



Greenhall, Milheugh and Barnhill

**Proposed Local Nature Reserve
Management Statement**

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Introduction

Local Nature Reserves (LNRs) are valuable places as they combine protection of the natural heritage with opportunities for people to enjoy, learn about and experience nature close to their homes. LNRs are:

- Statutory designations made under the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949.
- Special places which are rich in wildlife.
- Generally, readily accessible and suitable for people to visit and enjoy.

In declaring these sites, South Lanarkshire Council (SLC) aims to:

- Protect them from unsuitable developments.
- Manage and enhance the habitats to help biodiversity flourish.
- Improve public access.
- Help people understand and become more aware of the importance of the LNR.
- Encourage community participation and volunteering.

SLC have identified sixteen new sites (and an extension to the existing LNR at Langlands Moss) to become designated as LNRs. These encompass a broad spectrum of habitats including ancient broadleaved woodland, open water, wetlands and grasslands. The site management statements are written in conjunction with the South Lanarkshire Biodiversity Strategy (2018-2022), SLC Sustainable Development and Climate Change Strategy (2017-22), SLC Local Development Plan (2013) and SLC Core Path Plan (2012).

Vision statement

Across South Lanarkshire, Local Nature Reserves are a resource for local communities that balance excellent recreational and educational opportunities with valuable habitats for wildlife that are rich in biodiversity.

General information

Location and site boundaries: The woodland of Greenhall, Milheugh and Barnhill can be found to the west of the towns of Blantyre and High Blantyre, in South Lanarkshire. The site stretches for just over 1.83km along the banks of the Rotten Calder Water. Agricultural fields lie to the west and north of the site, with roads and residential areas to the north, east and south. The Rotten Calder Water forms the boundary in the north-western section.



Site name: Milheugh, Greenhall and Barnhill Park

Grid reference: NS 6752 5690

Site area: 33.1ha

Site boundary: The boundaries of the pLNR are based upon the extent of land owned by SLC.

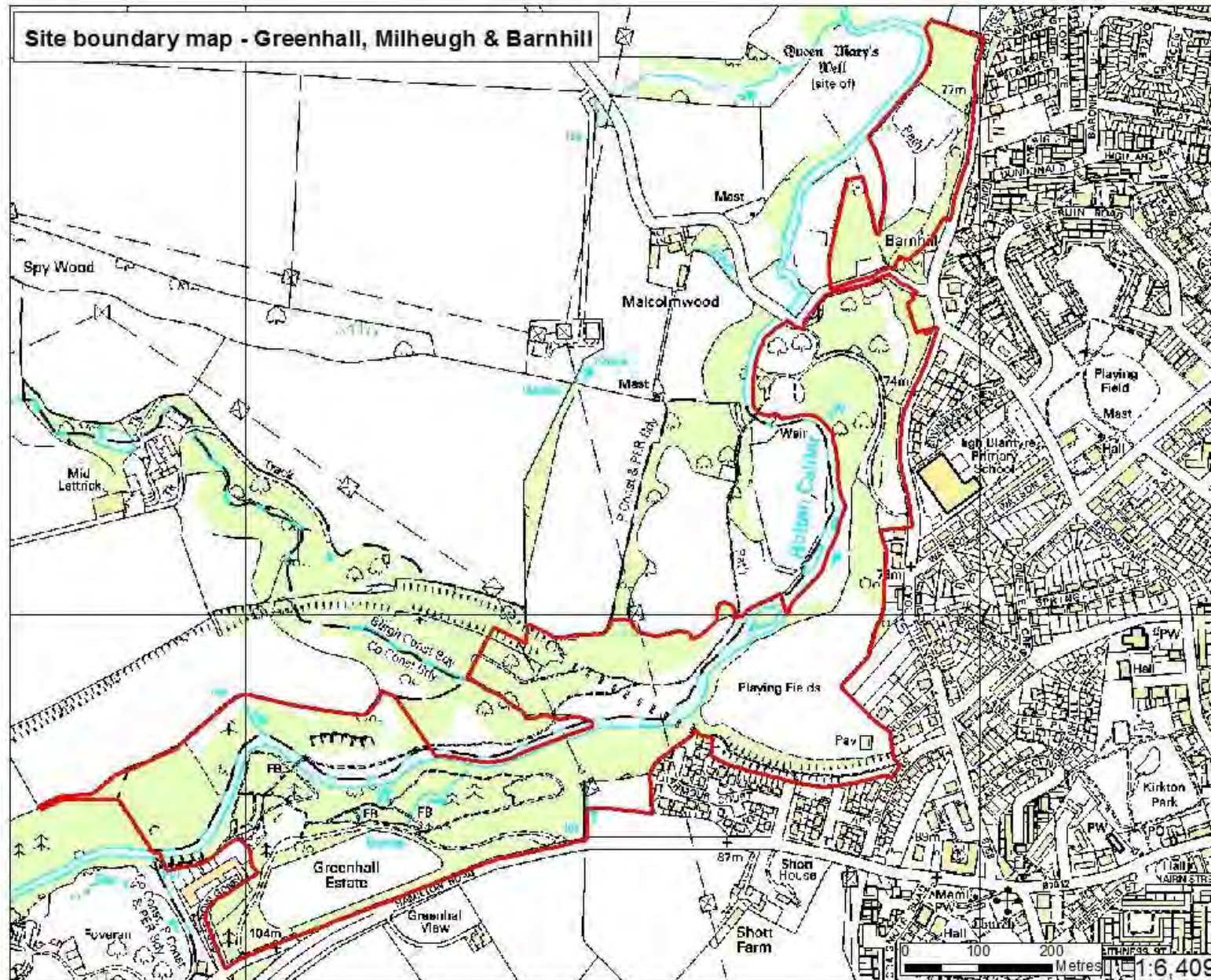
Site description: The Rotten Calder Water flows through the two former estates of Milheugh and Greenhall, to the west of the town of High Blantyre in South Lanarkshire. The landscape supports open parkland with mature trees, surrounded by woodland on the valley slopes.

Much of the site is under broadleaved woodland, a small section of which can be seen on General Roy's maps from 1755. The ground flora in this area is diverse and includes a number of ancient woodland indicator species. Wild garlic and bluebell dominate the woodland floor in spring, while other species of interest include broad-leaved helleborine, great wood-rush, wood anemone, wood millet, wood sorrel, wood speedwell and sanicle.

In September 2017, 1.6ha of dense conifer trees were removed from Greenhall; some sections were replanted with oak and the rest left to regenerate naturally. The woodland is listed in the Scottish Ancient Woodland Inventory and categorised as Plantation on an Ancient Woodland Site (PAWS). Regular monitoring of the felled area will be carried out to assess the development of natural regeneration. The park also contains semi-improved neutral grassland and managed grassland with mature parkland trees. The Rotten Calder Water runs through a wooded gorge at Greenhall, before opening out and winding through open grasslands at Milheugh.

The "Friends of the Calder" (FOC) local community group formed in 2013 and are actively involved in the management of the site. Working in partnership with SLC Countryside and Greenspace (CAG) team they have strived to secure funding and have accrued many volunteer hours in promoting the reserve, running events and practical conservation days.

Site boundary map - Greenhall, Milheugh & Barnhill



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Habitats, flora and fauna

The majority of land at Milheugh, Greenhall and Barnhill supports broadleaved woodland mainly found on the steep slopes along the course of the Rotten Calder River. The woodland supports mature trees dominated by ash, beech and sycamore with rowan, oak and alder. Planted coniferous trees can be found occasionally throughout the

Habitat	Area (ha)	%
Broadleaved woodland	21.47	72.1
Felled conifer trees	1.6	0.5
Semi-improved neutral grassland with tall ruderals	2.71	9.1
Amenity grassland	5.59	18.7
Total	31.37	100

woodland, supporting mature Norway and Sitka spruce. Sections of the understorey are abundant with naturally regenerated ash, hazel, hawthorn, wych elm, beech and sycamore.

Former policy woodlands can be found around the main drive to the original site of Milheugh House. The area consists of mature oak, Scots pine, sycamore and beech over yew, hawthorn and ash. The area of former policy woodland is adjacent to an area of parkland supporting many mature trees of common lime, copper beech and ash.

Ground flora within these woodlands, along with the soils and trees species indicate NVC type W9 (herb rich / ash / elm / hazel / rowan woodland). Sub-types of this woodland occur locally depending on the topography, geology and hydrology. The woodland and trees along the course of the river throughout the estate and a small section within the southern half of the former Greenhall estate can be found on Roy's maps from the 1750s. Therefore, these areas of woodland can be classified as "ancient", supporting an array of ancient woodland indicator plant species notable in the spring and summer months.

At present the established woodland supports a good diversity of trees: a significant proportion are native species of mixed age, with significant levels of young saplings throughout the woods. Deadwood is abundant, providing an important habitat for a variety of invertebrates.



In addition to the woodland at Milheugh and Greenhall the park supports a variety of habitats, including open semi-improved neutral grassland, tall ruderals and amenity grassland with mature trees. The former curling pond area is abundant with rosebay willowherb, meadowsweet, common hogweed and young trees of ash and cherry with thickets of blackthorn, hawthorn and willow. Other open areas give rise to bramble and raspberry, providing a valuable food source for local wildlife. The Rotten Calder Water and Cock's burn add to the ecological diversity of the site and provide an important link to the wider countryside and nearby woodlands.

A phase 1 survey of the site carried out in August 2013 identified 130 different types of plant species, including trees, ferns and higher plants. 33 species of fauna have been noted throughout the site including otter, roe deer, badger, common pipistrelle bats, soprano pipistrelle bats, Daubenton's bats and a variety of birds. Annual surveys are carried out by the Countryside Rangers; data is sent to national recording schemes.

As part of Froglife's Living Waters project, the temporary pond at Barnhill was restored in 2016, resulting in a larger pond with semi-permanent open water. The following photos show the area at Barnhill before (September 2016) and after (November 2016) work was carried out through the volunteer work days and the Froglife Living Waters project.



Landscape

Within the park, woodland and parkland trees are the dominant landscape and habitat feature. The park itself comprises of a mosaic of riparian woodland along the Rotten Calder Water corridor which is principally broadleaf in character. Other habitats include open amenity grassland, meadow and tall ruderals. The adjacent landscape to the west supports agricultural land, with the residential town of High Blantyre to the east.

In terms of the wider greenspace network there are a number of woodlands to the north and south of the site linked by the river corridor. The majority of these are identified as pLNCS (potential Local Nature Conservation Sites) including:

- Malcolm Wood / Rotten Calder (NS 677 577)
- Cock's Burn to Mid Lettrick Woodland (NS 671 570)
- Stoneymeadow Cutting (NS 660 565)
- Rotten Calder Blantyre to Redlees (NS 679 607)
- Bardykes Bing / Spittal Burn (NS 671 588)
- Spy Wood (NS668574)

To the south the Rotten Calder water flows from Calderglen Country Park (NS 659 545), where it is similarly surrounded by broadleaved woodland until the habitat surrounding the watercourse opens up into mostly agricultural land.

Cultural information

Cultural heritage: past land use

Milheugh: The northern section of the park is formed by what was previously the gardens and policy woodland of Milheugh House. The house and surrounding 118ha estate was in the possession of the Millar family for nearly 330 years until the decline of the estate in the 1940s. The mansion house itself was located on the banks of the Rotten Calder, which is now parkland and mown amenity grassland.

A lint (flax) mill was part of the estate from 1727, situated on the eastern side of the river, with a bridge crossing the water (demolished 1952). The driveway to the mansion house is still present today from the Hunthill Road (B758) opposite High Blantyre Primary School. The estate was purchased by the Lanark County Council (precursor of South Lanarkshire Council) in the 1950s. The mansion house was demolished in 1955.

The remains of a railway viaduct cross the river, which originally opened to rail traffic in 1883. This railway formed the main Blantyre to East Kilbride branch line until 1924 when passenger traffic ceased. Freight traffic continued until 1939 when the track was finally removed. The giant red sandstone support pillars remain today providing significant heritage feature within the site.

Greenhall: The original house at Greenhall was built circa 1760 by one of the forefathers of Colonel John Wardrop Moore. At this time, Greenhall estate comprised approximately 120ha. It was situated about a quarter of a mile downstream of Cross Basket House (which remains today) next to the Rotten Calder River. Roughly half of the estate land was quite heavily wooded; the other half being given over to farm land.

The mansion house at Greenhall was still standing in the 1930s and supported four farms, offices, stables, paddocks, a rose garden, tennis courts, glass houses with vinery, peach house and orchid house. The conifer trees in the southern part of the estate were planted in

the late 1920s to early 1930s. The estate was purchased by the Lanark County Council in the 1960s and the main mansion house and estate farm house were demolished in the late 1960s to early 1970s.

Present land use

A survey by Community Links was carried out in 2012 to ask the local communities of High Blantyre and Blantyre when and how they utilise Greenhall and Milheugh. The majority of those who took part (215 individuals) in the survey used the site for walking (75%) and walking their dogs (45%). Other activities listed included exercise, peace and quiet, observing wildlife, playing, cycling, picnic, socialising, education, art and commute to work / school or shops. The Rotten Calder Water is regularly used for fishing by the local community. The evaluation was conducted through paper questionnaires, which were designed by Community Links and approved by SLC CAG.

The survey also asked what would encourage them to access and use the Greenhall and Milheugh site more. The results of the survey helped to inform the direction of management on site. Suggested improvements included:

- Better and well maintained pathways.
- Area cleaned up and made safe (more wardens, police patrols and lighting).
- Introduction of facilities such as playpark and pitch and putt.
- More advertising and information about the site.
- Introduction of events and activities.

Site infrastructure

The woodland and parkland contains approximately 3,768 metres of footpath and tracks. Work was carried out in 2001/2002 through the River Valleys Project with financial assistance from the Millennium Forest for Scotland Trust to upgrade footpaths and install handrails and small boardwalks. Electricity wires through the middle of the site require that the land underneath is maintained regularly by Scottish Power Energy Networks; trees were most recently removed from under the cables in spring 2013.

In 2016 a successful bid was made by SLC CAG team with CSGNT (Central Scotland Green Network Trust) to the Forestry Commission "Woodlands In and Around Towns programme" (WIAT). The work started in 2017 and will continue over a period of five years. The improvements at the site include new paths, upgrading footpaths, woodland thinning, scrub/woody vegetation control, installation of steps, bollards and gates.

The areas of amenity grasslands found throughout the park mark the original locations of the houses, associated buildings, gardens and paddocks of Milheugh and Greenhall estates. These are currently maintained through regular mowing by SLC Grounds Services.

Recreation and access

The proposed boundaries of the park are based upon the extent of land owned by SLC. Parking is available at two locations to the south and north of the site. Pedestrian access can be gained from five locations (please refer to the location maps). Milheugh, Greenhall and Barnhill Park is located to the west of High Blantyre and Blantyre which support 17,505 (SLC, 2001) people; the park provides an important recreational resource for the local community.

There are currently no interpretational facilities within the site. There are a few numbered signs within the woodland to the south of the river, in the Greenhall section for an old nature trail on trees, but of the few that remain they are in poor condition. The site is not signposted from the road network around the park. Access improvements should be made to highlight the site from entrances along the main roads. The installation of interpretation at the site to highlight the network of paths, along with historical and natural history interest would be beneficial.

Local community

The Friends of Calder (FOC) community group first met in August 2012 and became formally constituted in early 2013. The group are interested in raising the profile of the site and encouraging responsible behaviour. Their long term aims are to seek and identify funding opportunities to improve access, enhance the network of paths and establish a working management group. The group are working with SLC CAG to plan and seek funding for the regeneration of the glen. The group meet every second month and promote the site and work of the group through social media.



The FOC, along with the SLC Countryside Ranger Service, develop, promote and carry out a number of events and activities throughout the year. These include regular practical conservation work days, historic walks and events to highlight the wildlife in the area. These are linked to national tree planting schemes and citizen science projects.

Conclusion

It is the intention of the SLC CAG team to continue to work in partnership with the FOC Calder to ensure that the ecological quality of the park, especially the areas of ancient, native woodland are maintained and managed. We aim to foster an understanding and facilitate enjoyment of the natural heritage of the park and to increase public use through improved access, interpretation, education and promotion of the site.

The management statement will meet these objectives by seeking to deliver a number of practical health, environmental education and community outcomes in partnership with external organisations and the local community. A full management plan for this site already exists and will be updated every five years.

Contacts

For more information on this site, or LNRs in South Lanarkshire, please contact: Countryside and Greenspace Service, Facilities, Waste and Ground Services, Community and Enterprise, South Lanarkshire Council, 18 Forrest Street, Blantyre G72 0JP.
Email: CAG@southlanarkshire.gov.uk

If you need this information in another language or format, please contact us to discuss how we can best meet your needs.

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www.southlanarkshire.gov.uk

*Photographs by Joanna Birkin (SLC CAG) and Friends of Calder – Mr J. Brown.
Note that maps may not be to scale.*

Appendix 1: Objectives and actions

Objective 1: Maintain, enhance and monitor the biodiversity value of the reserve.

Actions:

- Monitor the regeneration of the recently felled conifer plantation at Greenhall.
- Ensure woodland management maintains a diversity of species, age classes and dead wood, and that there is no loss of native woodland cover.
- Establish and maintain survey / monitoring regimes for indicator species.
- Survey for the presence of invasive non-native species; consider establishing a programme of monitoring and control where necessary.
- Contribute data to national and local biological recording schemes.
- Ensure appropriate management programmes improve and maintain biodiversity.
- Diversify areas of amenity grassland or dense bramble growth by altering management.

Objective 2: Maintain and increase the use of the access network.

Actions:

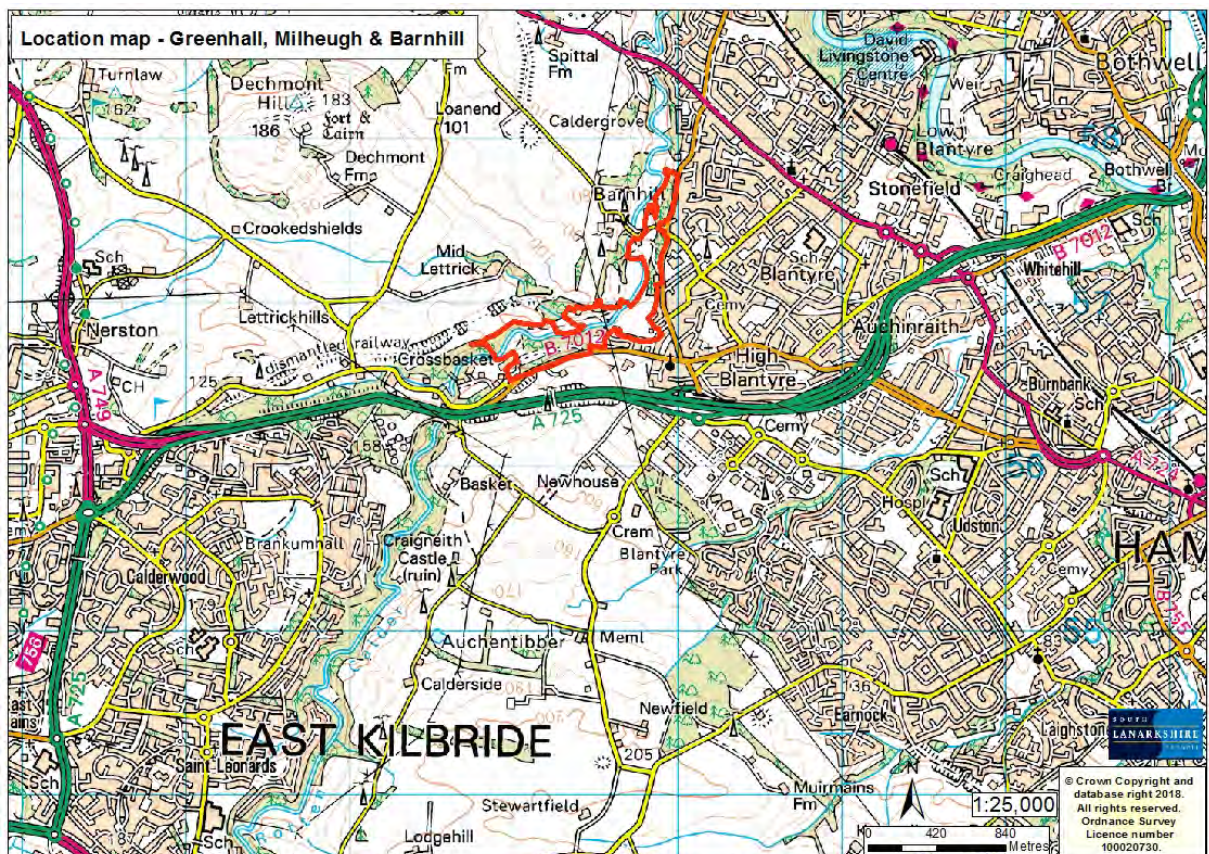
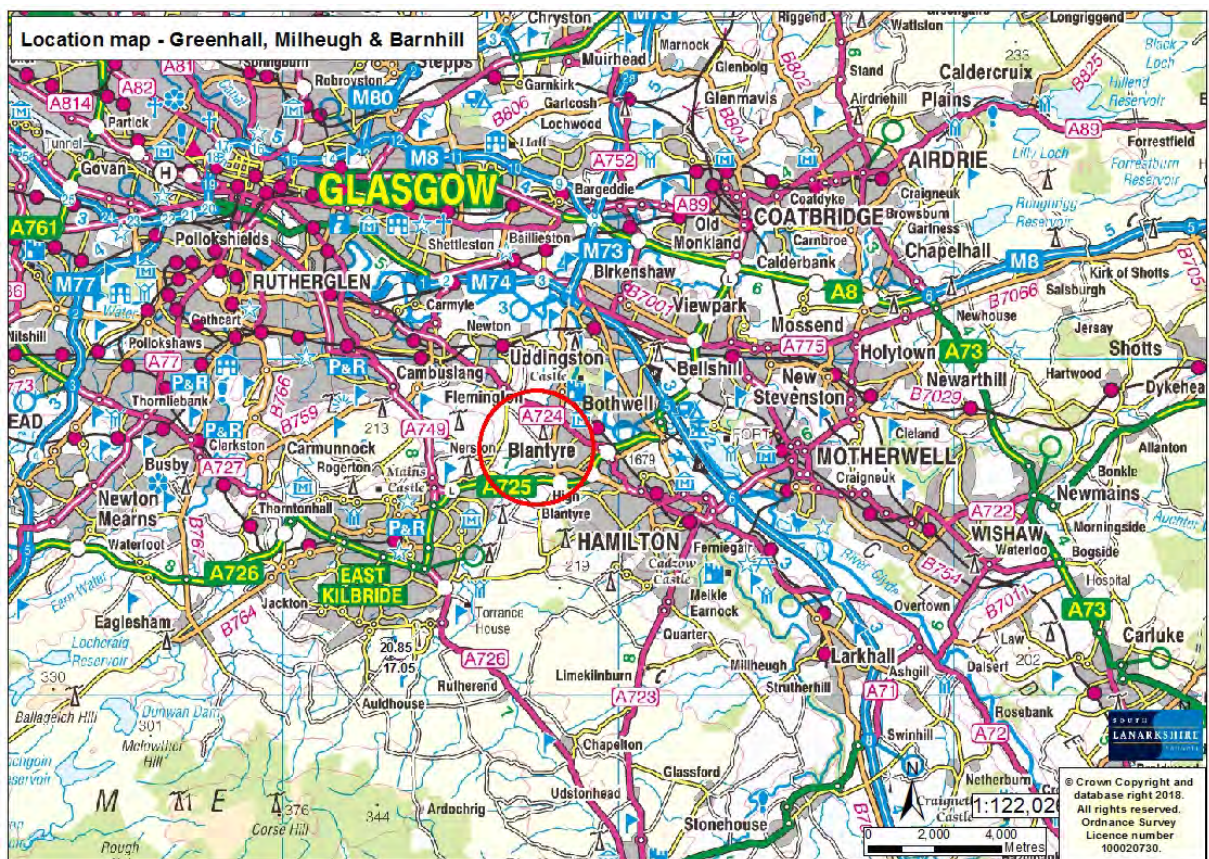
- Identify funding opportunities.
- Maintain and improve the paths network.
- Investigate the potential to establish a new access link with the possible reinstallation of a bridge over the Rotten Calder.
- Investigate the possibility of linking Milheugh and Greenhall park to other greenspaces and wider network of paths in the surrounding landscape.
- Improve signage to highlight access points.
- Install interpretation panels highlighting the path network and key features of the park.

Objective 3: Encourage and facilitate community involvement in the reserve.

Actions:

- Continue to support the local community group.
- Raise awareness of the park for the local community.
- Investigate possibilities of promoting the park in new and different ways, such as to specialist interest groups.
- Review the information at the site ensuring that it is current and up to date.
- Monitor and assess visitor numbers.
- Investigate the need for a trails guide of the routes, path networks and points of interest within the area.
- Encourage and promote the use of the park for the local community, schools, colleges, universities, youth groups and other interest groups.
- Identify and promote opportunities for people to enjoy the wildlife of the park.

Appendix 2: Maps



Aerial photograph - Greenhall, Milheugh & Barnhill

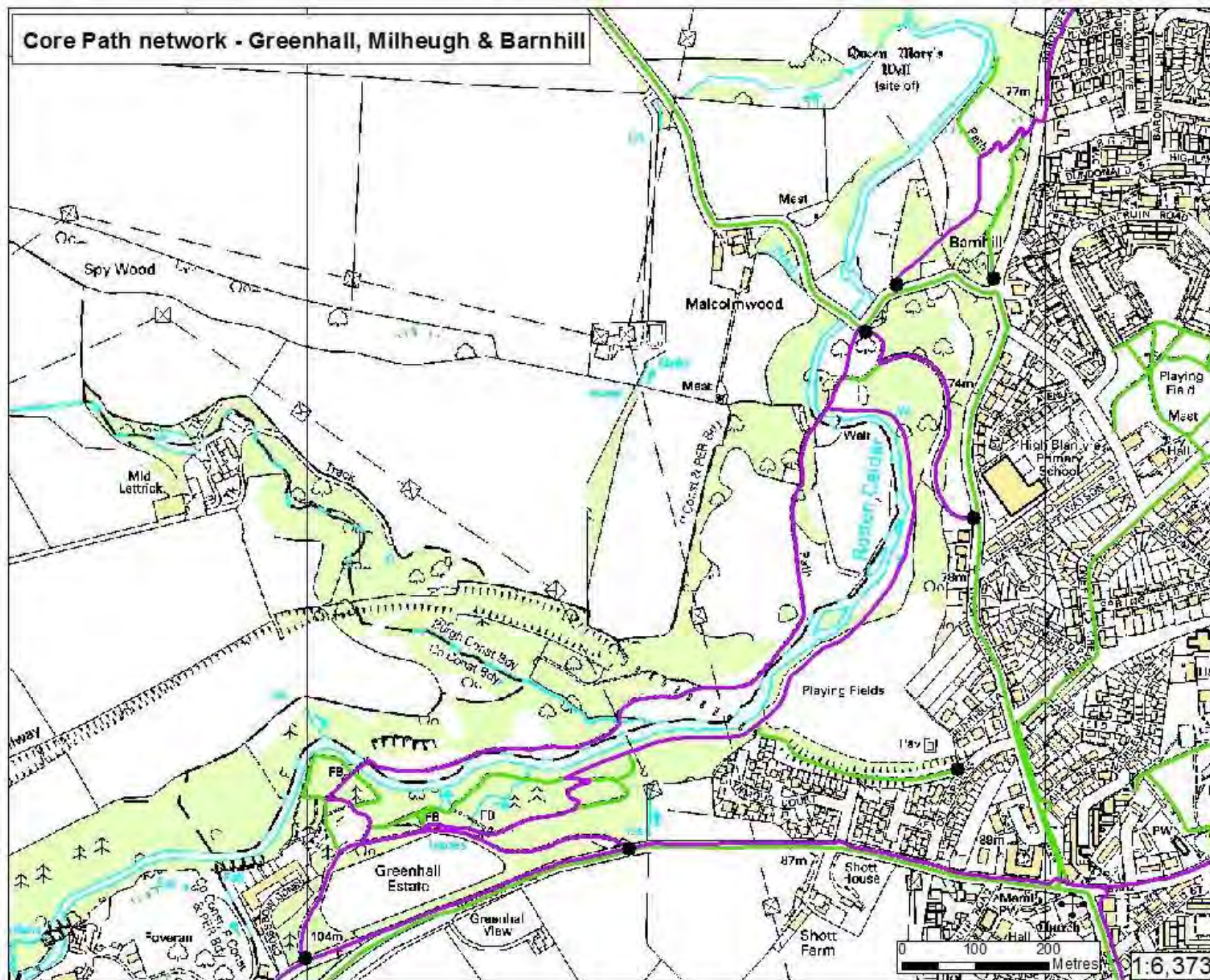


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Core Path network - Greenhall, Milheugh & Barnhill



Key

core path

wider network

entrance point

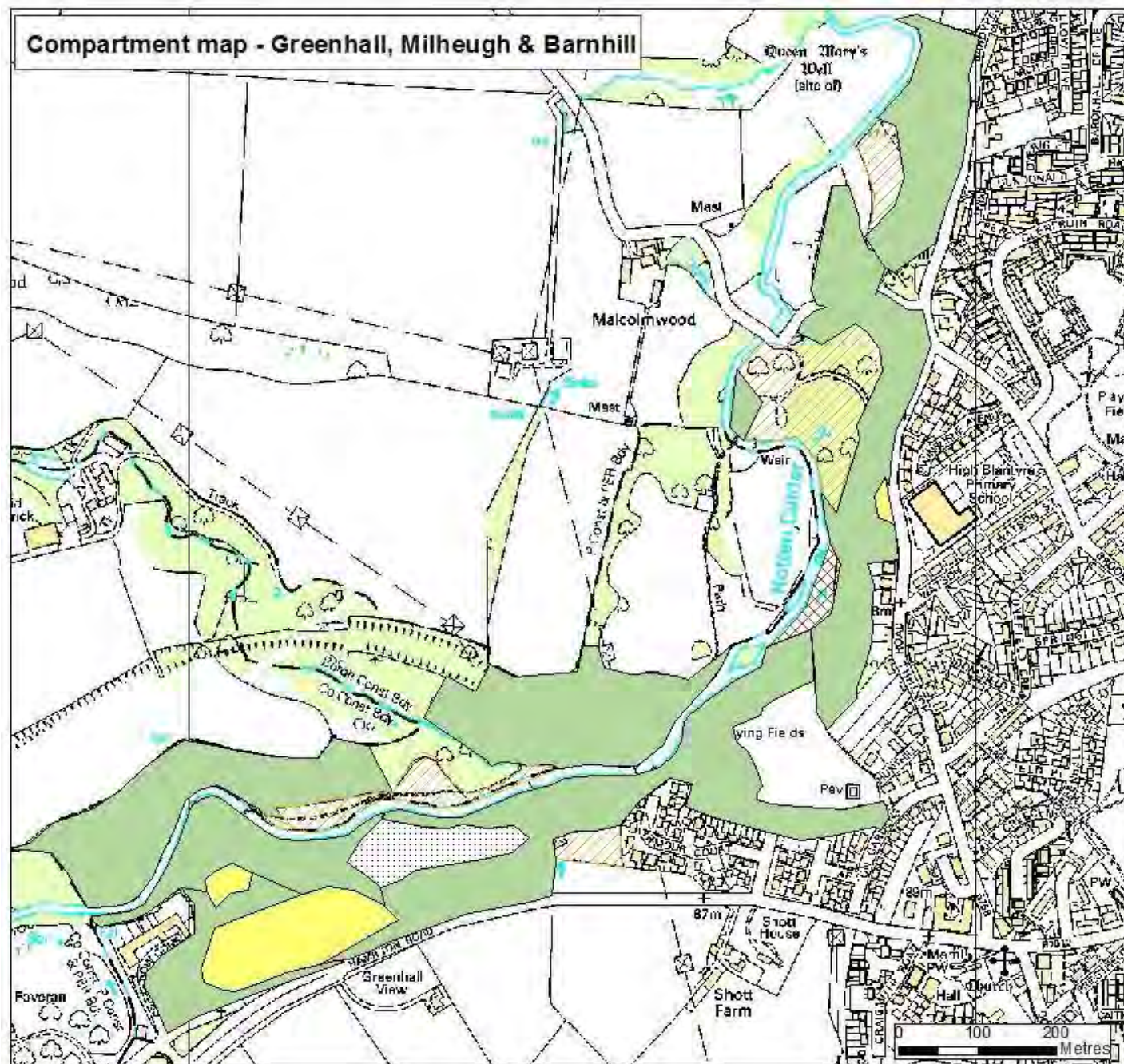


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Compartment map - Greenhall, Milheugh & Barnhill



Key

- broadleaved woodland
- amenity grassland
- recently felled woodland
- semi-improved neutral grassland
- tall ruderals

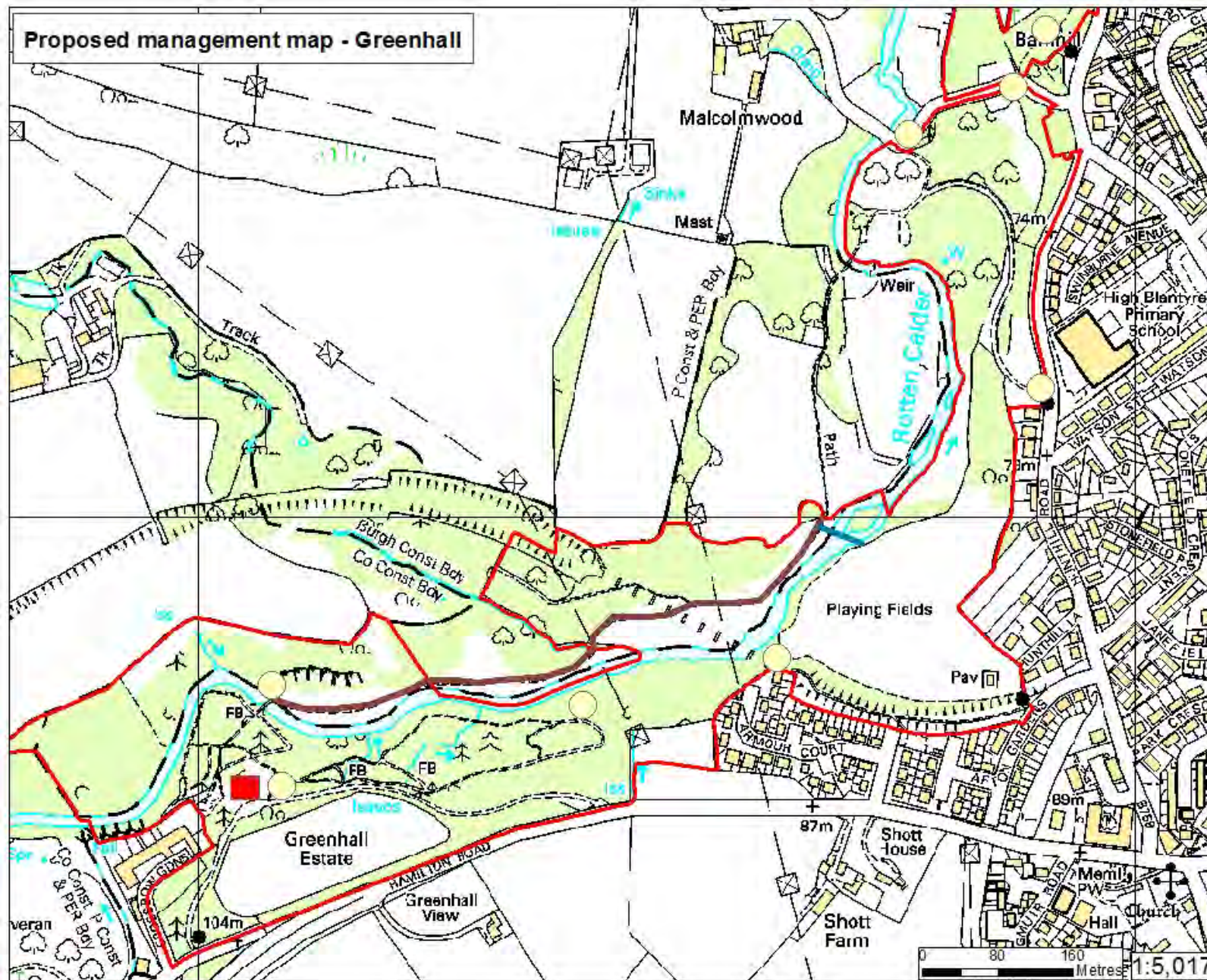


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Proposed management map - Greenhall



- interpretation panel
- welcome signage
- path improvements
- signpost
- possible location for bridge



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