

**Liz Pickering**

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**From:** Guthrie, Clare (NE) (VLA) [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** 23 March 2011 17:46  
**To:** Liz Pickering  
**Subject:** RE: Green Infrastructure Strategy - Initial Consultation

Our ref: SWA10-11.17549

Your ref:

Dear Liz,

**RE: Mid Devon Green Infrastructure Strategy – Initial Consultation.**

Thank you for consulting Natural England on the above proposal. Your letter was received by this office on 18<sup>th</sup> February 2011.

Natural England fully supports the adoption of such a strategy as an SPD. I have looked at the Vision and Strategic Objectives on line and have the following brief comments to make at this stage. A great deal of my comments will be based on our guidance document NE176 which I note you have included in the Annex.

**Page 1 Introduction**

The benefits should include mitigating climate change as well as adapting to climate change.

**Page 2 What is Green Infrastructure?**

You could use the definition of Green Infrastructure used by the Town and Country Planning Association (TCPA) within their publication 'Biodiversity by Design' which states:-

*'Green Infrastructure is the sub-regional network of protected sites, nature reserves, green spaces and greenway linkages. The linkages include river corridors and flood plains, migration routes and features of the landscape, which are of importance as wildlife corridors. Green Infrastructure should provide for multi-functional uses i.e. wildlife, recreational and cultural experience, as well as delivering ecological services, such as flood protection and microclimate control. It should also operate at all spatial scales from urban centres through to open countryside'.*

**Page 3 Benefits of Green Infrastructure**

Biodiversity and Nature Conservation: suggest this includes enhancing habitats and reversing fragmentation of habitats and species.

**Page 4 A Green Infrastructure Strategy for Mid Devon**

We support the use of Natural England's ANGSt standard as a basis for identifying where new GI should be focused.

SW Nature Map should be included in the evidence base. It shows Strategic Nature Areas which are generic areas of opportunity to create or extend priority habitats important to the South West where there is already a concentration of good priority habitat and with good potential for creating new habitat.

**Page 5 Strategic Objectives for the GI Strategy**

Objective 1 – suggest adding in biodiversity enhancement as well as general attractiveness etc

Objective 2 – suggest adding creating Local Nature Reserves as an example. Emotional connectivity has been used in some GI strategies e.g. Thetford where the importance of connecting people with the natural environment is seen as key. It highlights the need for funding to support green space wardens to help with managing people's expectations and fears etc

Wherever possible green spaces in and around settlements should be multi-functional, balancing various uses such as agriculture, access, recreation and biodiversity and ecosystem services within the local context. Application of this objective could involve the creation of additional publicly accessible land through a combination of land acquisition, donation and access agreements on private land through, for example, Environmental Stewardship and the Forestry Commission's England Woodland Grant Schemes. Potentially competing land uses such as increased access, farmed land and biodiversity sensitivity will need to be carefully managed to avoid conflicts.

The strategy should reflect the distinctive patterns of the Mid Devon landscape, in terms of its natural, historical and cultural landscapes. Proposals should always promote and enhance the local landscape diversity and distinctiveness of each area and should draw on the guidance of existing and emerging landscape character assessments.

#### **Page 7 Annex**

PPS9 is particularly relevant in terms of local sites and networks of natural habitats; also Biodiversity by design (TCPA) and Environmental Quality in Spatial Planning – incorporating the natural, built and historic environment, and rural issues in plans and strategies. Support the use of Natural England's NE176 GI guidance and SW Nature Map.

Consideration also needs to be given to the methodology, delivery and monitoring of the GI strategy.

I hope these comments are useful. Please do not hesitate to contact me if you wish to discuss anything further.

Yours sincerely

Clare Guthrie

Lead Adviser

North Devon, Torridge and Mid Devon

Cornwall, Devon & Isles of Scilly Team

Natural England

Level 10

Renslade House

Bonhay Road

Exeter

EX4 3AW

Direct line: 0300-060-1699. Mobile: 07771838551

Main Office: 0300-060-1110

Fax: 0300-060-1120

email: [REDACTED]

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[www.naturalengland.org.uk](http://www.naturalengland.org.uk)

**We are here to secure a healthy natural environment for people to enjoy, where wildlife is protected and England's traditional landscapes are safeguarded for future generations.**

In an effort to reduce Natural England's carbon footprint, I will, wherever possible, avoid travelling to meetings and attend via audio, video or web conferencing.

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**From:** Liz Pickering [mailto:LPickering@middevon.gov.uk]

**Sent:** 17 February 2011 10:21

**To:** Alex Hugo; Alex Wilson; Newsome, Amanda (NE); Andrew Bagnell; Andrew Gadd; Anthony Novis; Barry Ennis; Brian Hensley; Guthrie, Clare (NE); Gareth Jones; Huw Williams; Iestyn John; James Purkiss; Jane Terry; Lisa Clayton; Liz Summers; Luke Turner; Michael Griffin; Mike Bailey; Paul F Williams (Councillor); Ralph Farleigh; Richard Ayre; Richard Chesterton; Sarah Griffin; Steve Hellier; Steve Maddison; Steve Russell; Tim Smith; Timothy Garrett