



Report to: Policy & Performance Improvement Committee - 6 October 2025

Director Lead: Matt Finch Director – Communities & Environment

Lead Officer: Matthew Norton, Business Manager – Planning Policy & Infrastructure,  
Nick Law, Ecology & Biodiversity Lead Officer

Report Summary	
<b>Report Title</b>	Nottingham & Nottinghamshire Draft Local Nature Recovery Strategy Consultation
<b>Purpose of Report</b>	To update Members of the production and consultation on the Local Nature Recovery Strategy by Nottinghamshire Council and to endorse the District Council's proposed response at the final consultation stage prior to publication of the strategy.
<b>Recommendation</b>	That Policy & Performance Improvement Committee consider the proposed recommendations and forward to Cabinet for approval as the Council's response to the final consultation prior to publication of the Local Nature Recovery Strategy.

## 1.0 **Background**

- 1.1. A report was presented to the Policy & Performance Improvement Committee meeting of 2 June 2025 the purpose of which was to inform members of the production and consultation on the Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS) and to endorse the District Council's proposed response for consideration by Cabinet.
- 1.2. The Cabinet report highlighted how in February 2025 we commented on a pre-publication consultation on the LNRS and how many of our concerns were subsequently addressed in advance of the publication. However, there remained concerns, and these were set out in the Cabinet Report. In summary these were:
- Overlap with sites allocated for development in the relevant local plan and overlap with existing built development (mainly in association with watercourses);
  - Grassland (insufficient grassland areas);
  - Wet Woodland Layer (potential measures inappropriate);
  - Relationship with Biodiversity Net Gain (correlation of habitat terminology); and
  - Section 2.3 of the draft Statement of Biodiversity Priorities (misleading paragraph).

1.3. On 10 June 2025 Cabinet decided to:

- 1) Approve the proposed consultation response; and
- 2) Give delegated authority to the Portfolio Holder for Climate & the Environment, in consultation with the Planning Policy Board, to comment at the next stage of the LNRS process as set out in paragraph 2.7 of the report.

1.4. Delegated authority was considered necessary as the statutory timings of the LNRS development were such that there would not be another Cabinet meeting before the District Council would have to state whether it intended to object to publication of the final LNRS. However, timings have slipped with the LNRS production such that there is now an opportunity to seek Cabinet approval to approve or object to publication of the final LNRS at the Cabinet meeting of 14 October 2025. Therefore, a report to update Cabinet further, including a recommendation to support publication of the LNRS, has been prepared and is provided as **Appendix A** of this report. The report contents are summarised below.

#### **Overlap with Existing Built Development**

1.5. This is mainly in connection with the buffering approach that has been taken in relation to watercourses. Whilst we still consider that this does not look good visually, we acknowledge that to map otherwise would be extremely time consuming and with use it should become evident that this layer can be used pragmatically. Therefore, whilst not ideal, this is not considered to be of sufficient concern to warrant an objection to the LNRS.

#### **Poor Representation of Grassland Measures**

- 1.6. The additional areas that we proposed should be mapped under relevant grassland measures were reviewed by the LNRS team and with a few exceptions were accepted. Those that were rejected were discussed, and the Biodiversity and Ecology Lead Officer was happy to accept the small number of rejections.
- 1.7. Accepting these rejections was helped by the fact that the LNRS team proposed additional areas to those that we had proposed.
- 1.8. Others had also raised concerns regarding the paucity of grassland measures and in response the LNRS team has added similar additional areas outside of our District applying the same methodology we used for our proposed additional areas.

#### **Wet Woodland Layer**

1.9. Our continuing concerns regarding the wet woodland layer were addressed by an acknowledgement from the LNRS team that in the draft Statement of Biodiversity Priorities an unfortunate 'cut and paste' error had occurred, and the wrong Potential Measures had been pasted alongside the Codes for Woodland Priorities and Potential Measures. This has now been corrected satisfactorily.

## **Relationship with Biodiversity Net Gain**

- 1.10. We had raised detailed concerns with the LNRS team regarding this matter with the conclusion that the lack of correlation in the terminology for habitats used in the LNRS documents and the Statutory Biodiversity Metric and UK Hab habitat classification system would potentially result in additional burdens for those completing and reviewing BNG calculations.
- 1.11. In response the LNRS team have produced a supporting document to provide guidance. The Biodiversity and Ecology Lead Officer provided some framework information and additional comment for this. This will be provided as a separate guidance note rather than as an Appendix to the LNRS as originally intended; this will allow flexibility for future amendments, and this approach is considered acceptable by officers, Therefore, this matter is considered resolved.

## **Potentially misleading paragraph in Section 2.3 of the draft Statement of Biodiversity Priorities**

- 1.12. We note that there has been no amendment or discussion regarding this. However, this is not of sufficient importance to warrant an objection to publication of the LNRS.

## **Additional Item**

- 1.13. In addition to the grassland areas, following responses from the online survey and a specific landowner request an additional site encompassing several land parcels has been mapped for grassland and woodland measures at Lowfield Lane, to the south of the approved Lowfield Lane development.
- 1.14. These amendments, and others arising from other comments, were approved by the County Council Cabinet on 10 September 2025. On 22 September a formal 28-day consultation period will begin, during which any objections from Supporting Authorities should be made.

## **2.0 Proposal/Options Considered**

- 2.1. As set out in the preceding section, consideration has been given as to whether any outstanding matters were of sufficient importance to warrant an objection to the final draft LNRS being published. The conclusion was that none were.
- 2.2. That Council approves the recommendation that the amended draft Nottinghamshire & Nottingham LNRS should be supported and no objection to its publication be raised.
- 2.3. That this support should be conveyed via a letter from the Director - Communities & Environment which should be provided to the LNRS team within the 28-day consultation period starting 22 September 2025.

- 2.4. When published the Local Nature Recovery Strategy will be a consideration when plan making, therefore it has relevance in respect of Ambition 6 of the Community Plan.

### **3.0 Implications**

In writing this report and in putting forward recommendations, officers have considered the following implications: Data Protection; Digital & Cyber Security; Equality & Diversity; Financial; Human Resources; Human Rights; Legal; Safeguarding & Sustainability and where appropriate they have made reference to these implications and added suitable expert comment where appropriate.

#### **3.1 Financial Implications – FIN25-26/579**

There are no financial implications arising from this report.

### **Background Papers and Published Documents**

Except for previously published documents, which will be available elsewhere, the documents listed here will be available for inspection in accordance with Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972.

None