

Lancaster Green Spaces Forum

8 Feb. 2018 at Morecambe Town Hall

Purpose: To hear a report on the Lancaster City Council Local Plan, with particular focus on green spaces

Present: Lancaster city council represented by Maurice Brophy (Planning and Housing), Helen Ryan (Public Realm), and Abi Mills (Councillor for Scotforth West and member and founder of many green spaces groups)

Other Friends Groups representatives: Hilary Smith (Forest Friends, Friends of Williamson Park, Friends of Dorrington Rd Woods), Sarah Blackler (Friends of Greaves Park), Gill Davies (Friends of Greaves Park), Louise Belcher (Friends of Thwaite Brow Woods and Carnforth Coke Ovens), Ian Proctor (Fairfield Association), Roger Frankland (Lancaster Civic Society), Brian and Jean O'Neill (Friends of Ryelands Park; Friends of Lune Bank Gardens; Jean is a LGS trustee), Kamilla Elliott (Friends of Ryelands Park; Lancaster Green Spaces trustee and forum secretary)

Apologies: Rita Gerrard and Pete Turnbull

Maurice Brophy, Planning and Housing Policy Manager gave a presentation on the Local Plan. His presentation has been uploaded on the Lancaster Green Spaces Forum web page at <http://www.lancastergreenspaces.org.uk/greenspace-groups-forum.html>.

Here is a link to information about the Local Plan.

<http://www.lancaster.gov.uk/planning/planning-policy/publication-local-plan>

Key points of the presentation:

After seven years of preparation, the Local Plan was agreed by the Lancaster City Council on 20 December 2017; the plan will be published on 9 Feb 2018, followed by eight weeks for representations. The plan and representations will then be sent to the central government in May. In late summer/autumn 2018, there will be a local hearing session and independent examination. If approved, the plan would be adopted in spring 2019.

The Strategic Policies and Land Allocations DPD: determines what land needs to be protected and what needs to be developed. It has an urban-focused approach to development supplemented by large greenfield locations, including parts of the Green Belt. This is the first time that the Green Belt has been reviewed since 1991.

Four key sites have been chosen for development:

1. Bailrigg Garden Village, South Lancaster
2. Cuckoo Farm and Ridge Farm in North East Lancaster—a landlocked area.
3. Hammerton Hall/Beaumont Hall in North Lancaster
4. Lundsfield Quarry (brownfield with existing housing permission) and land south of Windermore Road (currently in green belt) in Carnforth South.

The presentation slides gave details of plans for these areas. (See uploaded presentation on the Lancaster Green Spaces web page using the link indicated above.)

Local Green Space Designation was a central government directive issued in 2012
Out of hundreds of local green spaces, 69 applications were made (2015 - 2016); 21 sites were allocated this designation in the local plan.

Freeman's Wood

Ridge Hill green

Barley Cop community Woods

Heysham Coast land

Low Moor

Greaves Park

Giant Axe playing field (historic significance)

Furness St green space

Dorrington Road woods

Lune Bank Gardens

Scotch Quarry park

Quay Meadow

Highfield Woods, Carnforth

Thwaite Brow Woods

Church Bridge recreation area

Over Kellet Craggs

Ryelands Park

Ripley Heights

Aldcliffe Road triangle

Fenham Carr Woods

Barton Road allotments

Notes: Moorside has town green status

Williamson Park: has Grade II parks and gardens protection as does Lancaster cemetery

Morecambe is doing its own local plan

Open Space (KKP)

2008 LCC conducted an Open Space, Sport and Recreation Facilities Study. It was refreshed 2010.

In 2017, KKP (Knight, Kavanagh and Page) were hired to conduct an open space study. 422 sites were included; 143 were visited.

This includes study of what open space provision is needed for new developments: playing spaces, allotments, etc. A report on their finding will be presented at the next Lancaster Green Spaces Forum on March 20 2018 at Lancaster City Hall at 19.00.

The study allows LCC to identify open space for protection—theirs will be more thorough than the previous study in 2008.

A Playing Pitch Strategy (also by KKP) is underway

How much do we need? Where should it be?

Will help with funding for MUGA and pitches at Ryelands Park

Includes pitches at Skerton School

Questions asked by Forum members

Louise asked about the protection of Carnforth Coke Ovens. It is not eligible for Local Green Space designation, but can apply for protection as a heritage site, said Helen.

Jean asked about whether there is money for the new schools proposed in the local plan.

Maurice replied that the local education authority does not have the money at present, but assured the group that required schools will be provided.

Kamilla asked about affordable housing and whether it will be prioritised in strategic planning. Maurice said that it will be considered.

Roger asked about gypsy/traveller provision. Maurice replied that Lancaster has one of the largest traveller communities in Lancaster and said that we don't have any real problems with it. More sites are needed, and that will be considered in 2018).

Roger: Can there be a bus stop on Mellishaw Lane?

Ian Proctor asked about the designation of Fairfield nature reserve as an 'urban setting landscape'. Maurice explained that it was too large for LGS designation and explained that this category of spaces includes green spaces that frame listed buildings, provide a backdrop for another part of the city, or frame the urban area from the outside—it is any space that helps shape the perception of an urban area.

Jean asked what the green hashing on the map that goes across urban areas represents.

Maurice replied that these sections indicate that the council does not yet know whether these areas are best to develop or should be kept as a green space/setting.

Pete Turnbull's questions (asked in absentia via Kamilla)

- 1) Will the local green spaces designations in the draft plan all go forward to the plan when formally adopted? 8 weeks for presentations

Helen: The only likely legal challenge is Freeman's Wood and the inspector will make a decision with binding recommendations (in about 12 months)

- 2) When will we be able to go public with our Local Green Spaces designation contained in the plan? Feb. 9 publication of draft plan

Helen: On 9 February 2018

Jean: What power does the Lancaster City Council local plan have over land owned by the Lancashire County Council? They would still have to apply for planning permission from LCC and the strategic plan for anything they provide, e.g. schools, they apply to themselves. They are likely to challenge the designation of Freeman's Wood.

Thanks were extended to Hilary Smith and Simon Gershon for inspecting the sites applying for Local Green Space designation and to those who applied for that designation.

Future Events

March 2-4 2018 is the Keep Britain Tidy Great British Spring Clean. Groups wishing to be part of this initiative should organise and publicise their own events, but if they inform Helen Ryan (hryan@lancaster.ac.uk), she can make sure that they are part of the publicity and offer supplies (litter pickers, bags, etc.) for extra volunteers. Several groups at the meeting indicated that they would be hosting litter picks and other events.

Future LGS Forums

19.00 Tuesday March 20 2018 at Lancaster City Hall to hear the results of KKP's Open Space and Playing Pitch survey

From 10-3 on Saturday March 24 at Christchurch Hall on Wyresdale Road, Lancaster the Northwest Parks Friends Forum is hosting a networking event for anyone involved in local green spaces. Come for the whole day or just drop in for a while. Light refreshments, including vegetarian soup and bread) provided, but if you have hearty appetite, you may want to bring a lunch main course.

14.00 Wednesday June 6 Forum at Williamson Park cafe, followed by a tour of the park led by the Friends of Williamson Park

[Possible event April or May 2018 event: Joint Action day with Green Lancaster at Lancaster University--TBD]