
Local Nature Recovery Strategy for Cambridgeshire and Peterborough



LNRS and the Planning System

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1. Planning Practice Guidance

The Natural Environment section of Planning Practice Guidance was updated in February 2025 to include *guidance on the role of Local Nature Recovery Strategies (LNRS) in planning and how Local Planning Authorities (LPAs) should interpret the legal duty to “have regard” to LNRS*. This guidance is a legal requirement of the Environment Act 2021. It includes information on how Local Planning Authorities should have regard to LNRS in both plan making and planning decision-making.

Paragraph 44 states, “*Section 40 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act (as amended by the Environment Act 2021) places a **duty on all public authorities who operate in England to consider how they can conserve and enhance biodiversity**. In complying with this duty all public authorities must “have regard” to any relevant Local Nature Recovery Strategy.*”

2. Local Plans

The [National Planning Policy Framework](#) [paragraph 192(a)] states that plans should identify, map and safeguard areas identified by national and local partnerships for habitat management, enhancement, restoration or creation.

The [Natural Environment Guidance](#) sets out the relationship between a Local Nature Recovery Strategy and Local Plans. It states “*Local Nature Recovery Strategies are intended to support local planning authorities in preparing local plans that conserve and enhance biodiversity and the natural environment, and local planning authorities have a legal duty to have regard to the relevant strategy for their area. Local planning authorities should consider the priorities set out in the relevant LNRS when determining how their local plan should contribute to and enhance the local and natural environment.*” It goes on to say, “*Local Nature Recovery Strategies are prepared through local partnerships under a national legislative framework and will identify and map proposed areas for habitat management, enhancement, restoration and creation. Local planning authorities should be aware of those areas mapped and identified in the relevant Local Nature Recovery Strategy and the measures proposed in them and consider how these should be reflected in their local plan. In doing so, they should consider what safeguarding would be appropriate to enable the proposed actions to be delivered, noting the potential to target stronger safeguarding in areas the local planning authority considers to be of greater importance. This will enable local planning authorities to support the best opportunities to create or improve habitat to conserve and enhance biodiversity, including where this may enable development in other locations.*”

3. Planning decision-making

Paragraph 47 states “*The Local Nature Recovery Strategy is an evidence base which contains information that may be a ‘material consideration’ in the planning system, especially where development plan documents for an area pre-date Local Nature*

Recovery Strategy publication. It is for the decision-maker to determine what is a relevant material consideration based on the individual circumstances of the case.”

4. Biodiversity Net Gain

Paragraph 48 sets out how Local Nature Recovery Strategies are designed to promote the delivery of off-site biodiversity gain in the right places. It states, “*Local Nature Recovery Strategies will identify areas where habitat creation, restoration or enhancement would be most beneficial for nature recovery and wider environmental outcomes. They can play a critical role in supporting offsite gains to be delivered in a way that maximises biodiversity benefits, when these are required to achieve a development’s biodiversity gain objective. This can help to support bigger and more joined-up areas in which our wildlife can thrive.*”

The Defra Biodiversity Metric rewards the creation of the right type of habitats in the right areas through a strategic significance multiplier, giving 15% more biodiversity units to areas “*Formally identified within a Local Strategy*”. Defra and Natural England have specified that a LNRS should be the document to guide where habitat restoration and creation in biodiversity offsetting sites and habitat banks will be rewarded with the strategic significance multiplier.

As has been previously noted, the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough LNRS area has significantly less habitat than many other parts of England and the habitats that remain are highly fragmented. The area is also one of the fastest growing parts of the country with massive development pressures. The need for biodiversity offsetting is therefore likely to be significant and local stakeholders wish to see this effectively targeted.

To identify and apply BNG strategic significance, use the relevant information published in the LNRS and descriptions as set out in table 7 of [The Statutory Biodiversity Metric User Guide](#).