland and West Hartlepool. Identified as one of the two main priorities by the North Linear Park Steering Group this area has seen little investment over recent years and is in need of much rejuvenation. The area currently has a number of footpaths and informal areas of open space as well as 2 football pitches and a rugby pitch along with some car parking. It is considered that with some significant investment the Central Park area could become a much more multi-functional green space which would attract a far wider range of visitors. A masterplan has been drawn up to illustrate how the park could be re-invented to include play space, wetland scrapes and habitat creation alongside much improved walkways (including signage) and improved car parking provision. The pitches will be maintained (and possibly redrawn to provide solely for junior football) and opportunities for enhancing both the pitches and changing facilities will be explored and funding sought.

To the north of this site is an area formerly known as “Steetly” which was previously an industrial area. The site has been cleared in 2012/2013 and an application was approved for 484 new homes. As part of the approval a new road is needed which is proposed to run through the eastern end of the Central Park. As such the masterplan has been designed to minimise the impact that this road would have. The Council have agreed that should this development proceed 50% of the sale price of the land would be reinvested into improving the park alongside a contribution of £20,000 from the developer. This potential funding equates to circa £145,000. The total cost estimate for the masterplan is circa £400,000 and a breakdown of the specific works is included in table below. The North Linear Park Group will continue to liaise with the Council and other organisations in order to try and secure further funding to implement elements of the scheme.

An early phase of tree planting has already taken place. This was delivered through funding obtained from the “Big Tree Plant” and saw circa £5,000 of investment in the Park. In the short term this investment is obviously beneficial to the GI in the area and will provide habitat for a range of species. It is also hoped that this investment will help to kick start the rejuvenation of the park and will see a great deal of GI investment over the coming years.

Diagram 3: Central Park Masterplan



Table 3: Central Park Masterplan Cost Estimates

CENTRAL PARK MASTERPLAN COST ESTIMATES				
Description	Unit	Qty	Rate	Amount
Excavation and Fill				
Reposition existing mounding. Reshape to flowing contours approx. 1.2m high. Topsoil to a min depth of 150mm.	sum			5000.00
Excavate areas to form Wetland Scrape. Deposit spoil on-site to form mounds above.	sum			2000.00
Re-grade existing embankment for new ramp and steps. Infill intermediate track as shown with imported fill and topsoil.	sum			3000.00
Excavate new defensive ditches approx 1m deep. Retain material on site for fill.	m	140	12.00	1680.00
Paving and Kerbs				
Construct new Tarmacadam paving for footpaths and car park, consisting of 20mm depth 6mm nominal size bitumen macadam wearing course.55mm depth 20mm nominal size dense bitumen macadam base course. 150mm depth type 1 sub base . Dispose of arisings in mounding above.	m2	3210	27.00	86670.00
Extra-over for coloured surfacing to key footpath.	m2	1555	5.00	7775.00
Supply and fix 50x100 pc concrete pin kerb concrete haunched..	m	2000	12.50	25000.00
Construct Raisby Golden gravel. 50mm consolidated depth onto 100mm type-1 sub base. Timber edging.	m2	1000	15.00	15000.00
Parking bays formed with existing surface material consolidated.	m2	625	5.00	3125.00
Timber decking to Nature conservation area	m2	40	100.00	4000.00
Fencing and Railings				
Close boarded timber fencing 1.8m high.	m	94	55.00	5170.00
Hoop-topped railings 1.2m high to match.	m	275	75.00	20625.00
Brick piers and railings entrance area.	m	80	150.00	12000.00
Entrance feature. Steel fabrication. Provisional sum.	item			20,000.00

Timber post and rail fencing	m	230	50.00	1150.00
Half tree trunk Timber barriers		30	50.00	1500.00
Play Area				
Play equipment	item	7	10000.00	70000.00
Safety surfacing including play mounds	m2	700	100.00	7000.00
Steps				
Timber steps with bound gravel treads and landings.	item	2	2,500.00	5000.00
Proposed Tree Planting				
Extra heavy standard trees and specimen Pines 1.2m high.	No	200	100.00	20000.00
Whip and transplant tree planting to mounds and Nature area	Item			20,000.00
Cultivation Grass Seeding				
Cultivate to a fine tilth, areas of new mounding and disturbed areas	m2	15000	0.15	2,250.00
Carry out Grass seeding, using hard-wearing Amenity mix, BSH A19 mix or similar at 35gms per m2. Carry out single cut and making good of defects, including over-seeding, prior to hand-over	m2	15000	0.30	4500.00
			Works Total	344,125.00
			Fees and Contingencies at 20%	68,826.00
			Total	413,125.00

The Town Moor

One of the oldest pieces of public open space in Hartlepool, the Town Moor on the Headland provides one of the only publicly accessible green spaces on the Headland. The Town Moor plays host to an annual fair which attracts large numbers of visitors into the area. The Town Moor is extremely open to the elements which minimises the uses and facilities which it can incorporate. It is very popular with dog walkers and provides open space for recreational activities. Given the limited opportunities for improvement there are no significant plans for this area however, as it is the easterly point of the North Linear Park, it is crucial that it continues to be signposted and provide seats and resting places for walkers who may be enjoying coastal routes.

North Cemetery



North Cemetery in Hartlepool is located to the north of the town centre and is a green space covering approximately 12.6 hectares. The whole of the site area is in the ownership of the Borough Council. The cemetery is of particular value to the local community as it is surrounded by areas of dense terraced housing with few attractive open spaces. However, the cemetery is currently under utilised as an open space, suffering from a degree of anti social behaviour and a perceived fear of crime which discourages legitimate users.

In the wider context of the site, there are a number of major regeneration works taking place, which is bringing substantial investment to the area. Two major housing regeneration schemes on the north and south boundaries of the Cemetery are being built and a further scheme is planned to the east of the cemetery. Key Issues for improving the North Cemetery include:

- community safety,
- environmental improvements,
- action to improve the biodiversity,
- boundary treatments,
- management and long term sustainability,
- relationship with the surrounding regeneration works,
- sensitivity around keeping part as a working cemetery whilst encouraging public use, and
- how the cemetery could be used as an educational resource.

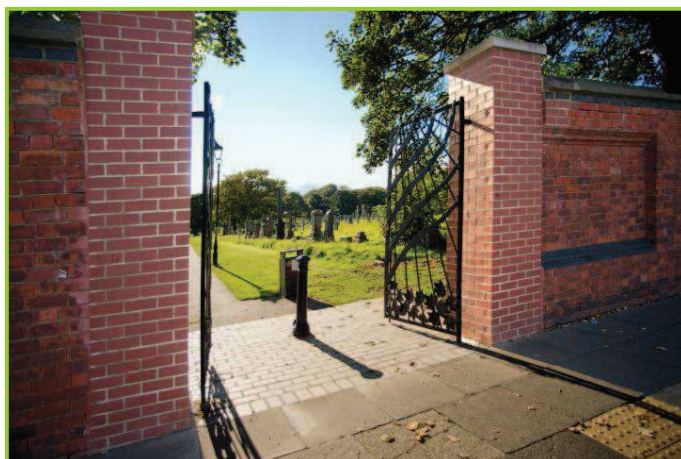
The Council have invested £15,000 to create a Masterplan to help address the above issues and to ensure that North Cemetery has a multi-functional future. This work has been undertaken in partnership with the Friends of North Cemetery and other community groups.

As part of the Masterplan study, a comprehensive public consultation programme was undertaken. This identified considerable opportunities to improve what the site has to offer the community in terms of access, recreation, and biodiversity. Combating anti-social behaviour and improving community safety were also identified as key issues to improve the overall attraction of the cemetery. Issues such as safe access, boundary treatment and visual surveillance in and out of the site were all consultee concerns which have been addressed by the Masterplan.

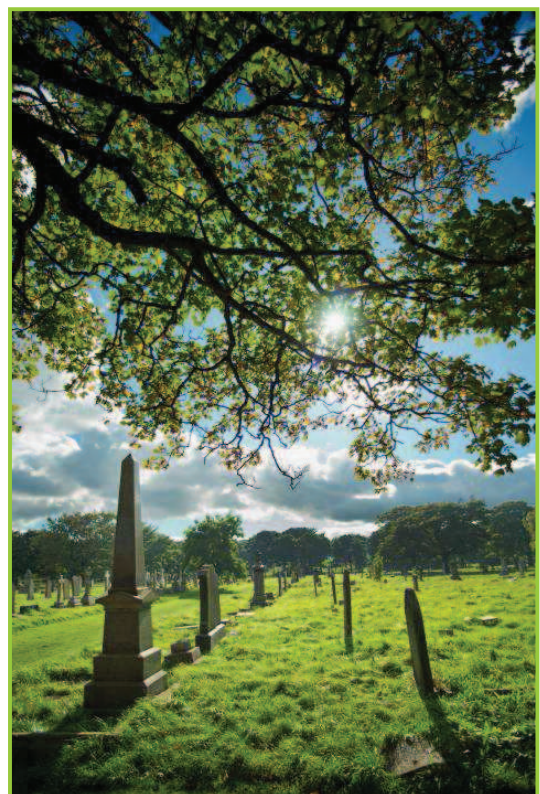
The masterplan proposals include the provision of a more accessible, enhanced green space for the existing community and for the significant area of new housing under development. The proposed access improvements and efforts taken to address security and safety issues will also alleviate public perceptions of 'fear of crime', which has a detrimental impact on casual and recreational use of the area. The masterplan has been designed so that individual elements can be delivered as funding permits.

In addition, the Masterplan proposals seek to protect and enhance site biodiversity and habitat value, both of which will also help make the area more appealing to visitors. Such environmental enhancements, when coupled with access and infrastructure improvements (such as new gateway schemes and footpath rationalisation) will also contribute to the feeling of a sense of place in this area, located as it is, within proximity to a number of key regeneration sites. The total cost of the masterplan to implement would be in the region of £1.2m. Early phases of the work have been undertaken but these only account for in the region of £200,000 of expenditure, still leaving a large amount to be funded. Given the number of cost spread sheets associated with this scheme they are not included in the Action Plan.

The Council has also been undertaking work to improve the biodiversity and habitat value of the cemetery over a few years under the guidance of the HBC Ecologist. Completion of the Borough Tree Strategy also highlighted that the existing cemetery woodland cover is all of a similar age, which was likely to be nearing the end of its life in the next 50 years. Tree planting activities using multi-aged replacement stock have, therefore, taken place with local schools. New trees have been planted within controlled areas where the grass has been allowed to grow, stimulating an increase in biodiversity and species numbers amongst wildlife and wildflowers.



(Figure 3: North Cemetery Gates)



(Figure 4: Inside North Cemetery)

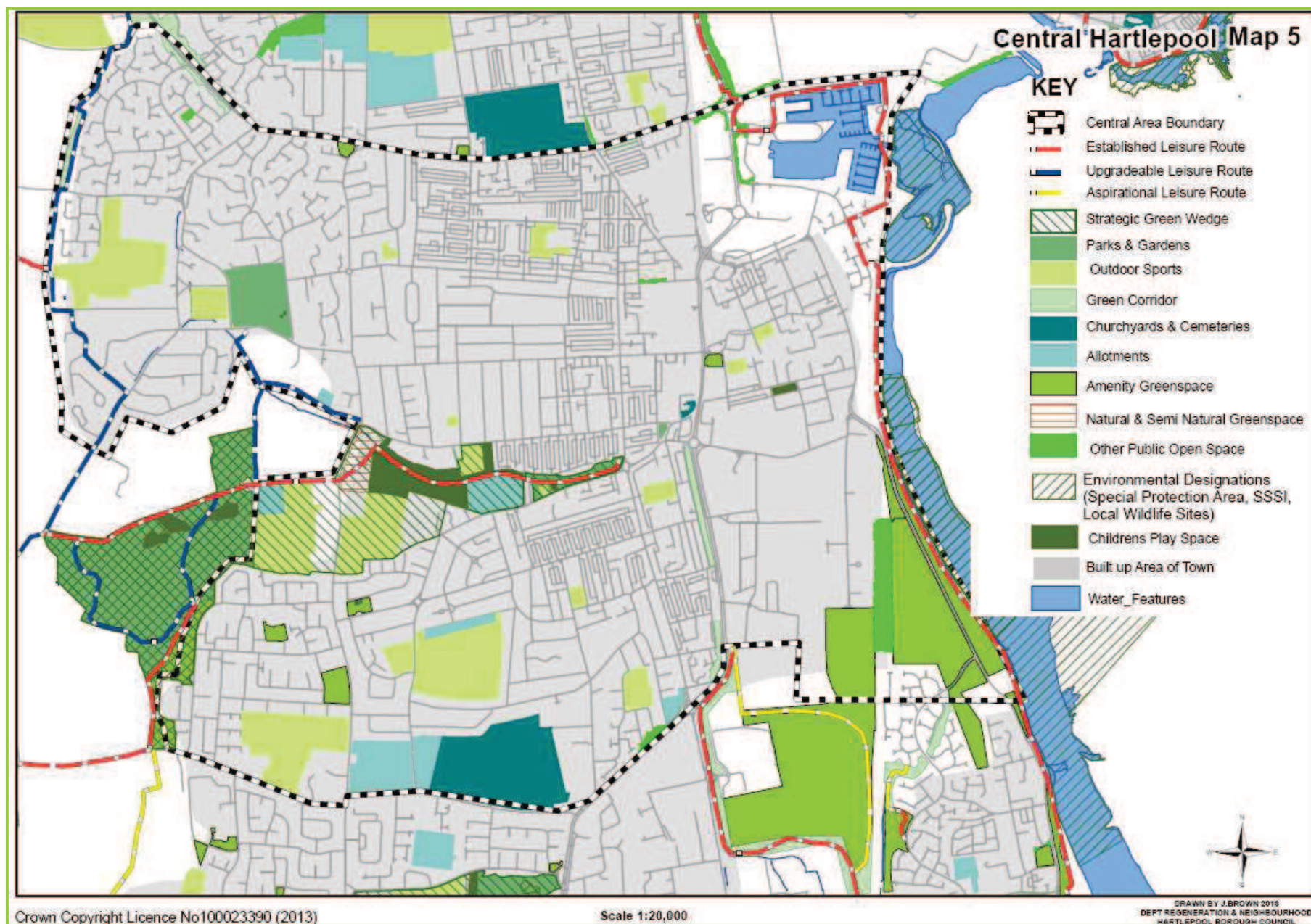
Area 4: Central Hartlepool

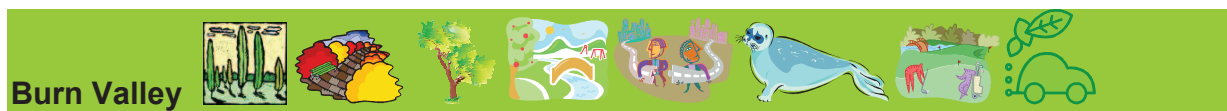
The central area suffers from a deficiency of quality GI especially in the town centre area and the northern element of this sub-area. It is however very well served by a range of quality GI within the southern and western areas including the Burn Valley Gardens and Ward Jackson Park. The area is also home to the two largest sports pitch locations in Brierton School and the Rift House Recreational Ground. There are also a number of allotment sites and a major cemetery within this area, all of which help to contribute significantly to the GI of the Borough.

It is evident from map 5 on the following page where the shortfalls in GI are within this area. For this reason it is extremely important to protect the small pockets of GI in the future as well as exploring ways in which the densely populated areas of terraced housing can add elements of GI, such as street trees, helping to enhance the appearance and feel of the street. In any new developments that occur in the east of this area it will be an important element of the planning process to ensure that GI is considered in a positive way, helping to improve the quality of the development whilst also meeting a shortfall in provision.

The importance of grass verges and planting in areas where general green infrastructure is lacking can be extremely beneficial, not only in terms of aesthetics but also to provide much needed habitat for wildlife in the area. The positive benefits that tree planting can have in the battle against climate change is also of great importance and these corridors provide the opportunity for such provision.

Map 5: Central Hartlepool





Within this area one of the main assets in terms of GI is the Burn Valley Green Wedge. This area has recently benefitted from significant investment through Natural England and the Environment Agency to improve a number of aspects of the area including realignment of the beck, restoration of habitat and creation of natural spaces. All the capital and revenue works that could be funded from the Natural England funding have nearly been completed but some capital work that is identified in the master plan still remains to be funded and the largest part of this is the creation of a car park on what was the site of the gardens flower nursery. The aim of this part of the project is to create parking space for the users of the bowling green and old boys club so that traffic and pedestrian users can be separated as far as possible. There will be ongoing revenue costs forming two types one being the continuous maintenance of the gardens and the other which is more aligned to soft landscape improvements of a plant management nature that would not be part of the normal maintenance works. For example the planting of bluebell and wild garlic drifts under the tree canopy.

The illustration on the following page shows the masterplan which was drawn up for the Burn Valley Gardens and which is well on the way to be realised on the ground. The Burn Valley plays a crucial part in creating green linkages between a number of areas of the town including the town centre and various residential estates in the central part of the town. The Upper Burn Valley (Family Wood) is the informal westward continuation of Burn Valley Gardens. It is a heavily tree planted area with a formal surfaced path running through it from Elwick Road to Catcote Road. The paths designation is Public Footpath No.10, Hartlepool. Other informal and unsurfaced paths run through the community wood and are used exclusively by pedestrians. The surfaced path has permissive cycle rights placed on it and is a vital safe cycle route for all types of users. The landscape character of Family Wood is informal with areas of good biodiversity value.

Beyond the main area of family wood is a satellite area located on the western side of Catcote Road, at the junction with Elwick Road. Another public footpath (Public Footpath No.8, Hartlepool) runs through this trees area and continues to another section of Elwick Road, opposite Ward Jackson Park. This as with some other urban fringe rights of way has permissive cycle rights placed upon it and is regarded as an important safe route to and from schools. The Council will continue to ensure that these routes are well maintained and upgraded where necessary to help promote the use of sustainable travel. Summerhill Country Park lies to the west of the Burn Valley Gardens and helps to create a green link between the urban and rural area. Ongoing investment in Summerhill is covered within the Rural Section of this Action Plan.

Diagram 4: Burn Valley Gardens Masterplan



Ward Jackson Park



Following substantial works to the park in the late 1990's a Management Plan for the Park was formulated supported by funding from the Heritage Lottery Fund. The Friends of Ward Jackson Park in association with the Council produce and update the Management Plan when necessary. Within the Management Plan it sets out a wide range of information including a history of the site covering key historical features, health and safety, staffing, maintenance of the park and environmental sustainability. The Park has been awarded Green Flag status and regular review of this management plan as well as continued maintenance and improvements to the Park will be crucial to maintaining this prestigious award.

The Friends of Ward Jackson Park is an active group which is classed as a charitable organisation. They organise regular events within the park to help with fund raising towards its maintenance and towards the actions set out within the Management Plan. The actions look at different features the park has to offer and how they will be managed and maintained over time such as woodland walks and the need to promote and maintain structural diversity within the woodland belt through maintenance of planting and natural colonisation to develop wildlife potential of site. Other elements covered within this section of the plan and with actions associated with them include the bowling greens, bandstand area, lake, fountain, grass areas, planted areas, path system and the Place in the Park (community building and café). A table of actions for the financial year is maintained by the Council's Parks and Countryside team and where known funding sources are identified. The Friends Group works in association with the Parks and Countryside team to identify funding sources where necessary.

Grayfields Recreational Ground



This site runs north/south along Jesmond Gardens and is operating well with its new pavilion, 3G all weather pitch and protective fencing. The highest quality football pitch in the Borough is located on this site and provides an excellent facility. There is however a requirement for path and road refurbishment, an additional bowling pavilion and improved drainage for the grass playing pitches. Funding for these improvements is currently being sought and a bid will be submitted to the "Protecting Playing Fields" fund for the pitch improvements.

The draft plan below illustrates improvements to the quality of the provision at Brierton whilst also looking to provide a full size 3G football pitch which would have wider public use available. Funding is currently being sought to enable the Council to progress these works and would be aided by money from the sale of the land on which the upper school used to be located in the west of the site as shown below.

Site plan for Hartlepool Sports Precinct & Housing Site. The plan shows a large area divided into a 'HOUSING SITE (approx. area 3.2ha)' on the left and 'PLAYING FIELDS (approx. area 8.4ha)' on the right. The housing site is bounded by Brerton Lane to the south and a landscape buffer to the east. The playing fields include three 100x65m rectangles, a 74x50m rectangle, two 30x20m rectangles, two 60x40m rectangles, a 'Future Swimming Pool', 'Tennis Courts', a '3G Synthetic Turf Pitch Football 106 x 71m', and a 'MUGA'. A 'LANDSCAPE BUFFER' runs along the top and right edges. A 'POTENTIAL FUTURE JUNCTION ALTERATION' is shown at the bottom right. A legend on the right shows symbols for 'PLAYING FIELD LAND' (diagonal lines) and 'HOUSING SITE' (white). A table at the bottom right lists project details: Hartlepool Borough Council, Planning and Development Committee, 2023, 1:1000 scale, 10/23/2023 date, and 10/23/2023 version.

Area 5: South Hartlepool

This area of the town is served by a variety of major elements of GI of differing quality, some of which benefit from established green corridors which help to link them with other areas of the town and linking into the countryside. This is illustrated in Map 6 on the following page. It is very clear however from the Green Infrastructure Strategy in the SPD that significant investment is needed over the coming years not only to develop areas such as the green wedge at Golden Flatts, but to help rejuvenate existing areas of GI such as Rossmere and Seaton Parks.

This investment will also need to focus on the provision of leisure routes within the southern industrial area to facilitate sustainable travel to work in the area and also to significantly improve the linkages south into Stockton towards Saltholme International Nature Reserve. Some of these routes will require sensitive planning to avoid any detrimental impact on the environmental designations in the south of the town. However, if planned correctly these routes could offer users the opportunity to enjoy a wide range of attractive GI which is home to many different species of wildlife.



(Figure 5: Golden Flatts)

Map 6: South Hartlepool

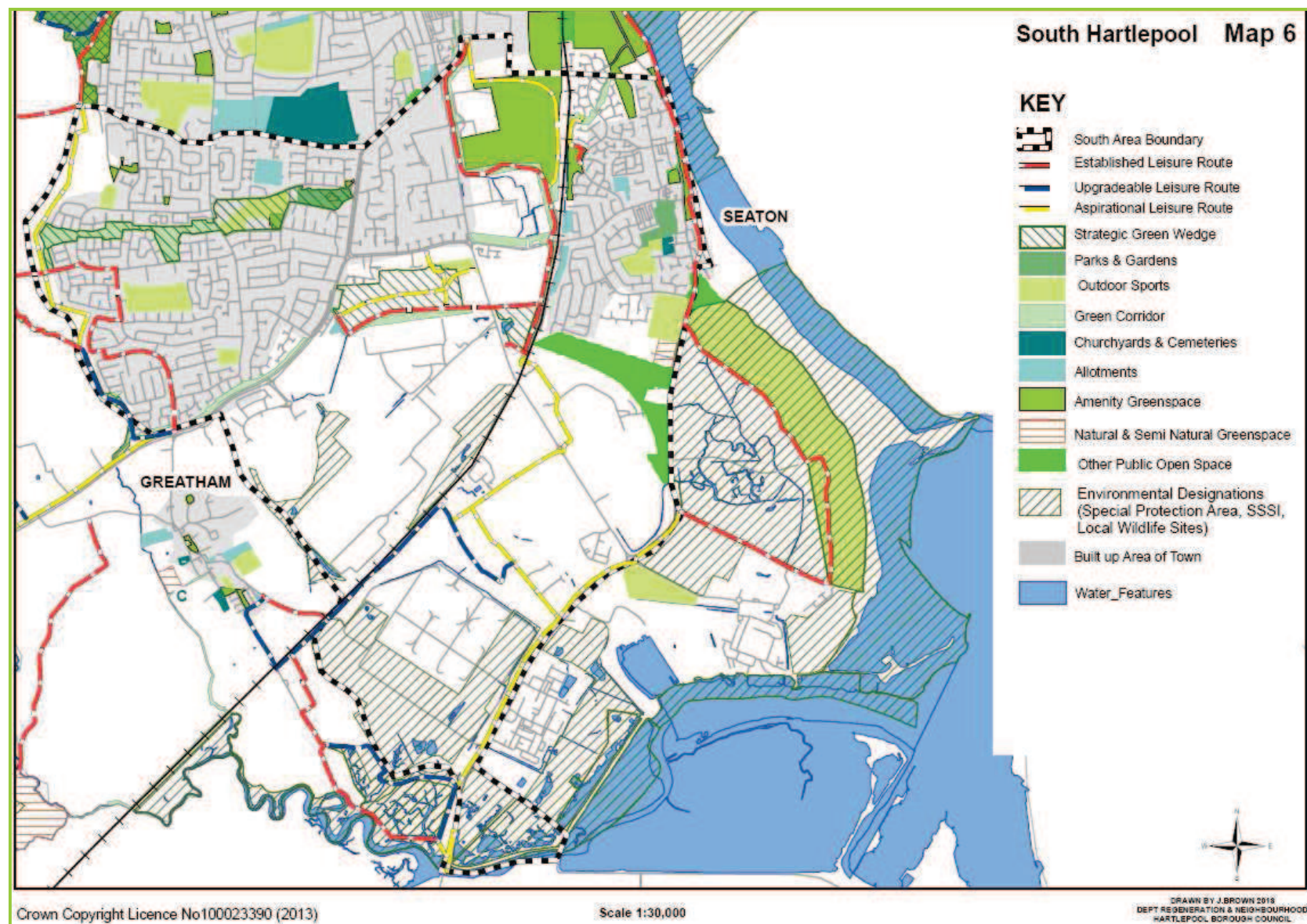


Diagram 6: Rossmere Park Masterplan



Rossmere Park Masterplan



The park plays a vital role in the provision of a variety of green spaces within the Owton Manor Green Wedge. Its location adjacent to the A689 means the park is accessible not only to those on foot but also to visitors to the town. There is a clear opportunity to transform this park into an attraction which can benefit far more people than it currently does. The park has a number of strengths, most notably the lake, but other features are in need of investment.

The Friends of Rossmere Park Group have consulted the local residents and park users and had (with the assistance of the Council) a master plan produced. The next stage is to go out to further consultation on this and to create the final masterplan which will enable the Friends Group and the Council to pursue funding opportunities for its implementation. The draft masterplan on the previous page helps to give an impression of the scale of the park and the wide ranging GI it includes. Once finalised individual elements of the scheme will be costed to ensure that should funding opportunities emerge, interested parties are in a position to bid for funding and will be able to demonstrate the overall benefits which will be derived from the works.

Recently, as the first phase of the masterplan, a new play site, in the vicinity of the proposed new café and community building has been constructed. This has helped to provide a valuable facility for local children and has helped to enhance the quality of the Owton Manor Green Wedge.

Golden Flatts



This project is one of the most significant pieces of green infrastructure in the south of the town. The site, which is approximately 20 hectares, was previously allocated as employment land. This use however has changed in the emerging Local Plan and the site has been allocated as a green wedge. The new allocation excludes the business/industrial unit at the eastern end of the site. The scale of this site obviously presents an exciting opportunity to dramatically improve the contribution GI makes within this area of the town and also offers the opportunity to provide sustainable links through to the southern business zone and on towards Seaton Carew.

Diagram 7 on the page 34 illustrates a masterplan that has been drawn up for the green wedge. This masterplan combines significant amounts of woodland planting, wildflower planting, ponds, walkways, play space, grazing areas and car parking for visitors. This scheme was consulted on with the local community and overall was positively received. The costs included give an indication of the levels and types of funding which would be needed to deliver this scheme. It should be noted that there is potential in the future that the Council may need to look at the potential for pitch provision on this site alongside changing facilities. If such a change is required the Action Plan will be amended to

reflect this. The estimated costs related to the Golden Flatts Masterplan (as shown on table 4) are as follows and based on Forestry Commission standard costs with the exception of the surfaced track and play builder scheme:

Table 4: Golden Flatts Cost Estimates

Element	Size	Estimated costs	Specification
Total area of woodland planting	6.68ha	£9,600	based on £400 for trees and £240 for labour per 1000 trees (stocking density must be 2250 trees per ha)
Total length of fencing for planted areas	3717m	£21,930	based on standard 18 gauge netting, posts at 5m centres two line wires. Rabbit proof for min 10 years (£5.90 per m)
length of fencing for grazing areas	950m	£17,100	based on amenity post and rail fence (£18 per m)
Total length of surfaced track	933m	£23,325	based on £25 per m (taken from Sustrans Technical Information Note 8. Cycle Path Surface Options)
Play Builder Scheme		£120,000	As per the Clavering Play Builder
Total length of mown paths	2826m	£650/pass	path strimming (3m wide) (£0.23 per m)

Diagram 7: Golden Flatts Green Wedge Masterplan



Seaton Park Improvements



Although well maintained by the Council, the park has poor horticultural infrastructure and a number of outdated recreational facilities in the form of football pitches, a bowling green and tennis courts. In recent years the only main capital investment into the park has been the creation of the main car park, which was created in the mid 1990's and investment into the play provision through the Playbuilder programme of 2009-11 concentrated on the play provision, with the complimentary wetland area.

As a result of the need for investment and improvement of the facility a group of stakeholders including the Council, residents and agencies came together to form a Masterplan to guide future development in the areas. This work was coordinated through Groundwork North East who produced a final masterplan as shown on Diagram 8 on page 38 in late 2011. The Masterplan will now be taken forward by the newly formed Friends of Seaton Park group who were established during the development of the masterplan.

The final designs for the Masterplan illustrates an ambitious redevelopment of the park which will compliment improvements to the sea front whilst also maintaining the traditional features of a neighborhood park.

The most far-reaching component of the proposals plan was the proposal to replace the existing out-dated 1960s bowling pavilion and changing cabins by a single multi-purpose structure, housing all the current functions of the bowling pavilion, football changing and parks storage. This would also incorporate much-requested cafe and public toilets. The principle features include:

1. New multi-functional 'Park Pavilion';
2. New access road for service / deliveries and accessible parking;
3. Improved and extended footpath network providing circular routes;
4. Fitness trail and wildlife margin on under-used football field margins;
5. Active area - table tennis / pump track / mini skatepark / crazy golf;
6. Canopy / open pavilion providing covered space for outdoor activities (tai chi, fitness classes, dance, performance art and 'boot camps');
7. Planting structure: boundary hedge and tree planting, internal trees, Boundary treatment along Allendale Street and Farndale Road to include mounding and hedge as buffer to park activities;
8. Main park entrance and boundary along Station Lane and The Cliff opened up and integrated with the town centre;
9. Events space and overspill car parking (organised events, markets, fetes, ice-skating, music events);
10. Open park with street lighting along the main routes.

The costs of the masterplan are indicated overleaf with a substantial overall cost in the region of £1.4million. Specific elements are however broken down and this will

obviously allow funding to be sought for individual elements depending upon the criteria of the funding being sought. This scheme will likely take a number of years to realise the overall vision.

Table 5: Seaton Park Costs

Element	Quantity	Units	Rate	Cost
Park Pavilion				
Remove existing building. Design and build new combined facility.	1	Prov	£650,000.00	£650,000.00
				£650,000.00
Hard surfaces				
Break out and remove hardstanding to realign paths and car park	991	m2	£5.00	£4,955.00
Break out and remove hard surfacing at entrance	377	m2	£5.00	£1,885.00
Extend car Park	292	m2	£50.00	£14,600.00
New access road, incl drainage	524	m2	£65.00	£34,060.00
New footpaths - main park	1889	m2	£35.00	£66,115.00
New footpaths - sports field	1076	m2	£25.00	£26,900.00
Paths resurfaced	1192	m2	£7.00	£8,344.00
Woodland path	194	m2	£20.00	£3,880.00
Overspill and sports field car parks - reinforced grass	1261	m2	£30.00	£37,830.00
Recycling compound	48	m2	£50.00	£2,400.00
Patio	128	m2	£55.00	£7,040.00
Refurbish tennis / basketball pitches	2628	m2	£7.00	£18,396.00
				£226,405.00
Soft Landscaping				
Bund creation - spread and shape mounds	890	m2	£3.00	£2,670.00
Swales and surface drainage into wetland area	item			£2,000.00
Perimeter hedge planting	1068	lin m	£7.00	£7,476.00
Semi-mature tree planting	210	nr	£180.00	£37,800.00
Wild flower meadow creation	7819	m2	£1.50	£11,728.50
Wetland area				£0.00
Shrub planting to front entrance area and Library entrance	200	m2	£35.00	£7,000.00
Bulb planting	5000	m2	£0.50	£2,500.00
Sensory Garden	635	m2	£35.00	£22,225.00
				£93,399.50
Boundary Wall and Railing				

Remove panels of brickwork. Face up exposed sides of piers	160	lin m	£15.00	£2,400.00
Metal railing infill panels and new section of boundary fence and gate. Arch re-erected	157	lin m	£120.00	£18,840.00
				£21,240.00
Miscellaneous				
Sculpture in woodland garden and elsewhere				£50,000.00
Signage				£10,000.00
Street lighting	12	nr	£1,500.00	£18,000.00
Benches, picnic tables and site furniture	20	nr	£500.00	£10,000.00
				£88,000.00
Active Play Elements				
Pump Track				£30,000.00
Crazy Golf				£60,000.00
Table tennis tables	3		£800.00	£2,400.00
Outdoor gym equipment	7		£700.00	£4,900.00
				£97,300.00
Sub- total				£1,176,344.50
Preliminaries on above works	4%			£47,053.78
Contingencies (on total costs + preliminaries)	5%			£61,169.91
Professional fees (on total costs + preliminaries + contingencies)	8%			£102,765.46
Total				£1,387,333.65

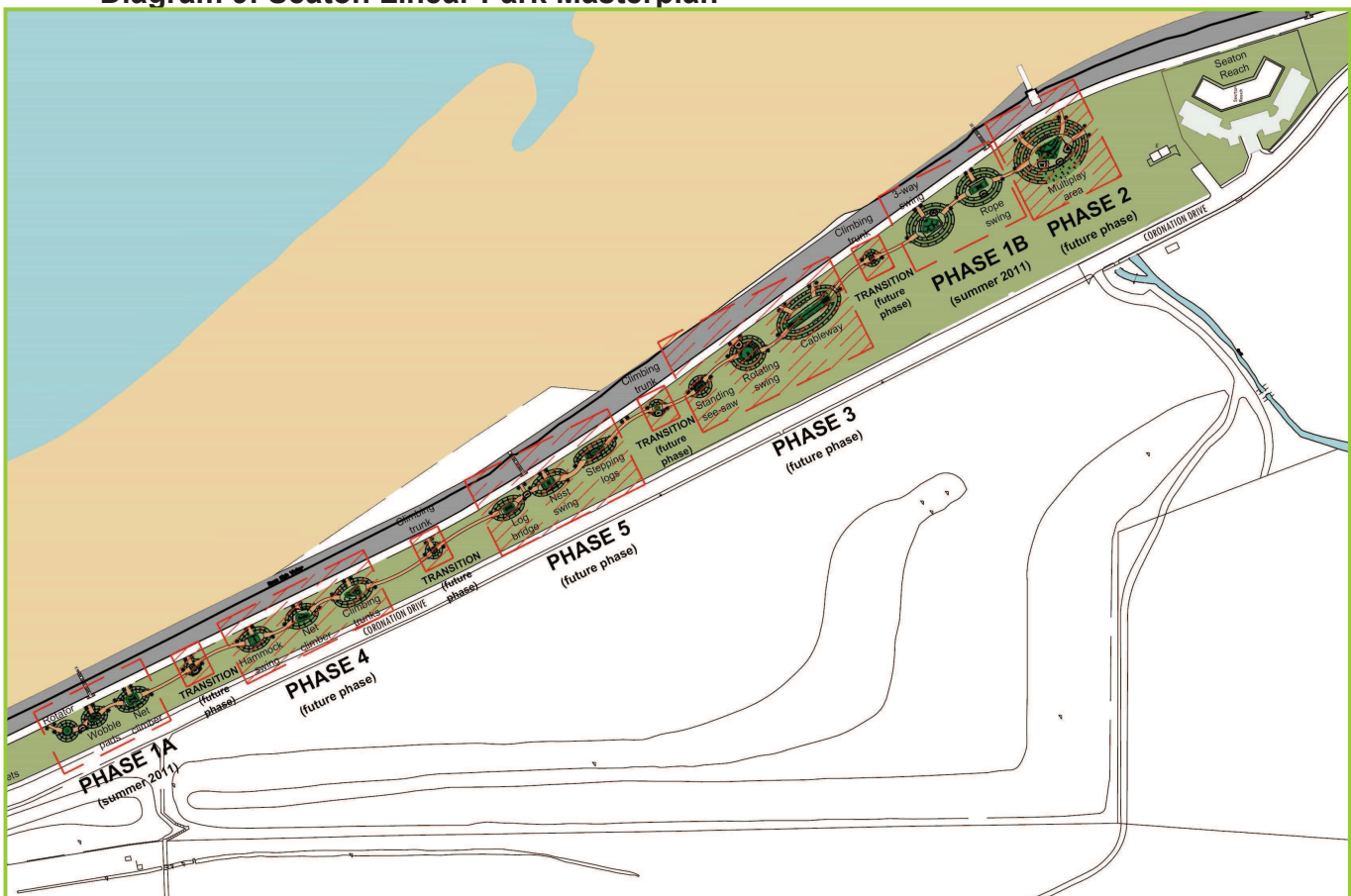
Seaton Linear Park Improvements



Over the past few years some major improvements have taken place along the Seaton Front area. Known as the Seaton Linear Park these improvements are part of an overall masterplan but have been implemented in a piece meal manner where funding has been available. The works which have currently taken place have seen improvements which have improved the pedestrian environment from the Newburn Bridge down into Seaton Carew and have incorporated landscaping, play areas, planting and seating areas. Particularly within Seaton Carew, the improvements have respected the historical nature of the conservation area and have been carried out following extensive public consultation.

The masterplan outlines a number of further stages to these improvements which it has currently not been able possible to fund but which are seen as a key priority moving forward.

Diagram 9: Seaton Linear Park Masterplan



Linkages and Movement

The creation and enhancement of green, sustainable linkages and corridors between the main areas of GI identified above and other smaller, yet equally important, elements of GI will be a key priority of the Council and will be of vital importance to the implementation of the Action Plan.

The leisure routes, illustrated on Maps 1-6, help to illustrate how movement is currently possible throughout the Borough, but also indicates where improvements and enhancements to the network of footpaths and cycle paths will be sought. The use of tree planting and planting of plants and shrubbery to create attractive, multi-functional corridors will ensure that residents and visitors will be able to move freely and safely in a sustainable manner along green corridors between residential, employment and more natural areas. The delivery of these will also contribute vital habitat and new wildlife corridors.

It will also be important to ensure that as part of new developments that occur in the town, thought is given to how open space, tree planting and walkways are integrated into the plans from the outset so that they link into the existing GI network.

Various sources of funding will be accessible to ensure sustainable linkages are created in the future, they include:

- Local Transport Plan
- Sustrans Funding
- Coastal Walkway initiatives such as the Durham Heritage Coast
- Developer Contributions from planning applications

Through these improvements, along with the improvements in the sections above, will ensure that Hartlepool's GI network continues to develop and grow in the future delivering with it the multi-functional benefits widely associated with successful GI.

The benefits these leisure routes offer is illustrated by the Walks Programme and Orienteering Programme that the Council operates. Walk about in Hartlepool launched in March 2011 and has attracted 379 participants to the scheme, the walks vary in length from 30 minutes up to 2 hours but all utilise the public rights of way in and around Hartlepool. The Scheme not only advertises normal walking but also has a very successful Nordic Walking Programme incorporated into the scheme. There are currently 11 walks (7 normal walks and 4 Nordic walks) that occur weekly targeting the community as well as closed walks for various organisations and their services users. These walks increase in the summer months and cover walks around the local Nature Reserves. Common walks that are utilised within this scheme are;

- Dalton Piercy Circular
- Hart to Haswell

- Summerhill
- Seaton Dunes
- Headland – along Promenade
- Greatham
- Crimdon Coastal Routes
- Crimdon Dene

Through funding received from the Community Activities Network (CAN) the Council have been able to develop Orienteering in Hartlepool;

- English Martyrs school and Manor College have had their schools sites mapped
- St Hilds have had their site updated
- Schools have added orienteering onto their curriculum; however the sport and Physical Activity Team have supported in some of the initial delivery and have engaged 84 students.
- Training has been delivered through Cleveland Orienteering Club to school staff and Sport and Physical Activity staff to support the development of orienteering, 66 people currently have been trained through this project.
- Family taster sessions and a Begin 2 Orienteering programme have been run and engaged 79 participants to the sport.

The development of orienteering in Hartlepool has been strongly supported by Cleveland Orienteering Club (CLOK) and they are re-mapping the old orienteering course at Burn Valley which will enable the team to develop orienteering in town utilising a key green wedge.

The Council are also launching the Xplorer/ Run Challenge project in partnership with British Orienteering and CLOK in Hartlepool from April for a 6 month period, this project is aimed at getting more people engaged in orienteering utilising sites and mapped courses in a slightly different way to that of conventional orienteering.