



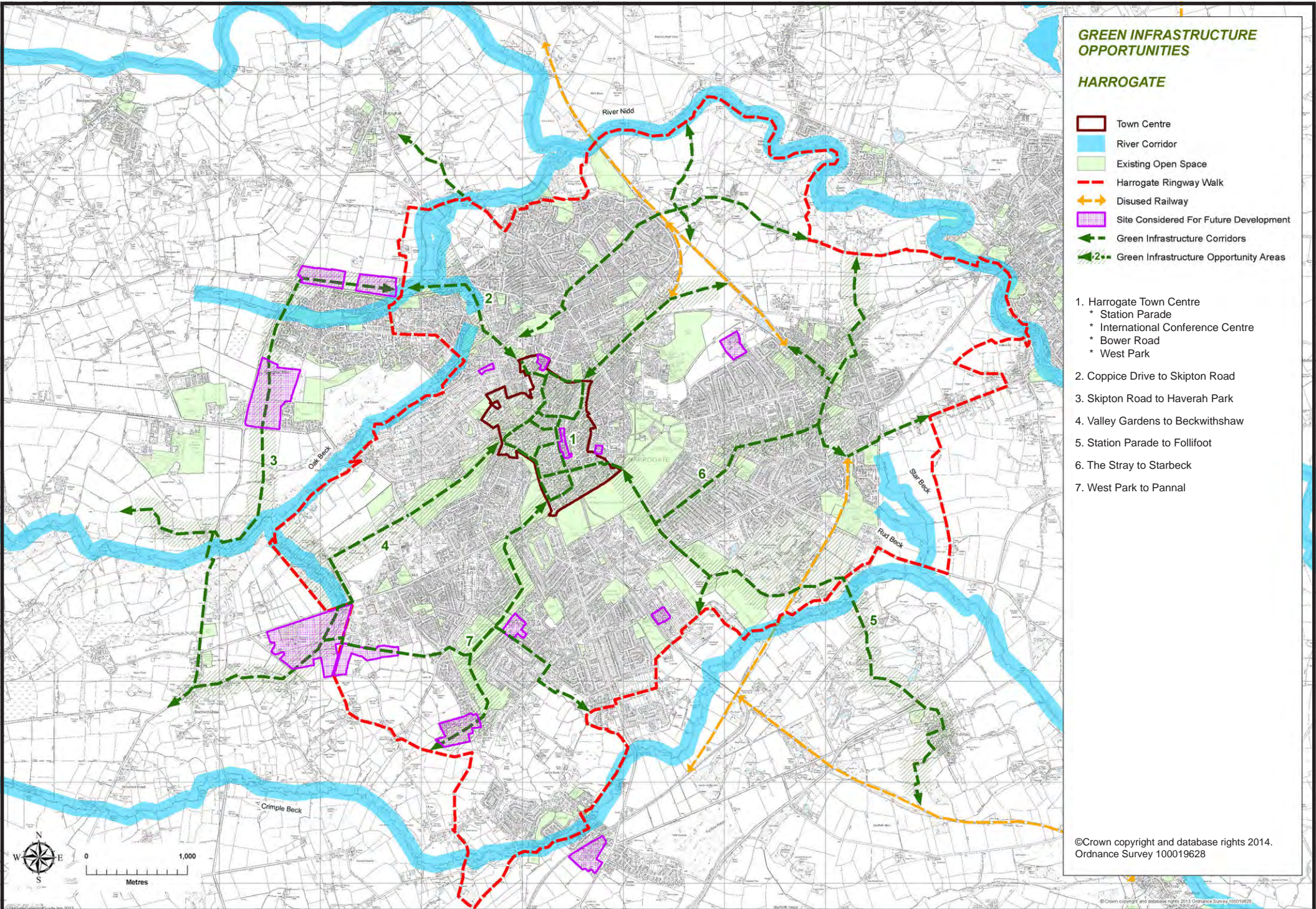
8. MAIN URBAN AREAS:

What opportunities are there for improving green infrastructure in the main urban areas of Harrogate, Knaresborough and Ripon?

- 8.1 Through work with Natural England and adjoining authorities on green infrastructure mapping in 2009 (see section 5) it became clear that more detailed work on green infrastructure opportunities within the main urban areas of Harrogate district was required.
- 8.2 This section includes an assessment of the main urban areas of Harrogate, Knaresborough and Ripon. The opportunities maps provide information about the key characteristics of the settlements and indicate green infrastructure opportunity areas and important green corridors. The accompanying text explains how development within the urban areas can contribute to enhancing green infrastructure.
- 8.3 The majority of key opportunities within the main urban areas are focussed on the need to strengthen links between the town/city centre and the open countryside for access and biodiversity, to improve the setting of key tourist attractions and heritage assets, improve the shopping and business environment and to help to attract more inward investment.
- 8.4 The guide does not identify specific projects, however it provides a starting point for applicants and developers that can underpin proposals for development. Applications for development within Harrogate, Knaresborough and Ripon will be expected to contribute to the delivery of the opportunities identified within this section.

Green Infrastructure Opportunities in the Main Urban Area of Harrogate



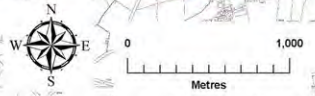


GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE OPPORTUNITIES
HARROGATE

- Town Centre
- River Corridor
- Existing Open Space
- Harrogate Ringway Walk
- Disused Railway
- Site Considered For Future Development
- Green Infrastructure Corridors
- Green Infrastructure Opportunity Areas

1. Harrogate Town Centre
 - * Station Parade
 - * International Conference Centre
 - * Bower Road
 - * West Park
2. Coppice Drive to Skipton Road
3. Skipton Road to Haverah Park
4. Valley Gardens to Beckwithshaw
5. Station Parade to Follifoot
6. The Stray to Starbeck
7. West Park to Pannal

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Context:

Harrogate's gardens and green spaces are an important component of the quality environment within the area and they give the town its own distinctive identity. These areas help to create an attractive setting, which has benefits in terms of attracting tourists, shoppers and investment to the town as well as promoting accessibility, healthy living and important links for biodiversity.

Harrogate occupies a large plateau which descends to the valleys of the Oak Beck to the north, northwest and west, the Crimple Beck to the southwest, south and southeast and Star Beck to the east. The Crimple Valley, which is part of the wider regionally important corridor rises to the southwest of Harrogate, adjacent to the Haverah Park area. It runs south of Harrogate and via Spofforth to join the Wharfe corridor at Wetherby. This river corridor links into The Stray in the centre of Harrogate via Hookstone Beck and its associated green wedge at Hornbeam Park. The river corridor comprising Star Beck and Rud Beck also forms important linkages to the north of the area and lies in close proximity to the Harrogate Ringway footpath.

The River Nidd passes to the north and east of Harrogate and it is part of the wider regionally important River Nidd corridor, which originates in the uplands of the Nidderdale AONB and passes close to lower dales villages such as Hampsthwaite, Ripley and Nidd before passing

through the Nidd Gorge northwest of Harrogate and via the town of Knaresborough then meandering eastwards, ultimately joining the River Ouse at Nun Monkton.

The Harrogate bypass acts as a barrier to the connectivity of the Crimple Valley corridor to Spofforth and the landscape to the southeast of Harrogate, but the green wedges cut into the urban area at Oak Beck, Oakdale Golf Course and Valley Gardens to the west and provide good access between town and country. To the east lies the green wedge at the Bilton Triangle and to the south at Hornbeam Park the green wedge links into central Harrogate via The Stray.

The town is bordered by The Stray that extends in a great arc to the southeast and southwest of Harrogate and this plays an important part in providing a highly attractive setting and approach to the settlement. The Stray and Valley Gardens were important in the historical development of the town, as were the Turkish Baths, Health Spa and the Royal Pump Rooms.

Two important focal points for tourists in the town are the area around the roundabout in Low Harrogate, framed by the Crown Hotel, Royal Parade and the bottom of Montpellier Hill, and Prospect Square dominated by the War Memorial and surrounded on three sides by St Peter's Church, Cambridge Crescent, and Prospect Crescent.

Priorities:

The following green infrastructure priorities have been identified for Harrogate town taking into consideration the characteristics of the settlement and other green infrastructure work undertaken at the regional and sub-regional level:

- Improved linkages between the town centre and open countryside;
- Better connectivity between the retail and conference areas from Station Parade;
- Quality of place and transformation of the public realm;
- Enhancement of the historic environment; and
- Enhanced green infrastructure corridors for biodiversity and accessibility.

Taking into consideration these priorities the following green infrastructure opportunity areas have been identified on the Harrogate Green Infrastructure Opportunities Map:

1. Harrogate Town Centre
 - Station Parade
 - International Conference Centre
 - Bower Road
 - West Park
2. Coppice Drive to Skipton Road
3. Skipton Road to Haverah Park
4. Valley Gardens to Beckwithshaw
5. Station Parade to Follifoot
6. The Stray to Starbeck
7. West Park to Pannal Ash

Further information about these opportunities is provided below:

1) Harrogate Town Centre

There are many opportunities in Harrogate to plan public realm improvements to enhance the natural and built assets and help to improve links for biodiversity. There is also scope to plan for improvements to the streets and open spaces that are directly related to the shopping potential of the town as well as its civic and tourism role.

In relation to pedestrianised areas, the most successful streets are those where landscape treatment and green infrastructure is simple and uncluttered and where human activity provides the life and vitality.

Street tree planting is important to provide softening and to frame key views across the shopping areas and to provide shelter and shade. There is a lack of new tree planting in this part of Harrogate to succeed existing planting and new tree planting will help improve the setting of buildings and diversify the age structure of trees in the area.

Tree planting in combination with street furniture can provide a high quality alfresco experience with planting for cover and can encourage an attractive and inviting setting where people can make informal use of the space and interact with each other.



Station Parade, Harrogate

Station Parade:

Station Parade between Bower Road and York Place presents a key opportunity for creating and improving green infrastructure that enhances the setting and connectivity of this key gateway to the town for those arriving by bus, rail, bike or car. This may also bring positive benefits in terms of encouraging investment.

The improvement of green infrastructure in this key area could then be expanded to include routes linking to key locations to help direct visitors and commuters efficiently to key places of interest such as the shopping areas, conference venue and office and business areas. The following are considered to be key opportunities within this area:

- Linking the town centre to the open countryside e.g. via open space and key cycle routes;

- Providing better connectivity to the retail and shopping areas;
- Improving connections to the conference centre; and
- Creating an attractive approach to the office and business areas e.g. West Park and Victoria Avenue.

Any green infrastructure opportunities for the Station Parade area would need to be considered alongside other relevant aspirations and priorities, for example, the land at Station Parade Development Brief approved by the council as Supplementary Planning Guidance (May 2005).

There are numerous historic and spatial focal points within this area, which offer opportunities for enhancement to encourage better open space connections. The Harrogate Conservation Area Appraisal arrives at a like-minded conclusion with regard to visual connections across the area and notes that:

'A new 'point de vue' opposite the end of Cambridge Street would benefit the townscape.'

Victoria Gardens provides an opportunity to reinvent this formal civic space. The square could benefit from a more pared down scheme to increase the feeling of space which may help to maximise its use and encourage more social interaction. The introduction of a focal point such as a water feature in this area could give emphasis to the importance of Harrogate as a Spa town.



Harrogate International Centre

International Conference Centre:

Harrogate International Centre is a key asset of the town. Creating an environment that enhances this asset through good connections within the public realm and high quality open spaces will help to secure the continuing prosperity of Harrogate as an international conference destination.

The public realm around the Conference Centre comprises Crescent Gardens framed by the council offices, St. George Hotel, the Royal Hall, Hall M, the Royal Baths and the long terrace on the south side of Crescent Road. There are a number of opportunities within the outdoor spaces to inject more design coherence and to improve linkages to the shopping and tourism destinations around Montpellier Hill and Parliament Street in particular. For example, a simple landscape enhancement project using a pallet of high quality natural materials and street trees could give a much stronger identity to the area.

One of the most significant open spaces within the town centre is Crescent Gardens and this open space plays a vital role in bringing the business and tourism trade together into one combined area. There is an opportunity to provide better linkages between Crescent Gardens and the Royal Pump Room and to improve interpretation of the Spa history for visitors as well as tourism generated from business events. Green infrastructure improvements to this area could help to enhance Harrogate's role as an events destination as well as a leading Spa town.

The Montpellier area was some time ago a typical 'backland' area to the town, however the recent rebuilding of the Royal Baths II and repaving of the streets and ginnels with natural stone setts and flags have complemented the historic character of this area. The Montpellier area, now known as the Montpellier Quarter provides a very attractive and welcoming environment for tourists but its ability to assist with wider key linkages from Crescent Gardens to West Park Stray has not been fully explored.

The junction with Parliament Hill is the place in the town where the shopping experience crosses over with the conference trade. This junction with its many safety barriers, traffic lights and signage provides a key opportunity for improvement in order to be more welcoming for shoppers and visitors to the conference centre and to create better links along Crescent Gardens, to the Valley Gardens, the Pump Rooms and Montpellier Hill.

This area does provide scope to become a key focal or 'point de vue' within the town.



Bower Road, Harrogate

Bower Road:

A greater part of this area to the north of the town is in residential use, although it includes hotels and guesthouses. It is bisected by the Harrogate-York railway line, which is crossed by two roads (Bower Road and Skipton Road) and two footpaths (one an underpass and the other a footbridge from the southern end of Grove Road).

There are some impressive streets coupled with visually important buildings and a number of significant local views with many street trees that maintain an attractive consistency of character. However in some areas there are opportunities to improve the setting of commercial buildings, garages and entrances to supermarkets and car parking areas.

Bower Road provides an opportunity to create linkages across the railway line to the town's

additional parking areas as the railway is embanked and carried by a bridge over Bower Road and Bower Street. There are other car parks within the town particularly at the cinema, the coach park behind Asda and on the corner of East Parade, that would benefit from green infrastructure improvements to improve their setting.

Many visitors walk through this area to reach their destination at the conference centre or the shopping and tourist areas. Retaining a high quality environment should be a key priority in this part of town to improve the overall arrival experience for visitors.



Montpellier Hill, West Park, Harrogate

West Park:

This area contains a varied mix of uses including high quality shops centred on the Montpellier Quarter, 'Prince Albert Row', James Street, West Park and Parliament Street. There is also a wide variety of other uses in the 'back land' areas and to the south of Victoria Avenue

including commercial, educational, residential and professional establishments.

The area supports some major hotels around Prospect Square and Low Harrogate with a number of interspersed churches and chapels. The most impressive and distinctive buildings are the three convex crescents comprising Cambridge Crescent, Prospect Crescent and Royal Parade. These buildings conceal the more modest streets behind.

A key attribute of this area is that it stretches between Prospect Place and the Prince of Wales roundabout and is considered to be the 'quintessential' part of the town. This area plays 'centre stage' in the heart of the Harrogate tourist area as it defines the highly prestigious image of Harrogate. With well-designed shopfronts using quality materials this is an elegant part of the town and represents an import 'gateway' to Harrogate for those travelling from Leeds.

The area mostly fronts on to the West Park Stray with its open expanse of grassland. There are many distinctive and mature trees with impressive views across The Stray towards the attractive backdrop of Beech Grove. Some of the buildings face onto The Stray and have front gardens, some quite long, bounded with low walls or hedges with many trees giving the buildings a greater presence in the street scene.

The area provides an attractive 'promenade' concealing the narrow streets of terraces and parking areas that lie in the 'backland' areas

bordered by Station Parade to the northeast. This area is home to a number of businesses and there is an opportunity for improvement by creating green infrastructure to improve the townscape, in particular to the open car park.

The businesses in this area have the benefit of the West Park Stray but there are also key spaces within the 'backland' area that play a valuable contribution in terms of wider connectivity to the station and the town centre. A better physical connection with the library could also be beneficial in terms of future potential for this area. The small square to the east of the library is attractive and there is scope for better quality green infrastructure in order to improve the use of the space and the setting of the library building and the western side of the square. Another attractive open space is the small area between Albert Terrace and Station Parade.

The West Park Stray closely links with Valley Gardens via the sweep of attractive buildings forming Montpellier Hill and also provides links with the attractive civic space framed by Cambridge Crescent, St. Peter's Church and Betty's opposite.

Links between West Park and Valley Gardens are one of the most important opportunities to explore to ensure that there is good open space connectivity to the shopping areas in the Montpellier Quarter. Visitors to West Park Stray are likely to be drawn towards the Montpellier Quarter for a simultaneous shopping and visitor experience.



Portland Crescent, Harrogate

2) Coppice Drive to Skipton Road

The area around Coppice Drive offers key linkages to Skipton Road, via Oak Beck and the former gasworks site. The former gasworks site is a key wildlife corridor with an ecologically rich water course and the open beck provides an important wooded corridor in the area. New planting and better access in this area could improve links for biodiversity and for local residents.

Measures could be explored, as part of any future proposals for development within this area, to help to enhance existing green infrastructure and the de-canalisation of the watercourse. New planting with improved footways would be one opportunity to enhance landscape character and biodiversity in this corridor.

There are a number of open spaces that contribute to the character of the overall area

including the well-treed open space on the corner of Kings Road and Coppice Drive, formerly the grounds of Brandreth House. This open space could be made more attractive with the provision of more under-storey planting and seating areas. The small grassed and treed areas at the junction of Alexandra Road and Kings Road, and of Bower Road and East Parade are also important open spaces. Overall, these spaces offer scope for improvement in order to encourage the community to make better use of them and improve connections across the area.

The area to the south is dominated by the Holiday Inn and to the north the notable landmark building is the attractive St. Luke's Church on Kings Road. There is potential to enhance the lower parts of Kings Road at the junction with Alexandra Road and to make better links between Coppice Drive, Kings Road and the conference area.



The Hydro swimming pool, Harrogate

3) Skipton Road to Haverah Park

Haverah Park is mostly owned by Yorkshire Water and there are three reservoirs in the upper reaches of the two valleys: Beaver Dyke Reservoir along Oak Beck and Scargill and Ten Acres Reservoir. There is a good network of footpaths across the corridor and parts of Haverah Park and the Forestry Commission owned Stainburn Forest are open access.

This area is part of the ancient deer park of Haverah, site of John of Gaunt's Castle and originally one of the royal parks of the forest of Knaresborough. The valley has a rich network of habitats including ancient woodlands, open water and wetlands. This is an attractive area and its connection with Harrogate makes it an important rural to urban link valued by both local residents and tourists.

The Oak Beck forms part of the Haverah corridor, which is part of the wider regional corridor and is centred on the valleys of Scargill Beck and Oak Beck, which flow eastwards from the edge of the Nidderdale AONB towards Harrogate. The Haverah corridor is one of district importance, since it connects the Washburn Valley corridor in the west with the Nidd and Crimple corridors in the east and sits between the raised plateau of Forest Moor to the north and Sandwith and Stainburn Moors to the south.

The Oak Beck corridor lies at the urban fringe and there are important green wedges

which extend right into the heart of Harrogate. Oak Beck runs at the foot of Birk Crag Local Nature Reserve, alongside Oakdale Golf Course and into green space near the Hydro in the urban area.

In turn Killinghall Moor Country Park south of Jennyfields links into open space through that estate along Saltergate Beck, which in turn feeds Oak Beck. Killinghall sports ground has potential to provide improved opportunities and extended access to sport for the local community with the potential to bring wider health benefits to the area.

This corridor provides a vital link with the countryside and the wider AONB. There is an opportunity to enhance physical linkages between the western urban edge of Harrogate and Haverah Park to provide better accessibility for the local community and visitors.

There are three sites around the west of the town that are considered suitable for urban extension. Further information about the green infrastructure opportunities for these sites is set out in the urban extension section of this SPD.

4) Valley Gardens to Beckwithshaw

Valley Gardens is an important registered park within this corridor protruding from the urban edge. The gardens significantly contribute to the setting of the town and provide valuable links with the countryside.

Links with RHS Garden Harlow Carr from the Valley Gardens are a key tourist draw. RHS Garden Harlow Carr links in from open countryside to Harrogate through the Pinewoods and Valley Gardens in turn linking with The Stray at Low Harrogate and the Montpellier Quarter.

There are opportunities to improve habitat as well as pedestrian connectivity in this area to explore access, recreation, wildlife corridors, Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINCs) and landscape character to ensure that these functions complement each other and act as a network of green infrastructure.

The enhancement of this corridor could also improve links to Nidderdale from Harrogate.

RHS Garden Harlow Carr, Valley Gardens and Moor Park all have a key influence on the character of the area and the attractive landscape setting of these important assets could be enhanced and maintained.

The Cardale business park lies to the southeast of the corridor and there are opportunities to make better connections for people working and living in the area. Improvements to access and screen planting to help the business park integrate with existing woodland and trees at the urban edge could be of benefit to the landscape setting of the settlement and improve the attractiveness of the working environment.



Valley Gardens, Harrogate

5) Station Parade to Follifoot

There is potential to provide linkages from Station Parade via the green wedge at Hornbeam Park, since southwards from the town there are links across The Stray via Hookstone Drive. The area is drained by Hookstone Beck which emerges from the ground at Hookstone Road and which links into the green wedge to the southeast and joins Crimple Beck. To the south of Hookstone Road a bridlepath connects Oatlands Drive to the Crimple Valley corridor and the Yorkshire Showground. The Yorkshire Showground includes the Yorkshire Events Centre and the site is expansive offering space for large scale events with large areas of car parking and views across the Crimple Valley.

The corridor follows Oatlands Drive and serves as a key green route to the town centre from the Crimple Valley, since it is essentially tree lined

over most of its length. Trees bordering the railway line which forms a triangle with Rayleigh Road and Hookstone Road are landmark trees that also contribute to the quality of this green infrastructure corridor and Hookstone Road is an old road traversing the Royal Forest of Knaresborough.

Two schools lie within the area: St Aidan's C of E High School and St John Fisher Catholic High School and their open playing fields contribute to the character of this green infrastructure corridor. The former Convent of the Holy Child and Gate Lodge is also in close proximity to this corridor and is set in extensive wooded grounds, which contribute to the attractive character of this area.

There are also extensive views of The Stray from this corridor in particular from the northern part of Oatlands Drive. Apart from the Stray there are no significant open spaces in the character area except the bowling green on the eastern side of Tewit Well Road. There are no strategic pedestrian routes across the area, but the wooded railway corridor provides a valuable corridor for biodiversity.

The viaducts are important features in the Crimple Valley landscape and views framing them are critical to preserve the attractive and distinctive landscape character of the area. Views of these features on approach to the settlement are particularly important as well as views to other historic buildings within this valley.

Another linear corridor providing a key part of green infrastructure is the disused railway line linking Harrogate to Wetherby. Between Spofforth and Wetherby the track forms part of the National Cycle Network 67, however there is no public access along the track between Spofforth and Harrogate. There are opportunities to link this cycle network into the town centre to enable better cycle connectivity to the north ultimately linking with the Bilton to Ripley disused railway corridor.

Better connectivity in this area could also ultimately enhance linkages with the Nidd via Plompton Rocks to join the Nidd with the Crimple via Birkham Woods Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) to the north.



The Stray, Harrogate

6) The Stray to Starbeck

This area provides scope to enhance the physical environment and assist with social well-being through improvements to green infrastructure.

Opportunities exist within Starbeck to create new spaces to revitalise previously underused areas and to attract new visitors and investment to the area and also improve the quality of life for those living there.

There are potential links from The Stray to Starbeck via the Bilton Triangle and the disused railway tracks within the Nidd Gorge, which could help increase accessibility from the urban fringe into the wider countryside. For example a bridleway is being created along the disused railway between Bilton and Ripley, which links north to the Ripon railway corridor. There may be further opportunities to improve access to the gorge on the north bank near Knaresborough from Starbeck and there are opportunities to provide landscape improvements around Bilton Lane to enhance linkages to the Harrogate Ringway and Knaresborough Round public footpaths also linking to schools in the area.

Improved cycleway access through the Bilton Triangle could be a key initiative to enhance linkages into the centre of Harrogate from Starbeck. Footpaths and cycleways could be improved to provide all year round usage.

There is also an opportunity to enhance the wooded character of the Bilton Triangle and urban edge at Starbeck, with improved woodland management, infilling of hedgerows and the planting of new trees along the field boundaries. Parkland trees within fields could also enhance

the landscape setting of the settlement and biodiversity. Improvements to the quality of footpaths/green lane surfaces on Bilton Hall Drive and Bilton Lane to make it accessible to all users and finding improved links through to the new Bilton to Ripley Cycleway are key opportunities to build upon.



The Stray, Harrogate

There is also scope for green infrastructure to enhance the public realm in Starbeck. The high street is directly connected to the rail network and many opportunities exist to make the area an increasingly attractive place to live and work.

7) West Park to Pannal Ash

The West Park Stray provides an area of valuable recreation open space as well as a highly distinctive setting for this part of town, including sports use for the nearby schools. This part of The Stray also acts as a significant green corridor linking the centre of Harrogate to the countryside since the area provides linkages to key residential areas on the southwest side of Harrogate linking to Rossett and Pannal Ash. The area is virtually co-joined to the outlying countryside by this sinuous green corridor, which links ultimately with the former Police Training Centre (a site considered suitable for a mix of market and affordable housing).

The open character of The Stray in this part of town is particularly important to those arriving from Leeds and Otley. Not only does the openness contribute to the character of the area, but it also allows the attractive buildings at the edge of town to be viewed at a distance. These are perhaps the most iconic views of Harrogate

and make the area the most important in terms of 'sense of arrival' to the town centre from the outlying countryside.

This green corridor is cut through and constrained by main roads through the town (especially Leeds Road and Otley Road) but the area is reinforced by street trees and footpaths and cycleways that are generally tree lined. Suburban gardens also provide substantial greening.

There are opportunities to improve this link as a significant wildlife corridor by enhancing land alongside playing fields at Harrogate Grammar School, Rossett School, Rossett Acre Primary School, Ashville College and the Police Training Centre, incorporating the Rossett Nature Reserve and the SINC north of Whinney Lane. There are potential opportunities with North Yorkshire County Council (as local education authority) in linking to school activities.

Green Infrastructure Opportunities in the Main Urban Area of Knaresborough

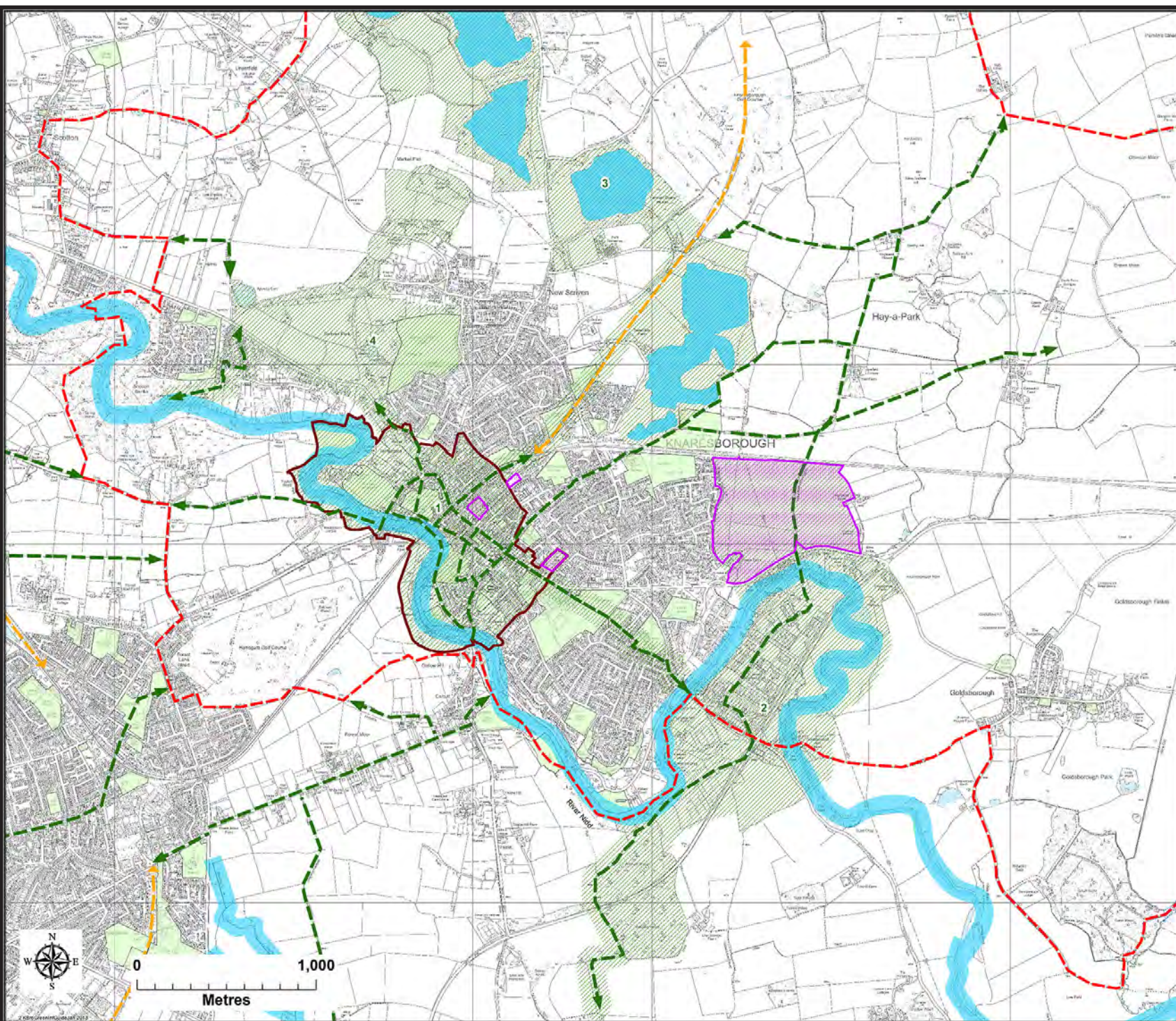


GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE OPPORTUNITIES

KNARESBOROUGH

-  Town Centre
-  Water & River Corridors
-  Existing Open Space
-  Knaresborough Round Walk
-  Disused Railway
-  Site Considered For Future Development
-  Green Infrastructure Corridors
-  Green Infrastructure Opportunity Areas

1. Knaresborough Town Centre
 - * Railway Station
 - * Bus Station
 - * Castle and Bebra Gardens
 - * Tentergate and Waterside
 - * High Street
2. Market Place to Goldsborough
3. Knaresborough Lakes
4. Riverside to Scriven Park



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Metres

Context:

Knaresborough has a strong cultural heritage including the Castle, a beautiful riverside setting and views and can be largely divided into four distinct character areas that give the town its special qualities:

- The Castle Environs;
- The Market Place;
- The High Street; and
- The Riverside.

The Nidd is a regional corridor originating within the AONB and one of the key functions of this strategic green infrastructure corridor (R8) is to promote economic growth and tourism.

The key green infrastructure functions of this corridor include recreation, education and accessibility including the promotion of access to the Knaresborough Round. The new Bilton-Ripley bridleway also lies within this corridor and follows the section known as the Beryl Burton Cycleway that passes along the disused railway and connects Knaresborough to Ripley. There are aspirations to continue this route up to Nidderdale and this corridor also highlights numerous sites for biodiversity enhancement and flood alleviation/mitigation.

The River Nidd passes to the south and east of Knaresborough, it originates in the uplands of the Nidderdale AONB and passes close to lower dales villages such as Hampsthwaite,

Ripley and Nidd before passing through the Nidd Gorge northwest of Harrogate via the town of Knaresborough before meandering eastwards, ultimately joining the River Ouse at Nun Monkton.

The river enters Knaresborough at the Nidd Gorge as it cuts steeply through limestone and sandstone sediments. The heart of the Nidd Gorge is marked by dramatic viaducts at Bilton and Knaresborough. These are separated by ancient and plantation woodland (owned by the Woodland Trust) and by the grounds of Conyngham Hall. The river corridor provides an important means of access to the countryside for the urban populations of Bilton, Starbeck and Knaresborough.

The River Nidd corridor combined with the attractive towns of Harrogate and Knaresborough make the whole area a popular destination. The waterfront of urban Knaresborough is dominated by the viaduct and Castle which is raised above steep cliffs, Mother Shipton's Cave, the Long Walk and St Robert's Cave with its Medieval heritage.

Knaresborough is surrounded by far reaching countryside to the north and the east where the surrounding land use is dominated by a mixture of intensive arable farming. The settlement is bound to the west by the villages of Scotton and Scriven and it is also fringed by attractive villages such as Farnham and Staveley.

Priorities:

The following green infrastructure priorities have been identified for Knaresborough taking into consideration the characteristics of the settlement and other green infrastructure work undertaken at the regional and sub-regional level:

- Improved links between Knaresborough town centre and the river corridor;
- Increased biodiversity by wider enhancement of the river corridor;
- Improved attractiveness of the area for tourism and investment;
- Increased recreational cycling and walking; and
- Encourage people to linger longer in the outdoor spaces.

Taking into consideration these priorities the following green infrastructure opportunity areas have been identified:

1. Knaresborough Town Centre
 - Railway Station
 - Bus Station
 - Castle and Bebra Gardens
 - Tentergate and Waterside
 - High Street
2. Market Place to Goldsborough
3. Knaresborough Lakes
4. Riverside to Scriven Park

Further information about these opportunities is provided below:

1) Knaresborough Town Centre

Knaresborough presents a wealth of opportunity for enhancement and improvement to the streets and squares. There is a major opportunity to reinforce the heritage and cultural quality of the town by improving the setting of the buildings and by giving each area an independent and distinctive 'sense of place'. The town centre is a dense urban area where the scope for green infrastructure may be limited, but the outlying areas have a wide range of green assets and linking these assets to the town centre could be a key priority.



Knaresborough Station

Railway Station:

The key opportunity here is to improve green links to and from the existing station. The relationship between the bus and rail stations offers an opportunity to enhance these connections to improve the visitor and tourism experience. Navigation from the railway station is a key issue and there is an opportunity to

improve pedestrian access to the Market Place, Knaresborough Castle and riverside in particular.

Knaresborough has a number of important tourism assets and by improving green infrastructure around and between these assets there is potential to improve their setting, which may increase visitor numbers and footfall in the retail area.

There are many opportunities to raise awareness of the cultural and historic associations of the town and there are some buildings and key features that go unnoticed. A high quality, more attractive and functional streetscape is a key aspiration as well as a good way finding system. Better links to the Castle, Market Place and riverside will lift the quality of experience for visitors to the town and encourage people to make better use of the outdoor spaces, which will have a positive influence on the vitality of Knaresborough as market town.



Market Place, Knaresborough

Bus Station:

The bus station is situated in a busy location on the High Street. There is much scope here to use green infrastructure to create a good first impression for people arriving by bus and to improve accessibility and provide a more attractive environment through improvements to green infrastructure.

There is potential to enhance the appearance of the bus station with a series of streetscape improvements, which may help to make the bus stops and shelters more appealing for passengers. There are also opportunities to improve the safety and security of the passengers entering and exiting the area by creating better pedestrian links to the shopping areas through a series of public realm and environmental improvements. This may include tree planting, which could help frame views and add to the overall attractiveness of the area. Trees in the carriageway could also have the added function of calming traffic as the carriageway would appear narrower. Street trees would also provide a good sense of enclosure and 'sense of place' and help provide a 'depth of time' to these areas.

Knaresborough Castle and Bebra Gardens:

Knaresborough Castle is a significant feature of the town's history. It is a Scheduled Ancient Monument and the grounds surrounding it are open as a public park. The connections between the Castle and riverside are constrained by the



Knaresborough Castle

intervening cliffs, woodlands and residential areas that significantly hinder permeability.

The Castle lies at the heart of the area and has major benefits because of its prominent position high on the cliff; it is the focal point in the town. The links to Market Place and Castlegate/Cheapside are generally flat and level, but immediately below there is an almost vertical drop to Waterside and it is these diminished connections that provide opportunities for further exploration.

There is a good network of footpaths across the wider area including large sections of the Knaresborough Round and there is potential to improve linkages between the Castle and these routes as well as offering benefits for wildlife connectivity. At present the connections from the Castle to this walking trail are limited and the existing Millennium walking trail is limited to the town centre only. There is potential to promote a

wider circular walking trail from Conyngham Hall and Waterside car parks which could encourage visitors to explore both the gorge and the town.

Bebra Gardens is a small attractive park, nestling at the foot of the Castle and the area provides an oasis from the busy parts of the town. Bebra Gardens were named in honour of the town's links with Bebra in Germany, but were formerly known as Moat Gardens because of their proximity to Knaresborough Castle moat.

Bebra Gardens present significant opportunity for improved linkages and enhancements to this area; they could extend and improve the appeal of the Castle and broker a better relationship between the Castle and the riverside. A landscape master plan already exists and proposes the removal of some trees and the opening up of selected views. The adjacent Castle grounds offer stunning views across the Nidd and although the gardens provide an area of established trees and conifers there is scope to plan and selectively cut back some trees to provide better visual connectivity between the Castle and riverside. There are also opportunities to open up views of the Castle and frame views through management of the wooded area that lies between the Castle and the river corridor.

The entrances to Bebra Gardens could be more welcoming to raise its profile. The site offers the potential to construct a bridge across the moat to Bebra Gardens and there is also an opportunity

to restore the circular path through the moat, which was lost with the removal of the cliff edge path by providing new steps at a point near the War Memorial.

The biodiversity and geological value of the cliff edge at Knaresborough is also a key green infrastructure asset. Historically, the cliffs at the Nidd Gorge were a habitat for notable limestone flora and much has been lost since the C19th. This may be an opportunity for restoration of the cliff habitats to enhance the nature conservation value of the area.

By improving the quality of Bebra Gardens, this could encourage more use as well as an increased experience of the river corridor as a key recreational asset to the town.



Waterside looking towards the castle

Tentergate and Waterside:

Waterside is located on the western edge of Knaresborough and the length of the river from High Bridge to Waterside car park including

Conyngham Hall is the key arrival point and tourist draw for visitors in the area. Access to Waterside is restricted by the steep sides of the gorge, limiting the main access points to either end, one end being the area around Tentergate. This limited access is also a constraint for those wishing to access woodland areas along the river corridor. These woodland areas are managed by the Woodland Trust and improved access could enable better management and surveillance in these areas.

The Tentergate area, including High Bond End, lies at a gateway to the town having crossed over the River Nidd from Harrogate. The road rises quite steeply and the open and attractive character of the river corridor changes quite abruptly. There are buildings and high stone walls to each side at Bond End and High Bond End, which provide a general impression of visual and physical constraint. This area could benefit from improvements to the public realm and some tree planting to improve first impressions on approach to Knaresborough. Connections from this area leading to the town could benefit from improvement to better complement the pedestrian approach to the settlement. Green infrastructure improvements in this area are likely to bring benefits to the year round tourist and shopping experience.

Although the area is dominated by Conyngham Hall and associated parkland, its open character and attractive wooded areas are not readily recognisable nor appreciated from the public

highway. The relationship of this area with the river corridor is poor. Nominally, the Nidderdale Way starts and finishes at Ripley village and there is an opportunity to improve links to Knaresborough. Potential exists to explore the possibility of links so the Nidderdale Way starts and finishes in Conyngham Hall car park and that better use is made of the Beryl Burton Cycleway to enhance these links. A pedestrian bridge would have to be provided across the Nidd into Conyngham Hall at Horseshoe Field. Both Conyngham Hall and the Henshaws Arts Centre provide key cultural opportunities in this area of the town.

Overall the Tentergate and Waterside areas could be re-invigorated to link the upper and the lower parts of the town and the Waterside car park is a significant arrival point for many visitors.

It occupies a pleasant riverside site fringed by mature trees. The car park lies between the carriage drive to Conyngham Hall and the river and there is opportunity for enhancement to provide more softening with tree planting and improved biodiversity.

There are potential ecology enhancement measures for the river corridor including creative ideas for interpretation of the unique biodiversity of the gorge and possibly limestone grass habitat creation.

There is already a popular round recreational walk between the two bridges (Grimbald Bridge and Low Bridge) using Abbey Road (which

has vehicle access for residents only) and on the north side of the river footpaths alongside the River Nidd (Crag Top) could be enhanced. Opportunities also exist for improved pedestrian and cycle links across the river to the Harrogate Road cycle link and to the Beryl Burton walking/cycling leisure route to the northwest of the river. The western approach to Waterside over High Bridge for cyclists and pedestrians could also benefit from improvement by creating a more user friendly arrangement of shared surfacing.

Knaresborough's key assets, although within close proximity, are divided between Waterside and the town centre and connectivity of green infrastructure between the two is likely to enhance the environment for visitors and shoppers.



High Street, Knaresborough

High Street:

The High Street in Knaresborough is the primary route through the town with little priority given to

pedestrians. The focus of the area is shopping, business and retail, however passing vehicles and parked cars also dominate the street frontage.

A key opportunity exists to enhance the attractiveness of High Street. There is scope to improve the streetscape through use of surface materials, street furniture and tree planting.

The High Street currently severs key linkages from Market Place to the east to the town's main residential areas. Pedestrian linkages could be improved with a positive range of green infrastructure measures to enhance these routes and encourage better use of them.



Woodlands

2) Market Place to Goldsborough

St James business park lies at a strategic meander in the River Nidd to the southeast of Knaresborough. The River Nidd meanders

through the landscape to the east of the settlement through an intensively farmed, mostly arable, lowland area that provides an attractive rural setting for the settlement.

Flooding is an issue to the east of Knaresborough and the area to the east of the business park in particular provides positive opportunities for flood mitigation/attenuation whilst at the same time improved recreation and links to the River Nidd could be explored. Land at Manse Farm is considered suitable for a mixed use development. Further information about the green infrastructure aspirations for this site is set out in the urban extension section of this SPD.

High quality green infrastructure has an important role to play in encouraging investment and in contributing to quality of the workplace environment for both communities and workers. St James business park presents a key opportunity for the retrofitting of green infrastructure to ensure that the high quality of the environment continues to play a positive role in people's high perceptions of the area. There is scope to invest in a series of landscape improvements that could significantly help to retain the high quality landscape commensurate to the calibre of business and retail investment within St James business park, whilst respecting the semi-natural setting of the river corridor.

Landscape improvements to the area could also maximise the potential for wildlife

enhancement and sustainable drainage. There are opportunities to improve the management of the Nidd Gorge woodlands by thinning conifers, improving access and interpretation for education to extend the ideas put into practice by the Woodland Trust along the Nidd corridor. There may be scope for new planting within land to the east of the settlement to help connect isolated groups of trees; and new trees in hedgerows to help create and enhance wildlife corridors and to assist with flooding issues.

There are opportunities to integrate The Lido caravan and camping site better within the landscape setting of the settlement and improve views from the public rights of way, in particular from the Knaresborough Round public footpath. Encroachment of domestic uses onto the landscape setting of the river corridor is a key issue and there could be scope to enhance and restore the rural setting of the river corridor in some areas and draw out the importance of the key geophysical features within it.

The links and the close proximity of Knaresborough to Harrogate could also be explored through the development of better linkages between the two settlements. Public footpaths to Birkham Wood Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) on the south side of Knaresborough could be promoted as links to Harrogate, Rudding Park and Spofforth.



Farnham South Lakes, from Farnham

3) Knaresborough Lakes

There is an opportunity to maximise the potential of the former gravel pit sites and surrounding area for biodiversity, access and recreation for local residents and tourists to provide a more congenial surrounding in which to live and work. The landscape to the north and east of Knaresborough incorporates elements such as Hay-a-Park gravel pits and Manse Farm that fall within the regionally important River Nidd corridor (R8). The reclaimed gravel pits are a very prominent feature of the landscape and are a key green infrastructure asset. Some of the gravel pits are primarily managed for wildlife (Hay-a-Park SSSI, Farnham South Lake and a little further north, the recently extended Yorkshire Wildlife Trust (YWT) owned Staveley Nature Reserve). Others are managed for fishing and water sports, Farnham Gravel Pit for water skiing and Farnham North Lake for sailing.

A key opportunity for this part of the town could be to improve the links between the Nidd corridor and the reclaimed gravel pits (referred to as the 'Knaresborough Lakes'). Formal public access to the lakes is limited and improved access could provide scope to promote a better quality of life for all those who live and work in Knaresborough. There is also scope to improve the management of this land for wildlife, where extensive margins of scrub, wetland and unimproved grassland could be introduced to encourage a wider range of habitats to develop.

The lakes also have potential to be used as an educational resource to increase public awareness on flood water management, biodiversity and wetland creation by providing outdoor classrooms or 'learning stations' that could offer a whole range of skills and events.

Most of these areas are no longer in active quarrying use and there is potential to work with landowners to identify potential initiatives. These initiatives could not only be of particular benefit to local residents but could also raise the profile of the market town of Knaresborough. Opportunities exist to significantly improve the tourism offer with water-based recreation activities focussed on fishing, walking and bird watching.

There are opportunities to strengthen the existing landscape character of the area and help integrate the edge of settlement into

the countryside, which could include tending overgrown hedges and improving the distribution of trees along field boundaries to improve the overall character and setting of Scriven.



A veteran oak in Scriven Park, Knaresborough

4) Riverside to Scriven Park

Other notable heritage and landscape assets in Knaresborough include Scriven Park and the Jacob Smith Park, at Scriven, which is noted primarily for its veteran trees. This is an important (unregistered) parkland area located right at the urban edge, which significantly contributes to the setting of the town and provides key links with the surrounding countryside.

There are many opportunities at Scriven to implement a range of historic management objectives in light of recreation pressures on the area. There is scope to explore historic and landscape character with the ambition of providing landscape enhancements to benefit the

overall setting of the settlement; this in turn could help protect its wider parkland setting.

There are also opportunities to enhance the linkages and bridge crossing between Scriven Park and the Nidd corridor; however this would require a new point of access on the north bank to link Horseshoe Fields to the north bank of the Nidd. There is a proposal to extend the 53-mile circular route of the Nidderdale Way to start and finish at Conygham Hall Car Park and this adds significant weight to the recommendations for green infrastructure improvements in this area. The opportunity exists to draw users of the Nidderdale Way into the centre and riverside areas of Knaresborough through Scriven and this could be helped by the new signage, interpretation, and improvements to the car park and gateway areas to the town to the northeast. Opportunities also exist to enhance the Woodland Trust Ripley Road car park, which is an important access point for the Nidd Gorge woodlands.



Conygham Hall, Knaresborough

Green Infrastructure Opportunities in the Main Urban Area of Ripon



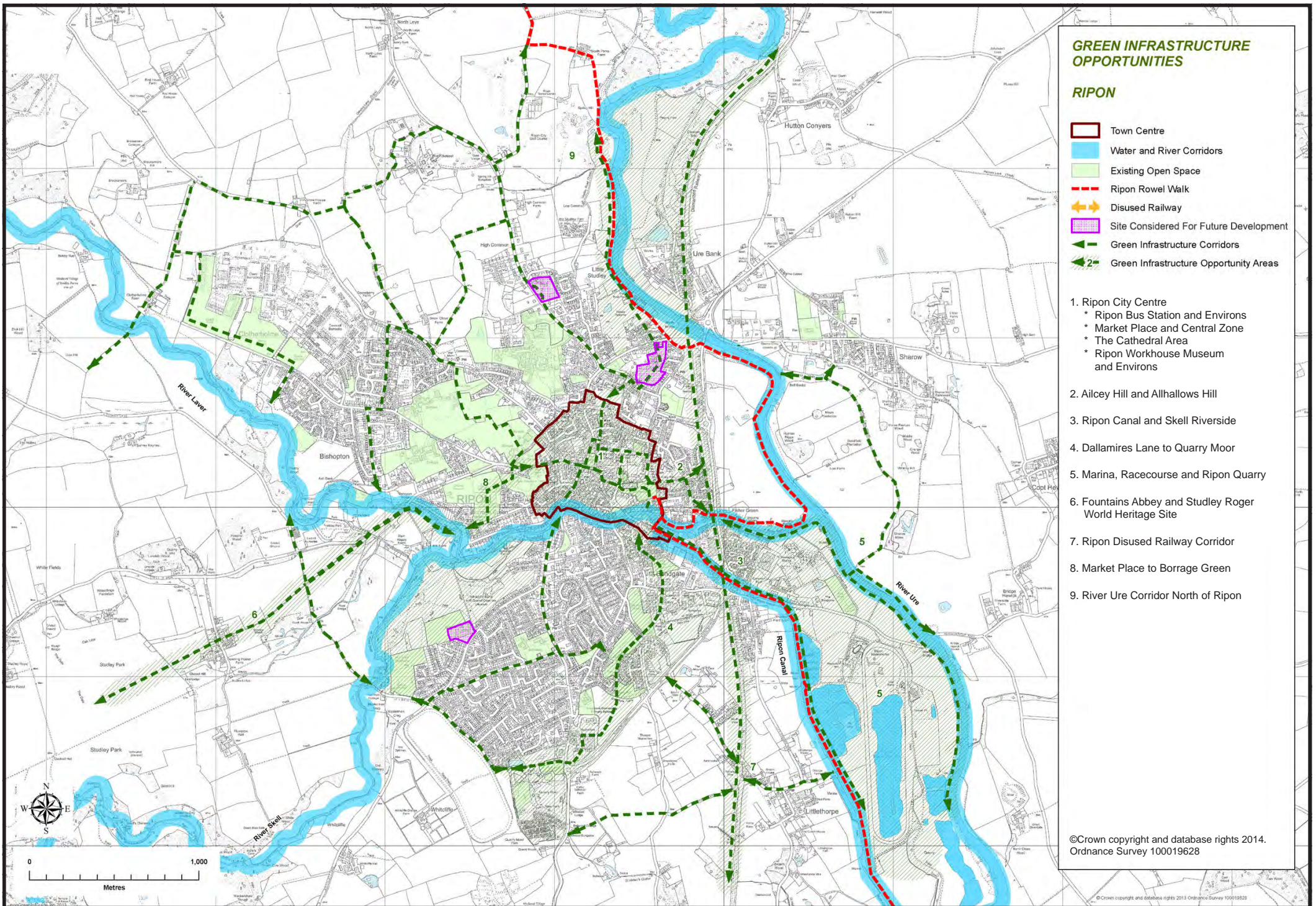
GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE OPPORTUNITIES

RIPON

-  Town Centre
-  Water and River Corridors
-  Existing Open Space
-  Ripon Rowel Walk
-  Disused Railway
-  Site Considered For Future Development
-  Green Infrastructure Corridors
-  Green Infrastructure Opportunity Areas

1. Ripon City Centre
 - * Ripon Bus Station and Environs
 - * Market Place and Central Zone
 - * The Cathedral Area
 - * Ripon Workhouse Museum and Environs
2. Ailcey Hill and Allhallows Hill
3. Ripon Canal and Skell Riverside
4. Dallamires Lane to Quarry Moor
5. Marina, Racecourse and Ripon Quarry
6. Fountains Abbey and Studley Roger World Heritage Site
7. Ripon Disused Railway Corridor
8. Market Place to Borage Green
9. River Ure Corridor North of Ripon

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Context:

The city of Ripon stands on a low, narrow limestone ridge running north-south from County Durham to Nottinghamshire. Overlying this solid geology is a series of glacially deposited sands and gravels forming a number of mounds and ridges which characterise the rolling landscape fringing the city. The historic core of the city containing the Cathedral stands on one of these ridges above the Rivers Laver, Skell and Ure.

The people of Ripon place a great importance on preserving the city and its historical heritage including the three rivers, which provide an outstanding landscape setting for the city.

Within the city there are a variety of landscapes and cityscapes of differing character and the Cathedral and the landscape of these river corridors provide a significant tourism draw as 'gateway to the dales'.

The three rivers comprise the Laver, the Skell and the Ure. The River Laver forms a well wooded river corridor to the northwest of Ripon, eventually linking into the Niddendale AONB. It is part of a wider corridor of district importance (D42) which originates in the moorland west of Kirkby Malzeard, following Dallow Gill and Carlesmoor Beck, forming the River Laver. The River Laver flows into the River Skell (which is also shrouded in woodland) at Ripon.

The River Skell, which flows into Ripon from Fountains Abbey and Studley Royal World Heritage Site is part of the wider Skell and Brimham corridor (S23) of sub-regional importance, which ultimately links the Nidd corridor south of Pateley Bridge with the Ure at Ripon. The Skell is joined by the Laver to the west of Ripon and flows through the urban area just south of the city centre, parallel to the Ripon Canal and on to its confluence with the Ure to the east of the city. Despite the river being heavily canalised through the city centre, the banks are well treed with wide verges along much of the length of the northern banks which forms a significant wildlife corridor and greenway reaching into the heart of the urban area. Recent works undertaken by the Environment Agency to replace Alma Weir have served to soften this section of river.

The River Ure as it runs through Ripon is part of a regionally important corridor (R16) which originates high in Wensleydale, eventually becoming the Ouse in the Vale of York. There is a belt of sand and gravel resources along the Ure Valley, extraction of which has created lakes at Ripon racecourse as well as Marfield, Nosterfield and Bellflask upstream of the city. The area incorporates several important nature conservation sites including Ripon Parks Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) just to the north of Ripon.

Public accessibility to the three rivers is already fairly good but improvements could be a key

priority in Ripon by building upon the already popular local riverside footpaths, Ripon Rowel Walk, Sustrans and National Byway Cycle route that run near to the area. Accessibility onto the Ripon Rowel Walk is a key issue and a network of footpaths and bridleways throughout the area could be improved and enhanced to address better connectivity. Several footbridges and fords across the river provide good access, but better connections could be established where poor access exists.

More could be made of the riparian setting of Ripon as a visitor attraction. At present it is possible to walk between the three rivers and there is potential to enhance this as a green infrastructure asset. It is possible to walk from the Laver at Mallory Park to the meeting with the Skell (which you can also follow upstream to Hell Wath) right down to the confluence with the Ure where there are already footpaths north and south on both sides.

The river corridors create an intimate setting for riverside activities and the strong network of public footpaths makes the area accessible. The character of the river corridors is distinct due to the extent of woodland cover, the valley landform and the high concentration of recreational use in close proximity to the city centre. The landscape is well tended and managed to a high standard and the riparian assets make the character of Ripon both interesting and appealing to tourists.

Priorities:

The following green infrastructure priorities have been identified for Ripon taking into consideration the characteristics of the settlement and other work undertaken at the regional and sub-regional level:

- Development of a greener core within the city;
- Improvement to the quality of existing civic spaces, public places and access routes; and
- Better connections from the built up area to the outskirts of the city and surrounding countryside.

Taking into consideration these priorities the following green infrastructure opportunity areas have been identified on the Ripon Green Infrastructure Opportunities Map:

1. Ripon City Centre
 - Ripon Bus Station and Environs
 - Market Place and Central Zone
 - The Cathedral Area
 - Ripon Workhouse Museum and Environs
2. Ailcey Hill and Allhallows Hill
3. Ripon Canal and Skell Riverside
4. Dallamires Lane to Quarry Moor
5. Marina, Racecourse and Ripon Quarry
6. Fountains Abbey and Studley Royal World Heritage Site
7. Ripon Railway Corridor
8. Market Place to Borrage Green
9. River Ure Corridor North of Ripon

Further information about these opportunities is provided below:

1) Ripon City Centre

There are a wide range of isolated green infrastructure opportunity areas within the city. The key aim of green infrastructure is to address the fragmented character of these areas and to pull them together into a more coherent and connected network.

In Ripon green infrastructure has the potential to enhance the city's historic assets through better connectivity with the river corridors. The rivers, the Cathedral, Market Place and the core shopping areas do comprise an open space network but there is a significant opportunity to draw them together and provide more greening as well as raising the awareness of the extensive cultural offer this important city can provide.

There is also an opportunity for incorporating more green infrastructure into the public realm within the city centre along with quality surface materials and street furniture to provide a more coherent streetscape for visitors, shoppers, workers and residents. Opportunities for green infrastructure within the city centre are mostly small scale but important and there are opportunities to use green infrastructure to improve key arrival points to the city, especially for those visiting Market Place and the Cathedral.



Ripon bus station

Ripon Bus Station and Environs:

There is potential to build upon links between the bus station and the historic core of Ripon to promote more walking through the city centre. Environmental improvements to the bus station and to its immediate environment is one of the key opportunities. The bus station and the car park opposite Victoria Grove are perceived as the main entry point to the city and green infrastructure could help to enhance the visitor experience with more tree planting and public realm improvements. The car park off Moss Arcade could also benefit from more tree cover to break up the impact of the area and the car park to the rear of Minster Hall off St Agnesgate could also benefit from environmental improvements.

Opportunities exist for the provision of a linear greenway leading from the bus station to introduce more green space within the heart of the city. A number of mature trees clothe

the slopes to the south of the Cathedral and are a feature of the large gardens of this area; however the central part of the city could benefit from more green space. The area around the bus station provides scope for improvement to develop a key green feature. The small area attached to the Court House is between the bus station and the Cathedral and is crossed by several asphalt paths and informal tracks. This area could benefit from a range of environmental improvements including path resurfacing, seating, tree and shrub planting and new lighting to help improve connections across the area.



Ripon Market Place

Market Place and Central Zone:

The Market Place is the largest open space in the historic core area, although it incorporates little soft landscaping. The whole area was refurbished some time ago and the recently planted trees on the market square are a good example of what can be achieved even in this densely urban area.

However an opportunity still exists to provide additional public realm improvements and there is scope to carry out a series of improvements to the east and the west of Market Place. The extent of soft landscaping is limited and fragmented in these areas and although there is tree cover on the outer edge, more trees could make a significant contribution to landscape quality.

A number of paths and yards connect the Market Place to the main car parks to the east and there are significant opportunities to improve the condition of the paths and yards to encourage people to use them night and day. The importance of improving pedestrian links between west of Market Place and Market Place is a key opportunity and to the west lies the recent development at Booths. Although complete this area does provide further opportunities to retrofit green infrastructure to better link the Market Place to North Street. There is also scope to improve green infrastructure links between the Market Place and the Cathedral via Kirkgate, including the rear of Kirkgate and linking to the bus station to encourage better use and accessibility.

The Cathedral Area:

The Cathedral is the strategic focus for the city, in terms of visual impact, as a place of culture and festivals and the aim should be to continue to provide an exemplary urban setting for this building.



Ripon Cathedral

Future events focussing on art, literature and music will always need to rely on good quality outdoor public and civic space that can support Ripon's cultural gatherings and these spaces should be able to adapt to the cultural demands of the future. Kirkgate, linking the market place and the Cathedral, could be further developed as a pedestrianised space for cultural events and a 'street café' atmosphere.

There are some public spaces with soft landscape and trees in this area which offer opportunities for improvement and better connections with the river corridor (and, in particular, better links with the River Skell). The largest of these areas is the playground containing the electricity sub-station between Bondgate Bridge and New Bridge at the foot of Bedern Bank, which has close connections with the river.

The C19th graveyard to the east of the Cathedral with distinctive gravestones could also benefit from enhancement and repair and also provides links between the Cathedral and the River Skell.

Car parking to the east of the Market Place is well used and serves visitors to the Cathedral. There are, however, opportunities to enhance the appearance of the parking environment and to make connections between the parking areas and the Cathedral more attractive.

The outlying landscape surrounding Ripon affords important views towards Ripon of the Cathedral and Fountains Abbey and these view corridors should be protected and enhanced as much as the immediate (urban) setting of the Cathedral. Lighting on Boroughbridge Road industrial estate could be improved so as not to over dominate the subtle Cathedral lighting when entering the city from the A1 south.



Ripon Workhouse Museum

Ripon Workhouse Museum and Environs:

The Museum Gardens, including an area of undeveloped land to the rear leading down to Tower Street, provide a valuable area of green space within the city. The museum and its surrounding open space lies detached from Market Square and the Cathedral and there are opportunities to provide better linkages and strengthen its presence in the city. Off Allhallowgate, hidden behind the BT telephone exchange, is a small garden created from a former chapel burial ground which could also be enhanced and incorporated into linkages across this area.

The museum could be used as an education opportunity to increase public awareness of green infrastructure. Particular emphasis could be given to interpreting the significance and value of the river corridors and their importance to Ripon, especially as a tourist asset. The museum could develop initiatives for improved access to landscapes, features and buildings of historic importance within the city.

There are also opportunities to improve pedestrian links between the city centre/ Allhallowgate and area to the north.

2) Ailcey Hill and Allhallows Hill

The Saxon burial ground at Ailcey Hill is a key feature within the city and opportunities exist for enhancement in this area. The hill lies 200 metres to the east of the Cathedral and is a large tree covered glacial mound. There



Allhallowgate, Ripon

is documentary evidence the mound was landscaped around 1825-1850, with a pathway spiralling to the seat or the summit, where a prospect of the Cathedral and city could be enjoyed. Few if any traces of the landscaping survive but the hill remains covered in trees and shrubs. Ailcey Hill is the subject of a number of local traditions and has been identified as a barrow or a motte linking it with a Dark Age monastery or a Dark Age battle.

Allhallows Hill is the name given to another mound nearby, like the motte of a castle keep. This stands behind the bishop's palace to the east of the bus station. The positions of each 'hill' mean that they are sited opposite the field of view of the other and they are important landmarks within the city as a precedent for way finding and interpretation. There is a key opportunity to use the opportunities at Ailcey Hill and Allhallows Hill as a means of providing key linkages to the east of the city.



Ripon canal basin

3) Ripon Canal and Skell Riverside

The canal is fed from the Skell at the canal basin and flows through the fringes of the city from the southeast. The terminal basin is situated a few hundred metres south of the Cathedral and this is an exciting opportunity to improve the visitor experience and proposals could seek to connect the areas by the canal and riverside to the historic core of the city.

The Ripon canal basin is a brownfield site that comprises the canal warehouse (Grade II) built around 1770-3; this stone warehouse with attached manager's house and stores buildings, all enclosed by a high wall, forms an interesting group of C18th canal buildings. This was a key wharf area for the city but with the declining use of waterways the area has become underused. The canal basin was redeveloped in the 1980s but there are current opportunities for environmental improvements in this area.

The historic city centre stands on a bluff overlooking the River Skell and roads from the Market Place descend fairly steeply down to river crossings. There are opportunities to enhance the canal and river crossings and their particular characteristics that contribute to the historic and cultural distinctiveness of Ripon's medieval industries, such as milling and tanning, which are clustered near the Skell in Waterskellgate, Skellgate and across the river in Bondgate. There are several disused mills that have contributed to the small scale river industry in the past that could be put back into beneficial use.

A waterfront area and linear park could be designed as a gateway providing opportunities to establish wider linkages from the edge of the city to the east eventually linking with the River Ure corridor. There would need to be sensitive graduation between the urban waterfront and the semi-natural wetlands of the River Ure-canal triangle. This linear park could significantly improve pedestrian connections whilst enhancing the conservation, recreation and biodiversity value of the area. Environmental improvements to traffic routes leading to canal and riverside areas could also provide an opportunity for enhancement.

4) Dallamires Lane to Quarry Moor

Hungry Hill is an important undeveloped area of land that lies between the edge of settlement and the bypass bounded by Dallamires Lane to the north and Knaresborough Road to the west. This



Dallowmires Lane Business Park

area includes former quarry workings at Gallows Hill to the south, which has now developed into secondary woodland. This part of Ripon presents a key opportunity to enhance access to open space for recreation and improve levels of health with better sports participation.

There is potential to provide improved linkages from the residential areas around Hungry Hill to outlying open space to the south, west and north of the city for football, other sport uses or informal recreation. There are also opportunities to create a new publicly accessible cycleway that could allow the residents to gain improved access to the wider countryside beyond the bypass, along the canal and to the River Skell. Access between these residential areas and Quarry Moor to the south could also be explored as a wider cycle strategy for the city as access to open space is more limited here.

The original C18th industrial area around the Ripon canal basin spread southwards towards Dallamires Lane and the bypass creating an undistinguished area of commercial activity comprising large sheds, storage areas and yards with little in the way of effective tree planting or landscaping. Dallamires Lane offers potential for landscape biodiversity enhancements with many sites that offer scope for improvement. These enhancements could provide a better setting to the employment buildings and improve the approaches to the city from the racecourse and marina to the east.

The bypass provides an effective edge to the eastwards expansion of the city and the structure planting along the verges of the bypass is a valuable wildlife link. This is an opportunity to improve the wooded character at the edge of the settlement and to add to the biodiversity value of the area by the introduction of additional tree planting along this road corridor.

5) Marina, Racecourse and Ripon Quarry

Direct access between the city, the racecourse and marina is hindered by the bypass which runs between and opportunities exist to provide better linkages. There is also scope for further greening of the key transport routes into the city in this area, including an opportunity for greening the east of Ripon urban area to improve the business and working environment for investors and staff.



Woodland path, North Yorkshire

There is scope to enhance the employment areas in Ripon generally by utilising green infrastructure to shape the identity of their surroundings and improve the quality of the environment for investors and the appearance of the approaches to the city.

This is an opportunity to develop a landscape enhancement programme within the mineral workings area once the successful extraction of gravel has ceased. After-use restoration plans for Ripon city quarry include an important new Yorkshire Wildlife Trust nature reserve.

There are key opportunities to facilitate a better recreational, wildlife and landscape asset for the city through the exploitation of the River Ure corridor which provides an important north-south link to the east of Ripon. There is a network of footpaths and bridleways within this area and along the riverside and canal towpath, but parts

of the corridor are not totally accessible and there is scope to create a continuous and secure green path (foot/cyclepath) along and linking to the river.

There is scope for more walking and cycling opportunities around Ripon and to create 'branded' footpaths and cycle paths. On a larger scale, the corridor presents an opportunity to promote recreation for residents and visitors to the city and raise the profile of water-based recreation and to improve the tourism offer. The racecourse attracts significant numbers of visitors and there is an opportunity to provide improvements to enhance the connections between the historic core and the marina and racecourse. Scope also exists to improve the approaches to the racecourse and to raise the profile to this whole area as a 'gateway' to Ripon.

The river and canal corridors have the potential to be used as an educational resource or the creation of a 'living laboratory' through the support of research in floodwater management, climate change adaptation and habitat creation. Opportunities to enhance the wildlife value of the floodplains could also be taken where possible, permitting seasonal flooding in some areas and the introduction of appropriate management. There are opportunities for 'outdoor learning' that could offer skills events attached to various sustainable urban drainage solutions.



Fountains Abbey and Studley Royal World Heritage Site

6) Fountains Abbey and Studley Royal World Heritage Site

Biodiversity is very important in the River Skell corridor, including the species rich grassland at Quarry Moor Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) and grassland, scrub and riparian woodland at Hell Wath Local Nature Reserve. These sites connect the urban fringe with the wider countryside including the Studley Royal and Fountains Abbey World Heritage Site.



Fountains Abbey and Studley Royal World Heritage Site

7) Ripon Railway Corridor

The disused Ripon railway corridor is a key feature in the landscape in this area. It is designated as a grassland Site of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINC) although is becoming heavily scrubbed and wooded. Parts have been developed and this railway corridor forms the basis of a connection of district-wide importance (D50) between Ripon and Harrogate. It passes close to Quarry Moor, the bypass and the linear settlement of Littlethorpe and the railway corridor and offers an opportunity for a strategic north-south link to the east of the city providing improved connections to the Ripon canal-Ure triangle. There is scope to develop an improved woodland network along the railway linking existing tree blocks whilst retaining views across the area.



North Ripon wider landscape

8) Market Place to Borrage Green

Key links from the west of the Market Place are also a primary consideration in particular to

the Spa Park area, which has potential to link ultimately with Borrage Green, Whitcliffe Quarry and Hell Wath.

There are significant areas of open green space to the west of Ripon including Spa Park, the grounds of the Spa Hotel and the playing fields of several schools and associated undeveloped land off Kirby Road, Kirby Road allotments and the cemetery. Spa Park and Spa Gardens are defined by closing belts of trees and specimen planting and the adjacent Spa Hotel garden is also distinctive. To the west are open areas in sports use bounded by trees and from here views of the Cathedral can be had.

This corridor contains the main parks and sports grounds in the city and provides valuable linkages to the wider area including Borrage Green, the former Whitcliffe Quarry, Hell Wath and beyond to the World Heritage Site at Fountains Abbey. There is an opportunity to improve the quality of the existing parks and open space in this part of the city including school ground projects and sports pitch enhancement measures to improve biodiversity and enhance the landscape character of the area. Projects such as allotment improvement and enhancement could also be considered.

These wider linkages enter the city to the west via the new retail development to the west of Market Place (Booths) and there is a need to improve connectivity between this new retail

development and Market Place. The area could benefit from more tree planting and areas of high quality open space. The potential for more green landscape in these areas has not been explored fully.



West Ripon wider landscape

9) River Ure Corridor North of Ripon

The open grazing land on each bank of the River Ure provides the setting for Ure Bank Terrace, a detached Victorian suburb, associated with the former railway station. Parts of the riverside are owned by Harrogate Borough Council and there may be opportunity for wetland enhancement and grassland improvement. There is also scope to

provide better connections between the caravan/camping site at Ure Bank with the centre of the city and potential to re-create a circular footpath around the riverside and disused railway.

Further towards the city, open fields and paddocks (including a SINC at Little Studley) provide open relief amongst the road frontage development. Previous flooding in Ripon led to the construction of a flood alleviation scheme involving embankments at North Bridge.



Ripon wider landscape

There are further opportunities along the river corridor associated with the flood mitigation measures and the disused railway (and with land left undeveloped because of gypsum hollows) that could be explored including tree planting, the creation of wildlife corridors, and habitat creation.