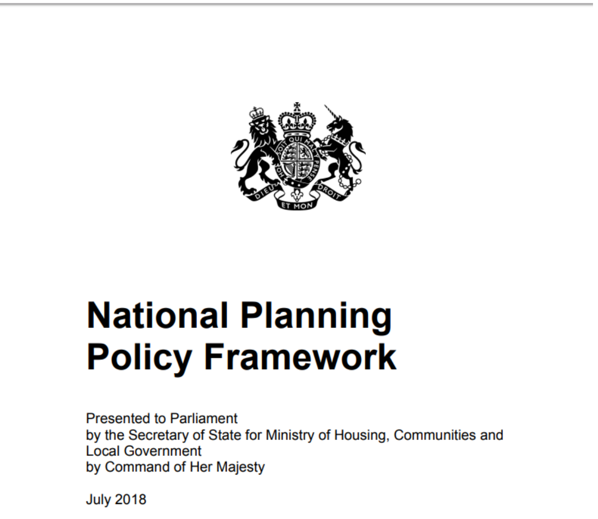
Developing a self assessment policy evaluation matrix to help GI mainstreaming.

Alister Scott Northumbria University

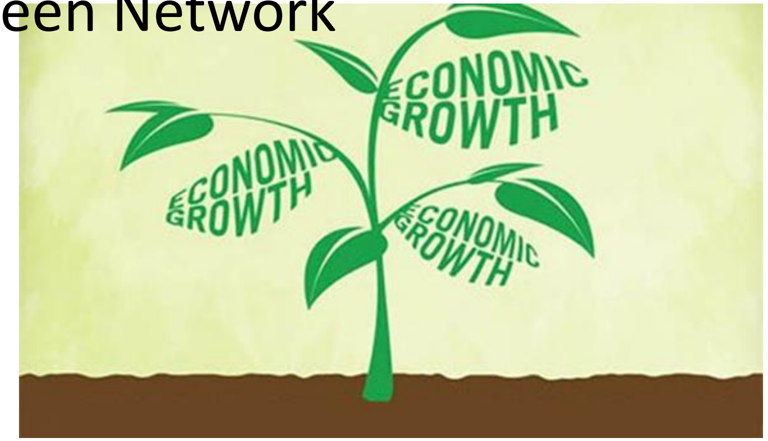
Max Hislop Glasgow and Clyde Valley Green Network



National Planning Policy Framework

Presented to Parliament
by the Secretary of State for Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government
by Command of Her Majesty

July 2018


ECONOMIC GROWTH
ECONOMIC GROWTH
ECONOMIC GROWTH

What is green infrastructure?

- A network of multi-functional green space, urban and rural, which is capable of delivering a wide range of environmental and quality of life benefits for local communities

`Glossary (MHCLG, 2018:67)

- “Green infrastructure is a **strategically planned network** of natural and semi-natural areas with other environmental features **designed and managed to deliver a wide range of ecosystem services** such as water purification, air quality, space for recreation and climate mitigation and adaptation. This network of **green (land) and blue (water) spaces** can improve environmental conditions and therefore citizens' health and quality of life. **It also supports a green economy, creates job opportunities and enhances biodiversity**”.

http://ec.europa.eu/environment/nature/ecosystems/index_en.htm

- Also seen as **a critical infrastructure and not just green space.** (Shaffler, 2013)

Creating the A-Z policy tool

- Built to address **definitional** and **functional** components of GI
- Functional aspects dominate the criteria (not the benefits)
- Drawing on several different strands of GI research and practice work
  - Building with nature NERC GI project
  - IGI GCVGN project
  - Mainstreaming GI work NERC
- Hislop pioneering work on 19 Scottish local plans 2018

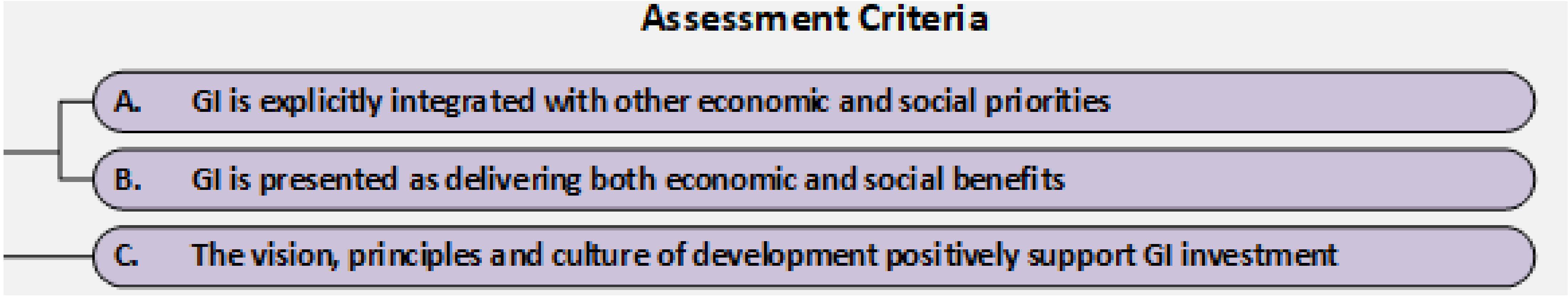
Methodology

- Read whole document
- Word searches across NPPF on GI terms and concepts.
  - Eg GI, GI network Greenspace, SuDs, Net gains, natural capital
- Paragraph(s) are analysed with respect to criteria A-Z with scores given for
  - GI Coverage A-Z
  - Policy wording strength

Coverage	None	Some	Most or dispersed	Full
Strength	None	Weak	Mid	Strong
Score	0	1	2	3

- The cumulative impact of the document is then revealed in a summary matrix revealing highest scores.

1a. Integration: Mainstreaming



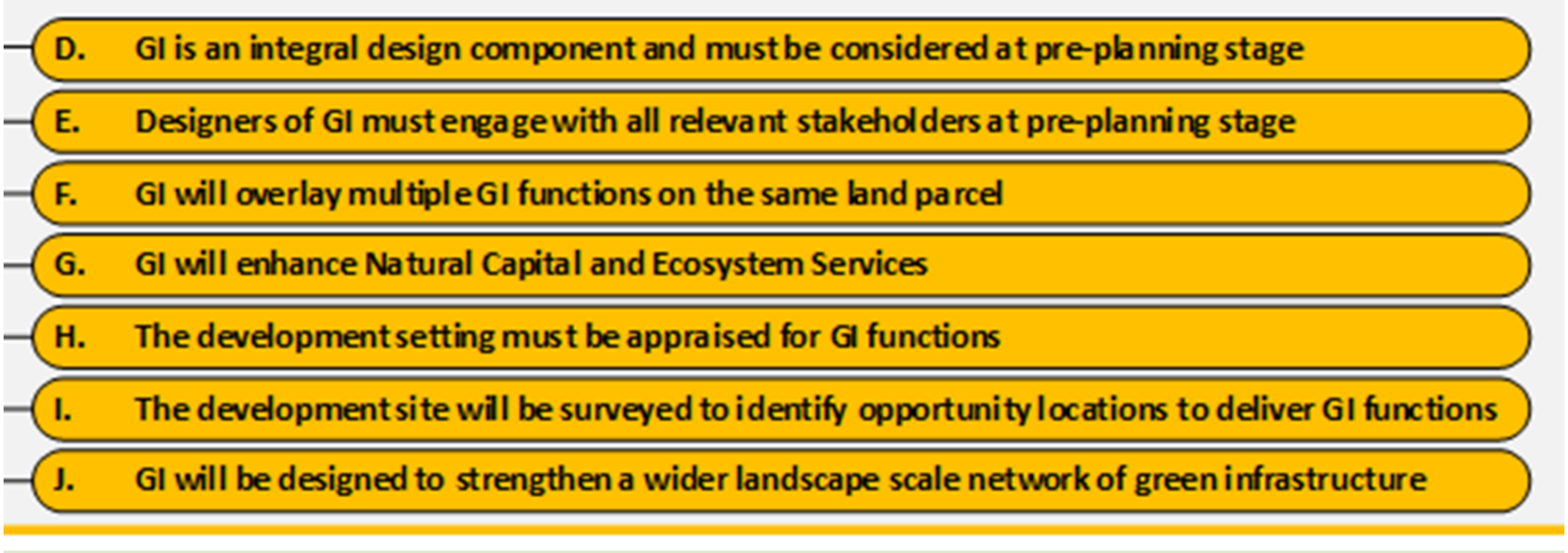
Assessment Criteria

A. GI is explicitly integrated with other economic and social priorities

B. GI is presented as delivering both economic and social benefits

C. The vision, principles and culture of development positively support GI investment

1b Integration: Development



D. GI is an integral design component and must be considered at pre-planning stage

E. Designers of GI must engage with all relevant stakeholders at pre-planning stage

F. GI will overlay multiple GI functions on the same land parcel

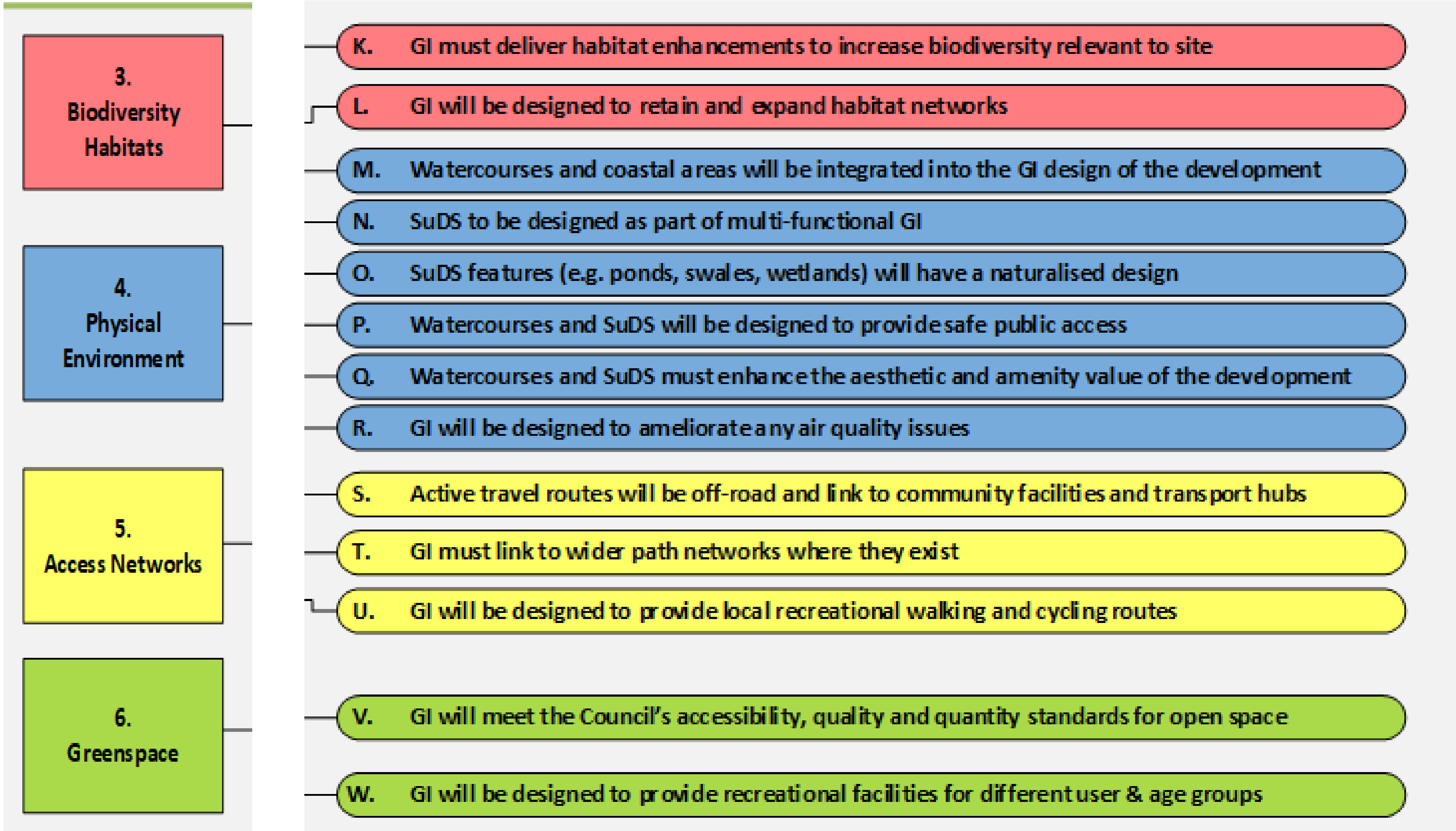
G. GI will enhance Natural Capital and Ecosystem Services

H. The development setting must be appraised for GI functions

I. The development site will be surveyed to identify opportunity locations to deliver GI functions

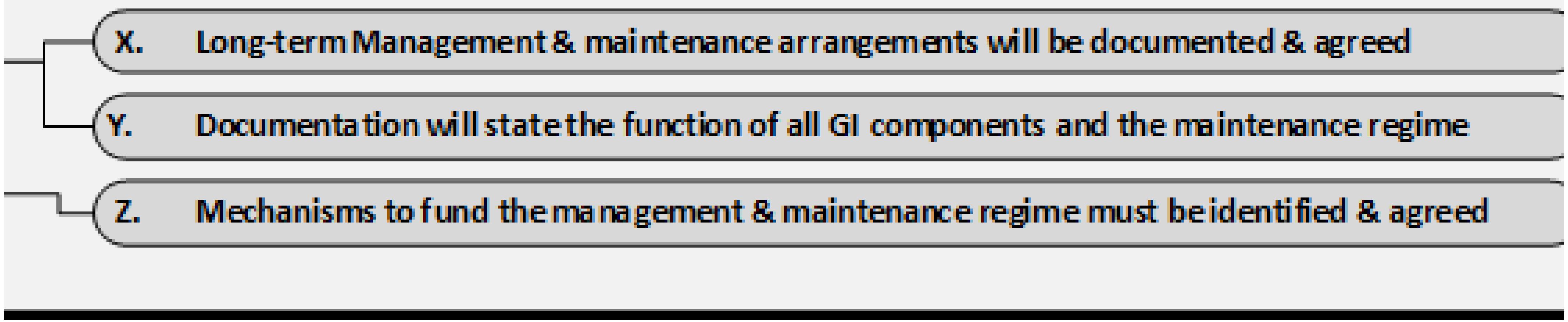
J. GI will be designed to strengthen a wider landscape scale network of green infrastructure

2. Functions



- **3. Biodiversity Habitats**
  - K. GI must deliver habitat enhancements to increase biodiversity relevant to site
  - L. GI will be designed to retain and expand habitat networks
- **4. Physical Environment**
  - M. Watercourses and coastal areas will be integrated into the GI design of the development
  - N. SuDS to be designed as part of multi-functional GI
  - O. SuDS features (e.g. ponds, swales, wetlands) will have a naturalised design
  - P. Watercourses and SuDS will be designed to provide safe public access
  - Q. Watercourses and SuDS must enhance the aesthetic and amenity value of the development
  - R. GI will be designed to ameliorate any air quality issues
- **5. Access Networks**
  - S. Active travel routes will be off-road and link to community facilities and transport hubs
  - T. GI must link to wider path networks where they exist
  - U. GI will be designed to provide local recreational walking and cycling routes
- **6. Greenspace**
  - V. GI will meet the Council’s accessibility, quality and quantity standards for open space
  - W. GI will be designed to provide recreational facilities for different user & age groups

3. Stewardship



X. Long-term Management & maintenance arrangements will be documented & agreed

Y. Documentation will state the function of all GI components and the maintenance regime

Z. Mechanisms to fund the management & maintenance regime must be identified & agreed

Relevant NPPF Chapter Bundles

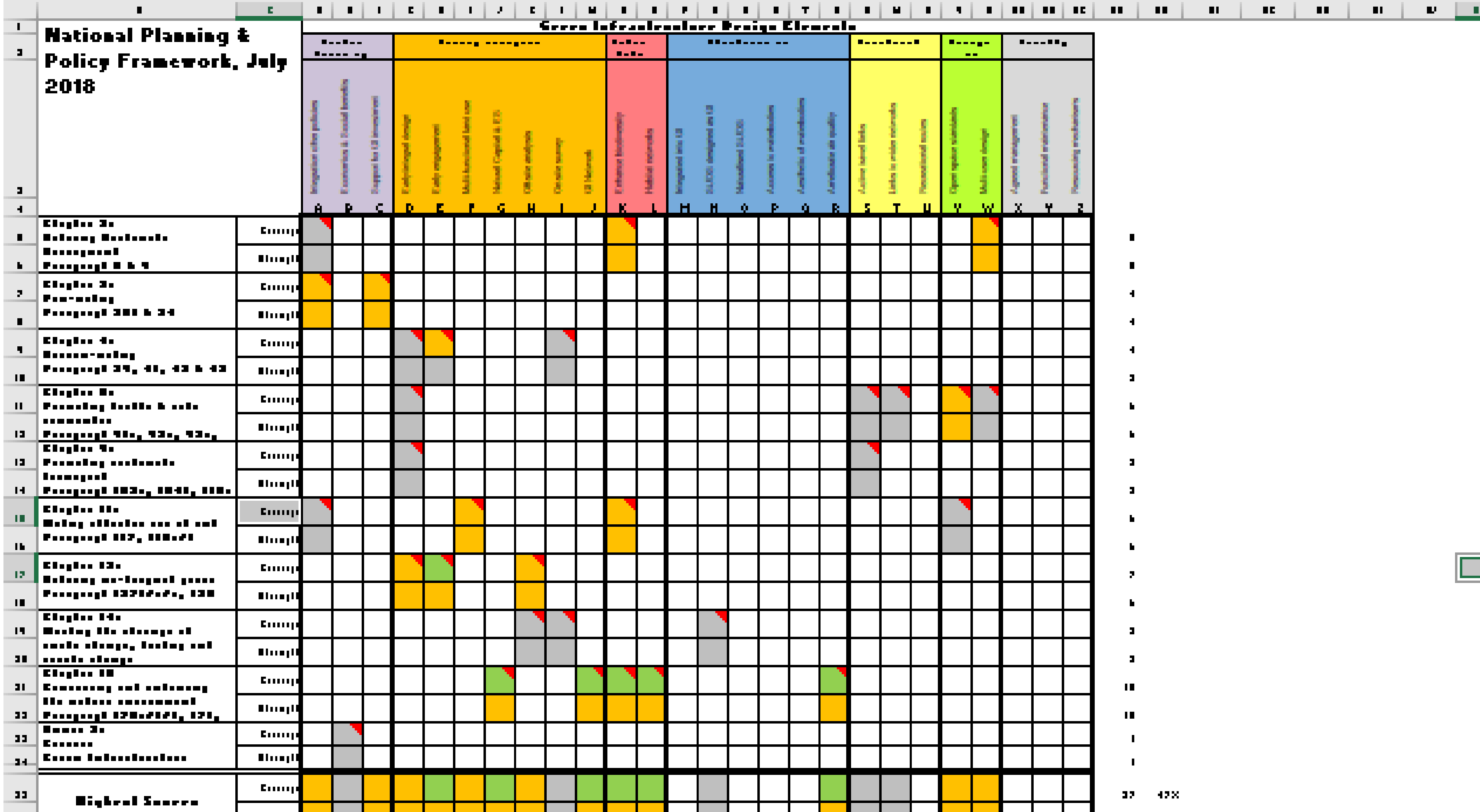
Chapter 2: **Achieving Sustainable Development** **Paragraph 8 & 9**
Chapter 3: **Plan-making** **Paragraph 20d & 34**
Chapter 4: **Decision-making** **Paragraph 39, 41, 42 & 43**
Chapter 8: **Promoting healthy & safe communities** **Paragraph 91a, 92a, 92e, 96, 98**
Chapter 9: **Promoting sustainable transport** **Paragraph 102c, 104d, 110c**
Chapter 11: **Making effective use of land** **Paragraph 117, 118a/b**

Chapter 12: **Achieving well-designed places** **Paragraph 127b/c/e, 128**
Chapter 14: **Meeting the challenge of climate change, flooding and coastal change** **Paragraph 150a, 163, 165d**
Chapter 15 **Conserving and enhancing the natural environment** **Paragraph 170a/b/d, 171, 174a/b, 175b, 181**
Annex 2: **Glossary** **Green Infrastructure**

Policy wording

Strong phrases	**Weak phrases**
“all new developments will provide”	“should incorporate”
“meet the needs of”	“when appropriate”
“must be designed to meet ____ needs”	“where appropriate”
“the Council will not accept”	“the Council will negotiate provision”
“proposals must demonstrate”	“should be well designed”
“any new development must protect”	“the Council will encourage”
“proposals will be expected to demonstrate compatibility with”	“the Council will expect development proposals to have regard to”
“planning conditions will be applied and, where necessary, legal agreements sought”	“the council does not favour the use of”
“all new development must comply with the Council's standards”	“development that helps ____ will be supported”
“the Council will expect”	“the Council will seek to develop”
“the Council expects that all development proposals shall be”	

Revised Example NPPF2



National Planning & Policy Framework, July 2018

Green Infrastructure Design Elements

A
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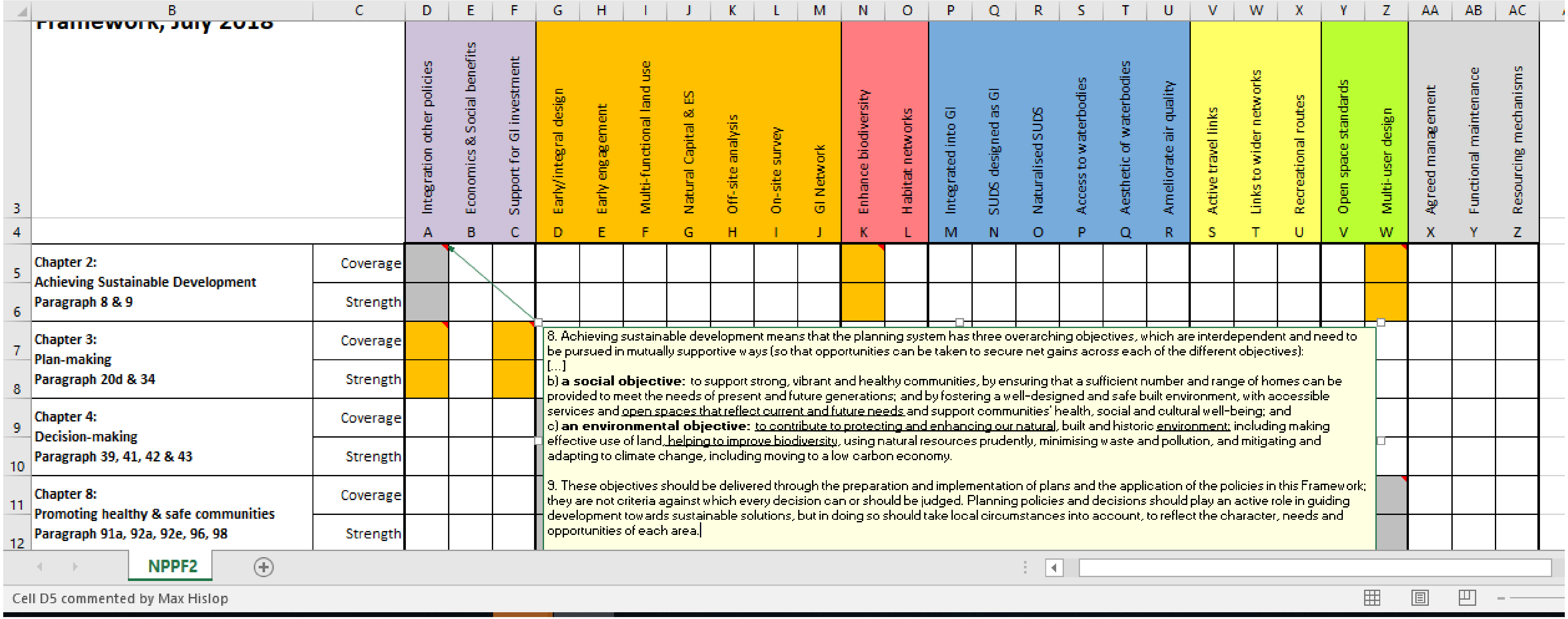
Highest Scores

Assessment Traceability



Framework, July 2018

		Integration other policies A	Economics & Social benefits B	Support for GI investment C	Early/integral design D	Early engagement E	Multi-functional land use F	Natural Capital & ES G	Off-site analysis H	On-site survey I	GI Network J	Enhance biodiversity K	Habitat networks L	Integrated into GI M	SUDS designed as GI N	Naturalised SUDS O	Access to waterbodies P	Aesthetic of waterbodies Q	Ameliorate air quality R	Active travel links S	Links to wider networks T	Recreational routes U	Open space standards V	Multi-user design W	Agreed management X	Functional maintenance Y	Resourcing mechanisms Z
Chapter 2: **Achieving Sustainable Development** **Paragraph 8 & 9**	Coverage	▨										🟧												🟧			
	Strength	▨										🟧												🟧			
Chapter 3: **Plan-making** **Paragraph 20d & 34**	Coverage	🟧		🟧																							
	Strength	🟧		🟧																							
Chapter 4: **Decision-making** **Paragraph 39, 41, 42 & 43**	Coverage																										
	Strength																										
Chapter 8: **Promoting healthy & safe communities** **Paragraph 91a, 92a, 92e, 96, 98**	Coverage																							▨			
	Strength																							▨			

8. Achieving sustainable development means that the planning system has three overarching objectives, which are interdependent and need to be pursued in mutually supportive ways (so that opportunities can be taken to secure net gains across each of the different objectives):

[...]

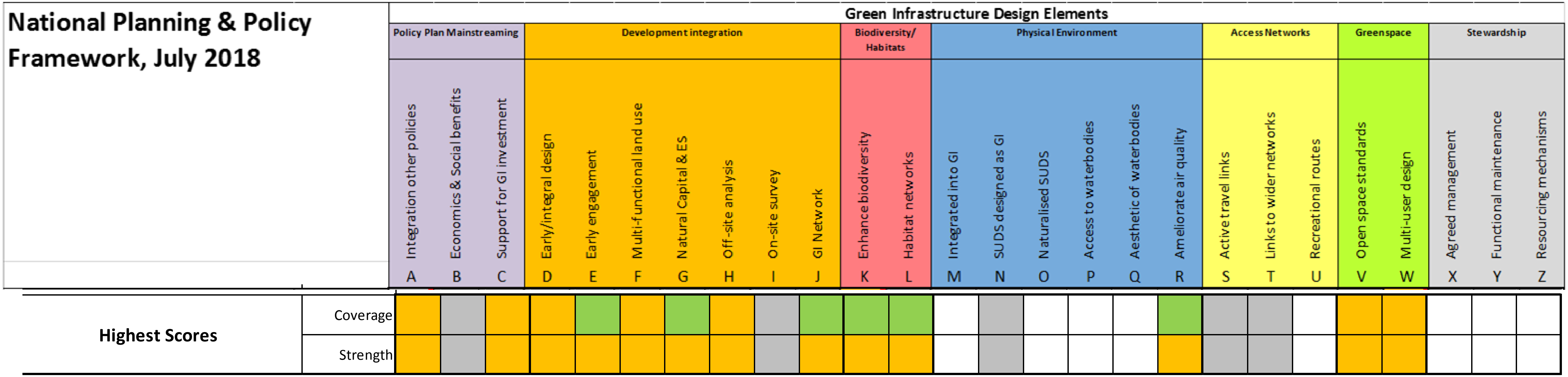
b) **a social objective:** to support strong, vibrant and healthy communities, by ensuring that a sufficient number and range of homes can be provided to meet the needs of present and future generations; and by fostering a well-designed and safe built environment, with accessible services and open spaces that reflect current and future needs and support communities' health, social and cultural well-being; and

c) **an environmental objective:** to contribute to protecting and enhancing our natural, built and historic environment; including making effective use of land, helping to improve biodiversity, using natural resources prudently, minimising waste and pollution, and mitigating and adapting to climate change, including moving to a low carbon economy.

9. These objectives should be delivered through the preparation and implementation of plans and the application of the policies in this Framework; they are not criteria against which every decision can or should be judged. Planning policies and decisions should play an active role in guiding development towards sustainable solutions, but in doing so should take local circumstances into account, to reflect the character, needs and opportunities of each area.

Cell D5 commented by Max Hislop

Overall draft scores NPPF.



National Planning & Policy Framework, July 2018		Green Infrastructure Design Elements																									
		Policy Plan Mainstreaming			Development integration							Biodiversity/ Habitats		Physical Environment						Access Networks			Greenspace		Stewardship		
		Integration other policies	Economics & Social benefits	Support for GI investment	Early/integral design	Early engagement	Multi-functional land use	Natural Capital & ES	Off-site analysis	On-site survey	GI Network	Enhance biodiversity	Habitat networks	Integrated into GI	SUDS designed as GI	Naturalised SUDS	Access to waterbodies	Aesthetic of waterbodies	Ameliorate air quality	Active travel links	Links to wider networks	Recreational routes	Open space standards	Multi-user design	Agreed management	Functional maintenance	Resourcing mechanisms
		A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M	N	O	P	Q	R	S	T	U	V	W	X	Y	Z
Highest Scores	Coverage	🟧	▨	🟧	🟧	🟩	🟧	🟩	🟧	▨	🟩	🟩	🟩		▨				🟩	▨	▨		🟧	🟧			
	Strength	🟧	▨	🟧	🟧	🟧	🟧	🟧	🟧	▨	🟧	🟧	🟧		▨				🟧	▨	▨		🟧	🟧			

A Cheesy Evaluation

- GI Coverage Emmenthal
  - Note stewardship and green space section devoid of any policy coverage
  - maximum scores in biodiversity .
- Weak on aspects of Blue infrastructure and stewardship
  - Lacking definitions in glossary

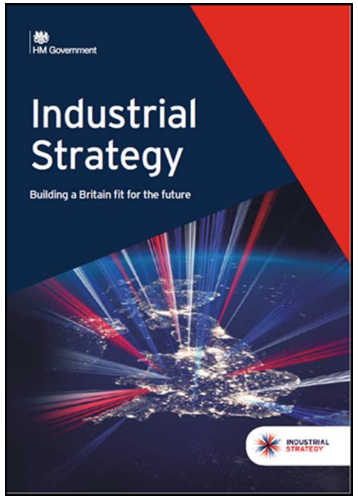
Policy wording (Lancashire)

- **No green scores at all creates vulnerability when set against other planning priorities**.
- Mainstreaming challenge.

NPPF vs 25 Year Environment Plan : A disintegrating policy landscape?

- HM Government Environment plan signed up to by all government departments.
- Is 25 YEP running parallel to NPPF as only limited references and policies.
- Role of industrial strategy and clean growth strategy mentioned in 25 YEP but only mention of NPPF is for SuDs and net gain.
- Lowest common denominator in all plans = natural capital (key hook)

A Green Future: Our 25 Year Plan to Improve the Environment

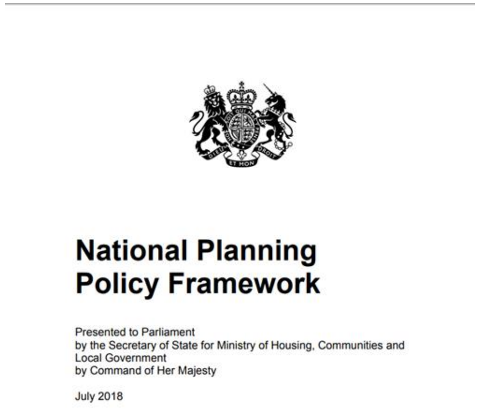


HM Government

Industrial Strategy

Building a Britain fit for the future

INDUSTRIAL STRATEGY



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What Happens Next?

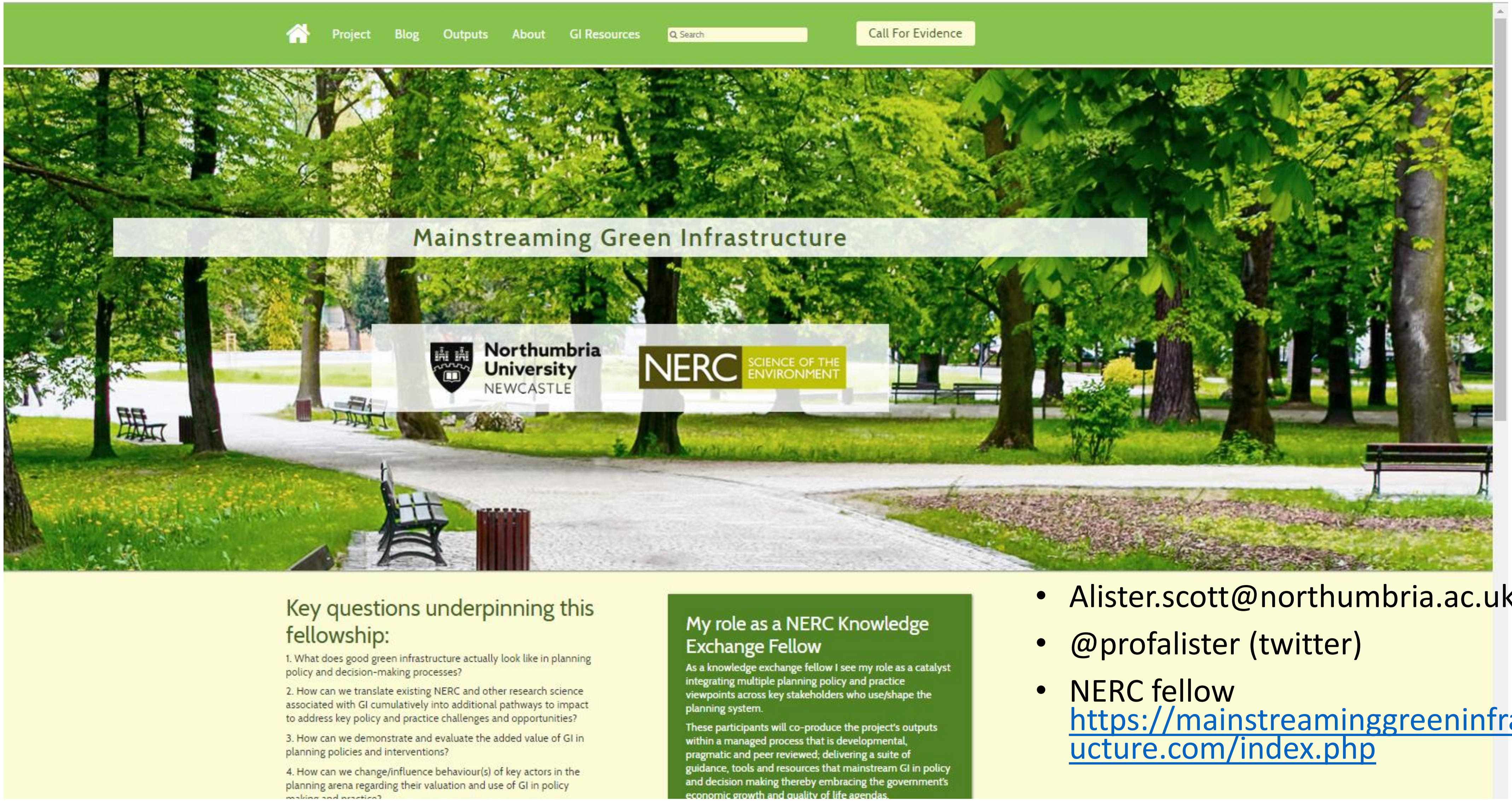
POLICY

- Pilot testing West of England 4 local authorities/GIP
- Evaluation of PPW10 (imminent)
- Natural capital – net gain – GI relationships
- Help inform improved NPPG to fill the holes

MATRIX

- Revised matrix wording (current)
- Develop full guidance for doing local plan self assessment (Jan 2019)
- Promotion within planning and built environment professions
- Free Training sessions
- Prompt for securing building with nature accreditation

Contact



Mainstreaming Green Infrastructure

Key questions underpinning this fellowship:

1. What does good green infrastructure actually look like in planning policy and decision-making processes?
2. How can we translate existing NERC and other research science associated with GI cumulatively into additional pathways to impact to address key policy and practice challenges and opportunities?
3. How can we demonstrate and evaluate the added value of GI in planning policies and interventions?
4. How can we change/influence behaviour(s) of key actors in the planning arena regarding their valuation and use of GI in policy making and practice?

My role as a NERC Knowledge Exchange Fellow

As a knowledge exchange fellow I see my role as a catalyst integrating multiple planning policy and practice viewpoints across key stakeholders who use/shape the planning system.

These participants will co-produce the project's outputs within a managed process that is developmental, pragmatic and peer reviewed; delivering a suite of guidance, tools and resources that mainstream GI in policy and decision making thereby embracing the government's economic growth and quality of life agendas.

- Alister.scott@northumbria.ac.uk
- @profalister (twitter)
- NERC fellow https://mainstreaminggreeninfrastructure.com/index.php