PERFECT: Learning report on Expert Presentation and workshop at PSC1

Delivered by Hugh Ellis, Head of Policy, TCPA

Tuesday 7th February 2017, 15:45 – 17:30

Attendance list

Country	Organisation	Individuals	
		Partners	**Stakeholders**
UK	TCPA	Michael Chang Hugh Ellis Jessie Fieth Diane Smith Henry Smith Julia Thrift	
	Cornwall Council	Edwina Hannaford Rob Lacey Philip Mason	
	Natural England		Martin Moss Carol Reeder
Hungary	SASD	Gabor Beres Mark Gabor	
Austria	STMK	Christine Schwaberger	Johannes Leitner
The Netherlands	City of Amsterdam	Rob Bakker Age Niels Holstein Imke van Moorselaar	Michaela Schönenberger Geertje Wijten
Slovenia	RDA Ljubljana	Matej Gojcic Gaja Trbizan	
	Urban Institute of Ljubljana		Sergej Hiti
Slovakia	Bratislava Karlova Ves	Zuzana Hudekova Lucia Lickova	Michal Sutriepka
Italy	Municipality of Ferrara	Antonio Barillari Silvia Mazzanti Michele Pancaldi	Roberta Fusari

Agenda

15.45 Expert presentation 2

Dr Hugh Ellis, Head of Policy, TCPA

Discussion around the definition of green infrastructure.

16.15 Workshop discussions

17.15 Summary of workshop discussions

Expert Presentation

Hugh led a discussion on how the PERFECT project should define green infrastructure (GI). The current EU definition was used as a starting point and Hugh proposed an alternative for discussion.

The Powerpoint slide of Hugh Ellis' suggested definition of GI for use in the PERFECT project

'a strategically planned network of high quality natural and semi-natural areas with other environmental features, which is designed and managed to deliver a wide range of ecosystem services… One of the key attractions of GI is its ability to perform several functions in the same spatial area…'

The current definition of GI used by in the EU.

An engaging debate followed, including discussion of the following points:

- GI is not always strategically planned as some have been there for a long time (for example London's big parks). It may be more appropriate to say 'strategically managed or maintained' or a 'strategically-planned, or naturally existing, network';
- Similarly, not all GI is 'planned' – there are some unplanned areas that are very ecologically important;
- Should blue infrastructure be included in the PERFECT definition of GI? At EU level, green and blue infrastructure are considered to be synonymous. And the presence of blue infrastructure is hardly ever strategically planned;
- The background of the PERFECT project is from a natural heritage perspective – it might do to mention this in the definition;
- GI should be considered as a concept rather than a 'thing';
- How do we define what 'high-quality' is? PERFECT is aspiring for high-quality GI but it introduces a certain level of ambiguity into the definition.

Vujadin Kovacevic, Policy Officer at the European Commission (who delivered Expert Presentation 1 earlier in the afternoon), commented that a reference to the EU strategy should be retained within the definition used in the PERFECT project as there is a need to have a common framework. The definition could then be explained from the PERFECT perspective

After a lively discussion, it was decided that the existing EU definition would be used for the time being for technical purposes and instead the focus will be on outlining the wording of a definition to be used for engaging with politicians and members of the public. This definition will avoid specific jargon (for example 'ecosystem services') that may cause confusion for non-experts. TCPA will draft this non-technical definition and share with Partners for comments.

Workshop

Hugh Ellis outlined the challenges facing Sheffield, the case study for the workshop, in terms of density, urban renewal and flooding in the city centre. Partners were divided into three workshops to discuss ways in which a GI strategy might help mitigate the effects of flooding in a densely populated urban area in need of regeneration. The purpose of the exercise was for the Partners and their stakeholders to use the learning that they had already gained in the Partner meeting on the multi-benefits of GI in an urban area, and to apply this in practice to a real-life scenario.

Hugh Ellis explaining the workshop task

The group was divided into three smaller groups for the workshop:

Group A **led by Henry Smith**	**Group B** **led by Hugh Ellis**	**Group C** **led by Diane Smith**
Cornwall and Styria Edwina Hannaford Rob Lacey Philip Mason Martin Moss Carol Reeder Johannes Leitner Christine Schwaberger	SASD, Amsterdam and Ljubljana Gabor Beres Mark Gabor Rob Bakker Age Niels Holstein Imke van Moorselaar Michaela Schönenberger Geertje Wijten Matej Gojcic Gaja Trbizan Sergej Hiti	Bratislava and Ferrara Zuzana Hudekova Lucia Lickova Michal Sutriepka Antonio Barillari Silvia Mazzanti Roberta Fusari Michele Pancaldi

Each group was asked to consider the case study of Sheffield, and to think about the following questions:

1. What would be the outline for a GI strategy in Sheffield? What are the opportunities for maximising the potential of natural heritage for jobs and growth?
2. What would the physical barriers to delivering that strategy over time?

Participants were provided with the following resources:

- Map of Sheffield Development Framework by Sheffield City Council[1].
- Satellite image of Sheffield City Centre (taken from Google Maps)[2].

1 http://sheffield.devplan.org.uk/demo/
2 https://www.google.co.uk/maps/place/Sheffield/@53.3817938,-1.4737545,2334m/data=!3m1!1e3!4m5!3m4!1s0x48790aa9fae8be15:0x3e2827f5af06b078!8m2!3d53.381129!4d-1.470085

- Map of South Yorkshire Forest Green Infrastructure Delivery Programme to 2016 (by South Yorkshire Forest)[3].
- Detailed road map of Sheffield City Centre[4].

Discussion was facilitated by a staff member of the TCPA on each table, to encourage lateral thinking and consideration of the multi-benefits of GI. Partners were also encouraged to think about how investment through Structural Funds could be secured, and how key stakeholders and decision-makers could be influenced in the process.

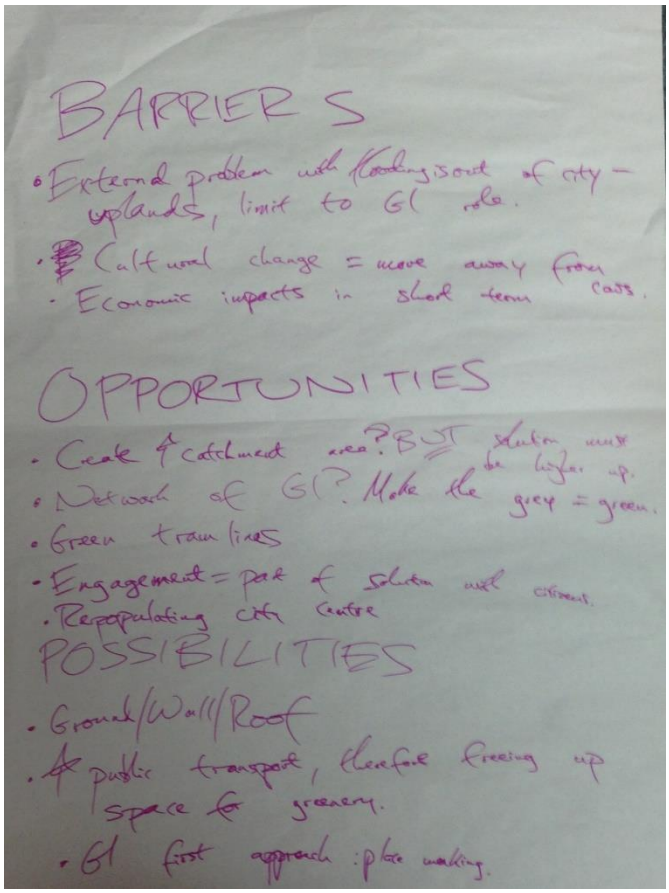
3 http://www.syforest.co.uk/wordpress/wp-content/uploads/2013/11/South-Yorkshire-GI-Strategy-delivery-programme-sites-2013-lo-res.jpg

4 See image on page 6.

Discussion from the groups

Group A

- Barriers:
  - External problem as flooding is out of the city – uplands, limit to the role of GI;
  - Cultural change = move away from cars;
  - Economic impacts in short term.
- Opportunities:
  - Create increased catchment area – but solution must be higher up;
  - Network of GI? Transform the grey to green;
  - Green train lines;
  - Engagement = part of solution with citizens;
  - Repopulating city centre.
- Possibilities:
  - Ground/wall/roof;
  - Public transport, therefore freeing up space for greenery;
  - GI first approach: place-making.

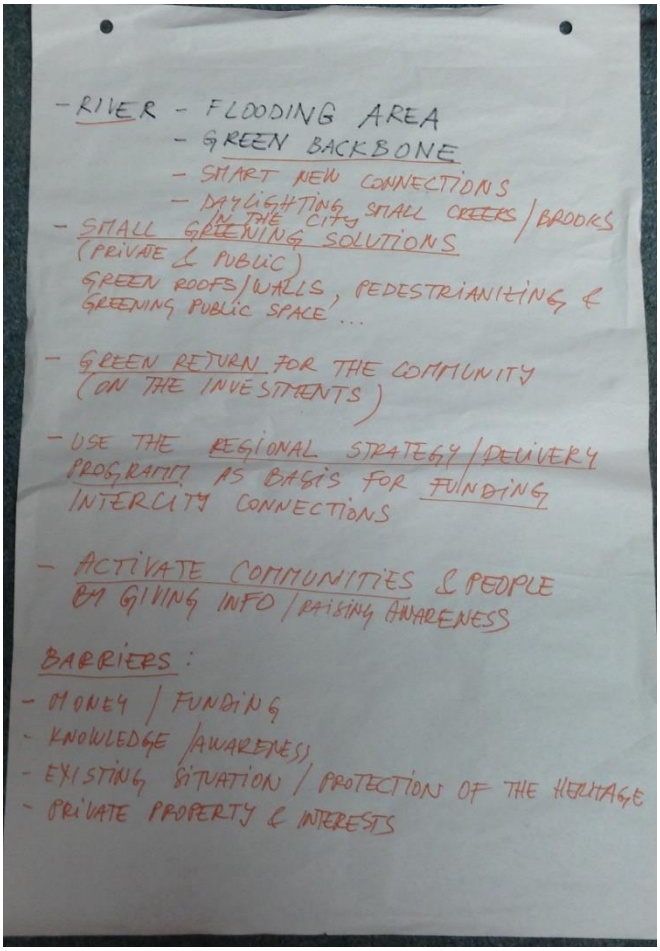


Working for Group A

Group A during the workshop

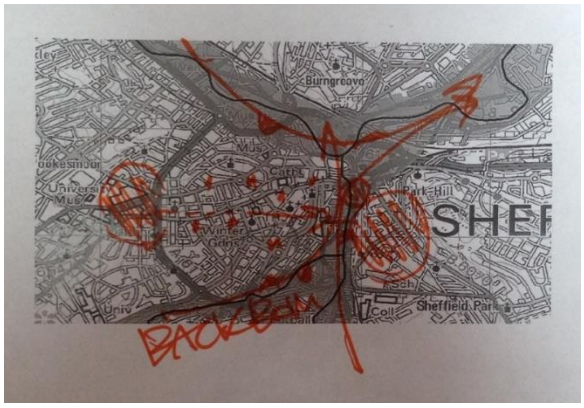
Group B

- River:
  - Flooding area;
  - Green backbone;
  - Smart new connections;
  - Daylighting small creers/brooks in the city.
- Small greening solutions (private and public):
  - Green roofs/walls;
  - Pedestrianising;
  - Greening public space.
- Green return for the community (on the investments).
- Use the regional strategy/delivery program as basis for funding intercity connections;
- Activate communities and people by giving info/raising awareness;
- Barriers:
  - Money/funding;
  - Knowledge/awareness;
  - Existing situation/protection of heritage;
  - Private property and interests.



Working for Group B

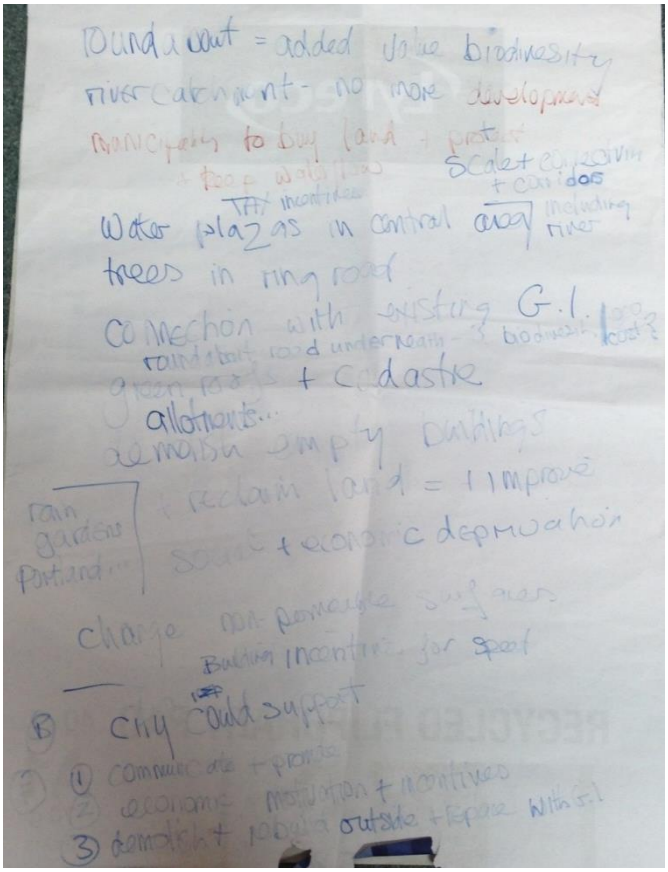
Group B during the workshop



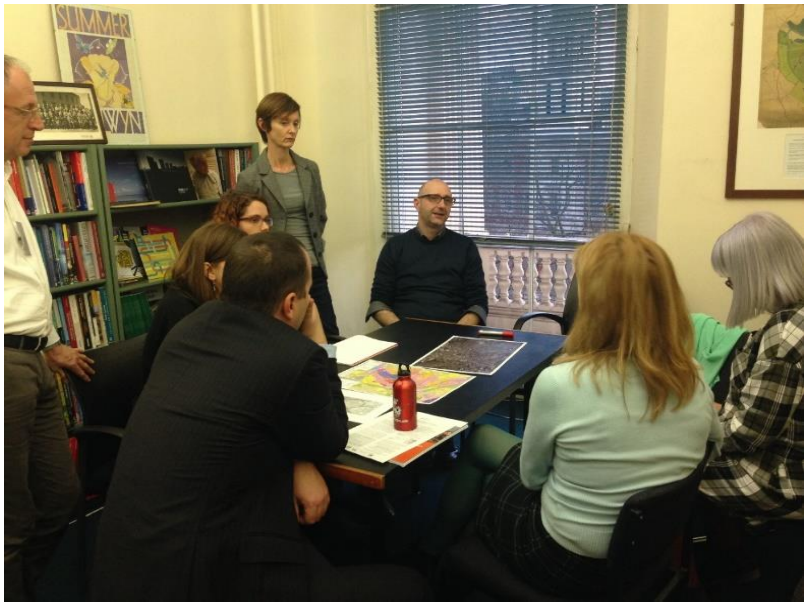
Annotations by Group B on the detailed road map of Sheffield

Group C

- Roundabouts can add valuable biodiversity;
- Limit development in river catchment;
- Municipality to buy land and protect, and keep water flow;
- Tax incentives;
- Corridors, including river;
- Water plazas in central areas;
- Trees along the ring road;
- Connection with existing GI;
- Roundabout road underneath – biodiversity, eco cost?;
- Green roofs/rain gardens (e.g. like those in Portland);
- Allotments;
- Demolish empty buildings and reclaim/improve land;
- Change non-permeable surfaces;
- Building incentives for speed;
- Process:
    - Communicate and promote;
    - Economic motivation and incentives;
    - Demolish and rebuild, and replace with GI.



Working for Group C



Group C during the workshop

Summary of workshop discussions

Hugh Ellis receiving feedback from each group following the workshop

Hugh Ellis, as the workshop moderator, asked a representative of each of the groups to feed back on the main points of discussions. Hugh then summarised the outcomes of the discussions, which included:

- Communication on the economic benefits of GI is key to securing its investment. At a time of resource constraints, Partners must make the case to decision-makers that the natural heritage covers many benefits and therefore investment can meet the needs across many sectors. Conversely, not investing in natural heritage can result in an increased cost to the public sector in terms of health costs.
- A place-making approach to GI is important to ensure that a holistic approach and good design is at the forefront. Planning has a vital role in this through consulting with multiple stakeholders and ensuring there is a robust bank of evidence around needs and requirements.
- It is now clear that climate change adaptation must form a major part of the strategy of cities moving forward, and the role of green infrastructure is integral to achieving this. This needs to be a central message therefore to stakeholders to make it clear that there are economic and social costs of inaction.