

Finsley Gate Wharf ERDF Summative Assessment Canal and River Trust

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Contents

1. INTRODUCTION.....1

2. APPROACH.....2

2.1 METHODOLOGY2

2.2 ECUS APPROACH3

3. SUMMATIVE ASSESSMENT8

3.1 INTRODUCTION8

3.2 SUMMATIVE ASSESSMENT8

1. Introduction

- 1.1.1 Finsley Gate Wharf is a flagship develop for the Canal and River Trust (CRT) comprising the refurbishment of a group of grade II listed buildings to create a new leisure destination alongside extensive biodiversity and landscaping works to the boatyard site and 3.5km of adjacent canal corridor. Funded partly through the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) CRT has instructed Ecus Ltd to carry out a Summative Assessment (evaluation) of the works funded by ERDF.
- 1.1.2 The purpose of the evaluation is to provide insights into project performance to enhance project implementation, to provide reliable evidence of its efficiency and to assess the effectiveness and value for money of the project. In addition, the evaluation will provide valuable insights into specific interventions and whether or not they worked, as well as identifying lessons for the future. It will also provide project level evidence which, combined with national evidence of progress and impact, will result in stronger evidence of the overall impact and effectiveness of the ERDF operational programme.
- 1.1.3 There are two project outcome indicators which needed to be achieved for ERDF against which the project will be evaluated. These were identified in the original project application, in the Summative Assessment Plan and the logic model for the project as follows:
- To support the rehabilitation and full reuse of 0.79 hectares of land at Finsley Gate Wharf which will add to the natural capital of the site.
 - To support enhancements across approximately 8 hectares of existing blue and green infrastructure with tangible benefits and protection for wildlife, biodiversity and people.
- 1.1.4 It should be noted that the ERDF funding to support the rehabilitation of the site and canal corridor enhancements is distinct from other funding obtained from the Lottery Heritage Fund and the Canal and River Trust to deliver the overall redevelopment of the buildings and other structures at Finsley Gate Wharf. This comprised initial funding of £289,300 which enabled emergency repair work on the structures at the wharf and £2,516,200 from the Lottery Heritage Fund, in addition to more than £300,00 from CRT, to deliver the restoration of the wharf and all the structures on the site.
- 1.1.5 The approach and methodology employed for this summative evaluation have focused on the achievement, or otherwise, of these two outcome indicators.

2. Approach

2.1 Methodology

2.1.1 ERDF have specified what information needs to be gathered in this Summative Assessment report.

This includes:

- Project Context;
- Project Progress;
- Project delivery and management;
- Project outcomes and impact;
- Project value for money; and
- Conclusions and lessons learnt.

2.1.2 The overall approach is based on the ERDF Summative Assessment guidance and whilst the approach to collecting information and the type of analysis within each summative assessment may vary, all assessments need to cover the following themes:

- Relevance and consistency;
- Progress;
- Delivery and management;
- Impacts; and
- Assessing value for money.

2.1.3 Furthermore, it has also been specified that the following two project outcomes were required to be achieved for ERDF:

- To support the rehabilitation and full reuse of 0.79 hectares of land at Finsley Gate Wharf which will add to the natural capital of the site.
- To support enhancements across approximately 8 hectares of existing blue and green infrastructure with tangible benefits and protection for wildlife, biodiversity and people.

2.1.4 As previously noted, the ERDF funding was specifically for the rehabilitation of the site and the canal corridor enhancements and is distinct from other funding obtained from the Lottery Heritage Fund and the CRT to deliver the overall redevelopment of the buildings and other structures at Finsley Gate Wharf. Therefore, this summative assessment is limited to whether the project has achieved the two project outcomes identified in the original project application, the Summative Assessment Plan and the logic model, as detailed earlier in this report.

2.1.5 A number of other project outcomes and intended impacts were also identified in the logic model

which in reality will be delivered directly as a result of the overall redevelopment of Finsley Gate Wharf (funded through the Lottery Heritage Fund and CRT) rather than directly as a result of the work funded by ERDF. These outcomes and impacts are detailed in section 2.2 of this report.

- 2.1.6 The ERDF funding for the rehabilitation and full reuse of 0.79 hectares of land at Finsley Gate Wharf was intended to support the delivery of the initial remediation and rehabilitation of the site to enable the delivery of the wider redevelopment of the wharf. The project application states:

“We [CRT] have now secured investment of £2.2m from Heritage Lottery Fund which alongside Canal & River Trust resources will be used to undertake the restoration of the buildings at the site. At Finsley Gate Wharf using European Regional Development Funds through Priority Axis 6 we will directly contribute to the objectives of that priority through the following actions.”

- 2.1.7 Therefore, the summative assessment considers these wider outcomes and impacts and how the work delivered using ERDF funding has contributed to achieving them, whilst acknowledging that many of the specific outcomes and impacts will be as a direct result of work undertaken using other funding sources.

2.2 Ecus approach

- 2.2.1 The approach to the Summative Assessment evidence gathering was conducted in accordance with the following tasks:

Project kick off meeting, Summative Assessment Planning and Logic Model

- 2.2.2 An inception meeting was held with key members of the project team to agree the scope of the evaluation, review interim evaluations and identify the information and data required to support the summative assessment. The project plan, roles, responsibilities, deliverables, timescales, risk management plan and mitigation measures were agreed. In addition, the data sources required for the evaluation and the means by which they will be supplied by CRT, including key contacts for obtaining this information, were identified.
- 2.2.3 The summative assessment plan for the scheme and the previously developed Logic Model were reviewed in advance of the evaluation. The summative assessment plan and the logic model were updated and finalised for the evaluation.
- 2.2.4 In addition to the two key project outcomes identified in the project application, the Summative Assessment Plan and the logic model, the following outcomes were identified for the project:

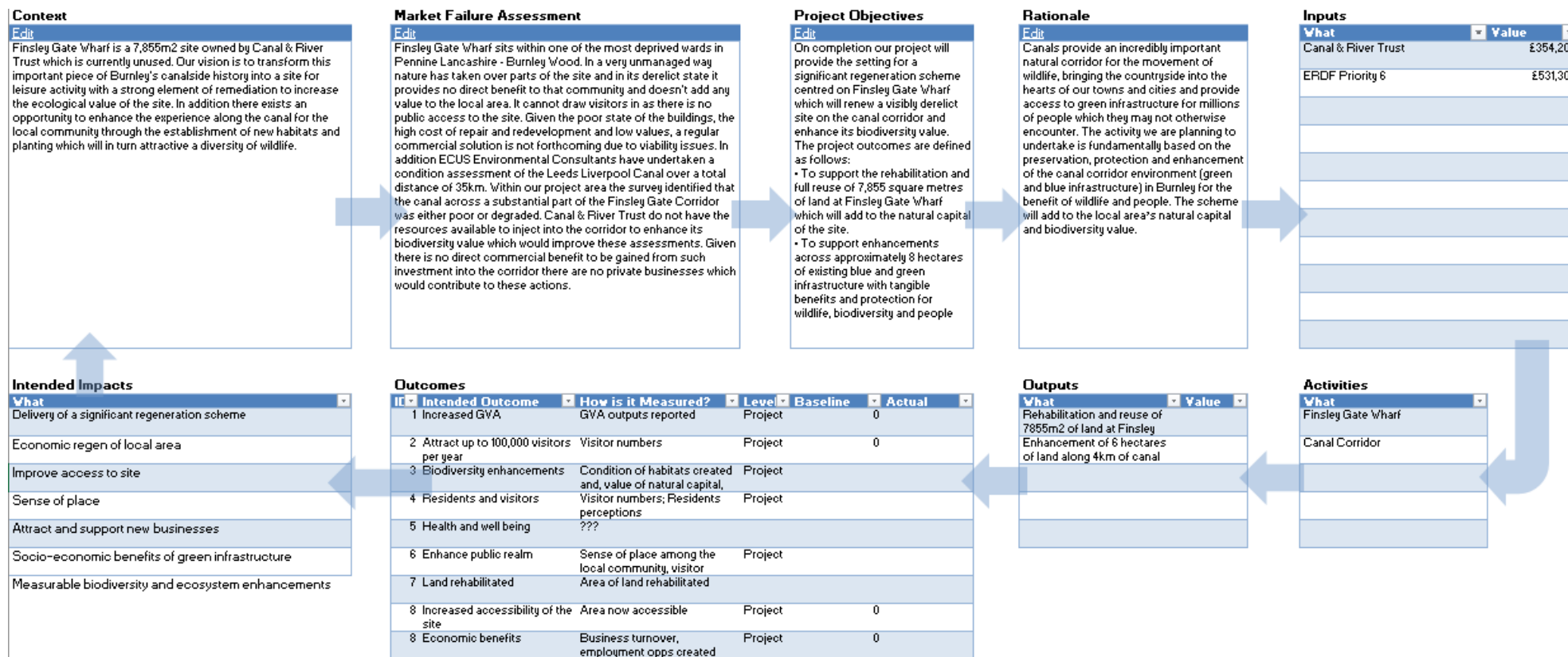
- Increased GVA;
- Attract up to 100,000 visitors per year;
- Biodiversity enhancements;

- Residents and visitors;
- Health and well being;
- Enhance public realm;
- Land rehabilitated;
- Increased accessibility of the site; and
- Economic benefits.

2.2.5 Furthermore, the logic model identified the following intended impacts of the project:

- Delivery of a significant regeneration scheme;
- Economic regen of local area;
- Improve access to site;
- Sense of place;
- Attract and support new businesses;
- Socio-economic benefits of green infrastructure; and
- Measurable biodiversity and ecosystem enhancements.

Finsley Gate Wharf Summative Assessment Logic Model



Data gathering and data analysis

2.2.6 The summative assessment plan and the logic model identified the monitoring data and information required for the evaluation and the following documents were reviewed:

- The original business case and application documents.
- Pre-construction and planning information.
- Project procurement and contract information.
- Delivery programme and records of progress.
- Project finances and budgets, including final account information.
- Interim evaluation reports.
- Project management records and correspondence (where relevant).
- Business Plan, operational budgets and accounts (where possible).
- Data on the use and impacts of the educational facility.

2.2.7 Several site visits were undertaken as part of the data gathering exercise during which key members of the project team and users of the wider Finsley Gate Wharf redevelopment were interviewed to gather qualitative and quantitative information about the delivery of the project and to assess the success of the habitats creation on the canal corridor.

2.2.8 The interviews were designed to refine our understanding of the project and the progress against the original proposal and the programme. The interviews were conducted using a semi-structured interview guide containing key topic headings. This approach was used to ensure that the key achievements and benefits from the project as well as the lessons learnt were adequately covered whilst allowing wider discussion to identify any additional information and evidence of relevance to the assessment.

2.2.9 A site walkover survey was also undertaken to assess the condition of the enhancements on the wharf and along the canal corridor to allow a comparison to be made with a baseline survey of habitat condition which was undertaken prior to the original application being submitted. The results of this survey has provided quantitative data on the progress towards achieving the two project outcome indicators.

2.2.10 A condition grade was assigned to each habitat type dependent on a number of key attributes. The condition grades used were as follows:

- Very Good, no threats or improvements
- Good, some opportunity for improvement
- Satisfactory, opportunities for improvement

- Poor, management required
- Degraded, significant management required

2.2.11 However, it should be noted that at the time the assessment was undertaken some of the canal corridor enhancements had only just been undertaken or were yet to be completed. This included the planting of the floating reedbeds. Therefore, whilst all of the intended activities had been delivered within the project programme, it was too early to make an assessment of the success of some of the enhancements (and whether they would be classified as being delivered to a high standard). This can be considered to be constraint to the summative assessment and it has been taken into account as part of the evaluation and recommendations for further evaluation have been made as part of this report.

3. Summative Assessment

3.1 Introduction

- 3.1.1 The ERDF Summative Assessment guidance sets out the structure of the assessment report in accordance with *ESIF-Form-1-014 ERDF Summative Assessment Report Summary Template v2*.
- 3.1.2 This form has been completed and submitted in accordance with the guidance as an Excel spreadsheet. The findings of the assessment reported in the spreadsheet are presented in this section of the report with a more detailed narrative and additional evidence under the section headings set out in the *ESIF-Form-1-014 ERDF Summative Assessment Report Summary Template v2*.

3.2 Summative Assessment

Project context

What was the project seeking to do?

- 3.2.1 The project aimed to support the rehabilitation and re-use of Finsley Gate Wharf by increasing the biodiversity value of 7,855 m² (0.79 hectares) of land as part regeneration of the wharf and approximately 8 hectares of habitat along the adjacent canal corridor. The outcomes included delivering tangible benefits and protection for wildlife, biodiversity and people, including health and well-being benefits for the local population and improve adjacent land values by providing quality blue and green infrastructure for future development.
- 3.2.2 The project-specific activities were undertaken across two distinct but connected locations within the scheme area. Therefore, there were defined two projects which make up the overall Finsley Gate Canal Corridor scheme.
- 3.2.3 Finsley Gate Wharf – A 7,855m² (0.8 hectare) site owned by Canal & River Trust – which was previously unused. The vision was to transform this important piece of Burnley's canalside history into a site for leisure activity with a strong element of remediation to increase the ecological value of the site. CRT delivered this alongside investment of £2.2m from Heritage Lottery Fund which alongside CRT resources was used to undertake the restoration of the buildings at the site. The ERDF funds were used to deliver the following:
- Break up large areas of concrete and in part replace with green infrastructure landscaping in order to provide improved environmental and biodiversity benefits at the site.
 - Clear and thin out self-seeded and unmanaged trees - in particular sycamore (*Acer pseudoplatanus*), grey alder (*Alnus incana*) and goat willow (*Salix caprea*) in order to replace with native trees and shrubs which will benefit – amongst others - invertebrates and bats.
- Proposed planting: alder (*Alnus glutinosa*) rowan (*Sorbus aucuparia*), whitebeam (*Sorbus*

spp.) silver birch (*Betula pendula*), field maple (*Acer campestre*), guelder rose (*Viburnum opulus*) and dog rose (*Rosa canina*).

- Retain, extend and positively manage some scrub areas across the site in order to provide important bird nesting, foraging habitat and habitat linkage along the corridor.
- Create a drought themed garden on an area currently covered by bracken (*Pteridium aquilinum*) in order to provide a haven for butterflies. Proposed plantings from: Lavender, Rosemary, Sage, Iris, Sedum, Poppies, Festuca and Stipa grasses.
- Create a new pond with an accessible dipping platform in order to provide excellent biodiversity and educational benefits for visitors.
- Re-use an existing derelict Grade II listed building (The Forge) in order to provide a focus for environmental and biodiversity education and information for visitors. Please see also Appendix 1d - Finsley Gate Wharf Forge Plan.
- Erect a swan breeding platform in order to ensure swans currently using the site remain once Finsley Gate Wharf has been regenerated and becomes busier.

3.2.4 Canal Corridor – An existing 4km of canal corridor which includes the water, associated embankments and towpath which is owned by Canal & River Trust. The ERDF Funds were used to deliver the following:

- Clear amenity grasses on towpath verges and re-sow with native wildflowers/grasses in order to provide habitat linkage, general wildlife corridors and bee, butterfly and other invertebrate 'superhighways'.
- Clear small triangular sections of land by three bridges ('bridge holes') and plant with appropriate and beneficial species (eg. alpinas, sedum) in order to provide havens for wildlife and a more visually attractive GI corridor.
- Improve one access point to Finsley Gate Canal Corridor in order to enable more people to access the canal corridor.
- Create marginal fringe along the corridor in order to provide valuable habitat for a variety of wildlife and which will also improve water quality.
- Improve resilience of canal embankment in order to protect and further enhance the green infrastructure benefits across this expanse of land.
- Tree management/planting, site clearance/landscaping, wildflower planting/seeding, shrub planting, climbers, dry stone wall repair (to create boundary and provide home for

invertebrates), bug hotels/wildlife boxes, access enhancements to increase visitors (benches x5, wayfinding and interpretation signage).

- Floating reed beds along the canal corridor fringe planted with native emergent aquatic vegetation.

What was the economic and policy context at the time that the project was designed?

- 3.2.5 The scheme is located in one of the most deprived local authority areas in the UK although Burnley had been performing well in terms of private sector job creation. The scheme is in an EU designated “Assisted Area” and is a key development site in Lancashire.

What were the specific market failures that the project was seeking to address? Was there a strong rationale for the project?

- 3.2.6 Previous attempts to regenerate the site and identify a new use failed because no solutions were financially viable, e.g. developers have previously turned down the opportunity due to the restoration costs being too high. The site is located in the ‘Weavers Triangle’, an area the local authority had identified as potential facilitator of regeneration in Burnley. Previous investment nearby, particularly the University of Central Lancashire (UCLAN) campus and other public spaces have demonstrated that high quality development can provide positive conditions for growth. This helped to underpin the rationale for the wharf and canal corridor habitat enhancements to contribute to wider economic and social regeneration within Burnley as part of the Finsley Gate Wharf redevelopment as a whole. This also fits with the wider Priority Axis 6 objectives of resources delivering more efficient ecological services and quality of life benefits to the communities they serve through the preservation, protection and enhancement of the canal corridor.

Was it appropriately designed to achieve its objectives? Was the delivery model appropriate?

- 3.2.7 In principle, yes. Both the enhancements to the wharf and the canal corridor were appropriately designed. The outcomes at the wharf in particular indicate that both the design and delivery were appropriate. The remediation and rehabilitation of the wharf was delivered successfully to enable the wider redevelopment of the site which was completed using funding from other sources. Finsley Gate Wharf is now fully redeveloped and supports a thriving business.
- 3.2.8 However, based on the evaluation there are a number of lessons learnt with regards to the design and delivery of the canal corridor enhancements. Some feedback from members of the project team indicates that this was viewed as an ‘add on’ later in the project rather than a key part of the original proposals. This may be a reason why some of the enhancements along the canal corridor have been assessed as not achieving some of the intended outputs, in particular the quality of some of the habitat creation. The canal corridor enhancements and the reasons why they did not fully achieve some of the intended outcomes are discussed in detail later in this report.

Were the targets set for the project realistic and achievable?

- 3.2.9 In principle the targets were realistic and achievable, particularly on the wharf element, where the specific target of rehabilitating 0.79 hectares of land to enable the wider redevelopment was achieved. However, there are a number of lessons learnt which have been identified in relation to project planning, communication in relation to the canal corridor enhancements which are discussed as part of the summative assessment.

How did the context change as the project was delivered and did this exert any particular pressures on project delivery?

- 3.2.10 The context for the project did not change materially. The main pressures on the project were from unforeseeable issues during delivery of the canal corridor enhancements and relating to the planning of the project. These issues along the canal corridor are discussed as part of this summative assessment report. Covid-19 also had an impact during the initial stages of the project delivery mainly through delays as result of the first lockdown preventing CRT staff and contractors working on the site.

Bearing in mind any changes in context or weaknesses in the project design / logic model, can the project reasonably be expected to perform well against its targets?

- 3.2.11 Overall the project will perform well against its targets although it is anticipated that some of the canal corridor enhancements will not achieve the planned outcomes in the short term. The reasons for this and further recommendations to address them are discussed in detail later in this report.

Project progress

Has the project delivered what it expected to in terms of spend and outputs?

- 3.2.12 Overall, the project has delivered what was expected based on the budget and the outcomes identified. Although there were some changes to the canal corridor work, mainly as result of unforeseen issues, it was completed within the original budget. The specific details of the spend and outputs performance are summarised in Table F1 later in this section of the report.
- 3.2.13 The habitat enhancements delivered as part of the wharf element of the project have been a particular success in terms of habitat improvement as part of the wider regeneration of Finsley Gate Wharf. There is evidence that this has led to greater levels of community engagement. As a result of the habitat improvement at the site and the implementation of the soft landscaping scheme a local community group now voluntarily tends the gardens. This demonstrates the contribution of the project to the delivery of wider local policies and strategies for economic development, cultural regeneration, sense of place and tourism.
- 3.2.14 There have been some changes to the delivery of the canal corridor enhancements from the original plans, which have limited the achievement of the some of the intended outputs. These

changes were due to a variety of factors, some of which could have been better accounted for at the planning stage, and some which were totally unforeseen (e.g. vandalism). Furthermore, the delivery of the some of the corridor enhancements has led to some areas not achieving the desired outcomes in terms of habitat enhancement. This might also be due to the corridor elements being included at a later stage in the project than the wharf.

What are the factors which explain this performance?

- 3.2.15 The main unforeseen factor which affected the canal corridor involved vandalism of the first few floating reedbeds installed on the straight mile, which runs immediately to the north of the wharf. This led to the planned locations of the floating reedbeds being fundamentally changed to avoid further losses to vandalism. This is an issue which could not have realistically been foreseen or avoided and it has been mitigated successfully. Some other enhancements were affected by the discovery of Japanese Knotweed, an invasive non-native species, which required amendments to the original plans.
- 3.2.16 During the delivery of the canal corridor enhancements some planting on the embankment along the straight mile was vetoed by the CRT engineers on the basis of safety concerns. There were also issues relating to land ownership on areas originally identified for planting. In combination, these issues meant that some planting locations were moved and budgets were amended accordingly.
- 3.2.17 Furthermore, the aftercare and the management of some of the areas of planting has led to some losses. This includes areas planted along the canal corridor between Finsley Gate Wharf and the UCLAN campus to the north west of the wharf. Some specimens have not been watered and some were planted in areas, which in hindsight, were perhaps not appropriate. This has also led to some losses.
- 3.2.18 Overall, the project was still delivered within budget and the intended biodiversity outcomes remained the same.
- 3.2.19 The project was also delivered during the Covid-19 outbreak which added some complexity and delays although the project team were able to broadly mitigate these.

When the project draws to a close, is it expected to have achieved what it set out to?

- 3.2.20 The project can be considered as two separate but linked deliverables:
- the enhancements as part of the wharf regeneration; and
 - the canal corridor improvements. All proposed activities have been delivered within budget and programme.
- 3.2.21 The enhancements to the wharf have been delivered in line with the original objectives. There are

elements of the canal corridor which have been changed in relation to planting details and locations of some of the interventions. Furthermore, there are some enhancements which have not been as successful as originally intended.

3.2.22 The Spend and Output table (Table F.1) for the project summarises progress against the relevant indicators for the project.

Table F1. Spend and Output Performance

Indicator	Targets		Performance at time of evaluation		Projected Performance at Project Closure		Overall Assessment
	Original	Adjusted (if relevant)	No.	% of Target	No.	% of Target	
ERDF Capital Expenditure (£m)	£510,000.00	£521,200.20	£521,200.20	100%	£521,200.20	100%	
ERDF Revenue Expenditure (£m)	£21,300.00	£10,099.80	£10,099.80	100%	£10,099.80	100%	
(C22) Total surface area of rehabilitated land (hectares)	0.79	0.79	0.79	100%	0.79	100%	
(C23) Surface area of habitats supported in order to attain better conservation status (hectares)	8	8	8	100%	8	100%	

Project management and delivery

Was the project well managed? Were the right governance and management structures in place and did they operate in the way they were expected to?

3.2.23 Overall, the project was well managed. There were individual project managers responsible for the wharf and the canal corridor aspects. Cost control and delivery to programme were judged to be well managed based on all of the intended interventions being delivered within the programme and within the project budget.

3.2.24 Some issues relating to complexity of the project were identified. Furthermore, changes to the overall project management team early in the project led to additional complexities although ultimately this did not affect the overall delivery of the intended outcomes. There were also some changes to specific project management roles during the project, although with no noticeable effects. It was also highlighted that there were separate budgets from the same grant for the wharf and canal corridor elements which led to additional complexity, although ultimately the project was delivered within the original budget.

Has the project delivered its intended activities to a high standard?

3.2.25 On the wharf the habitat enhancement was delivered to a high standard. The enhancements are

visible and quantifiable in terms of habitat improvements. The area is highly visible, connected to the wharf development and accessible to visitors. In particular, the woodland on site has been significantly enhanced and a measurable improvement in habitat condition was recorded in a relatively short space of time. This is quantified and discussed in more detail later in this section of the report.

3.2.26 On the canal corridor some activities have been delivered to a high standard although some improvements are harder to determine due to a number of factors. This is mainly due to the following key factors:

- The planting of the floating reedbeds being delivered at the end of the project meaning a robust determination of the success of this planting and the condition of the habitat was not possible at the time of the assessment; and
- Poor planning and aftercare of some areas of enhancement along the canal corridor have led to some failures and areas where intended outcomes have not been achieved.

3.2.27 The dry stone wall improvements have been completed to a high standard using a local contractor. Direct feedback from canal users, gathered by CRT, indicates that canal users have reacted positively to these changes.

3.2.28 The planting of the floating reedbeds was completed only a short time before the end of the funding period (July 2022) and some of them were planted after the assessment had taken place. Therefore, whilst the intended activities have been delivered within the programme it is too early to make an assessment of the success of the planting (and whether it would be classified as being delivered to a high standard). This is something which should be further evaluated over the next 12 months as the beds become established and for a further period of time to monitor their continued progress.

3.2.29 The success of some habitat enhancements is difficult to determine, including planting of shrubs, wildflowers and hedges, some of which appear to have failed due to either poor planning, inadequate aftercare or using inappropriate locations. However, it might also be that some enhancements will become more apparent over time and should be evaluated further in the future. Habitat creation projects are complex and many of the benefits are realised over longer periods of time than those available for this summative assessment. Some habitats can take many years to become fully established and to achieve their target condition.

3.2.30 On the canal corridor a number of other activities will be completed before the end of the funding period, including access enhancements and the installation of bird and bat boxes. However, these were not in place at the time this evaluation was undertaken.

Could the delivery of the project have been improved in any way?

- 3.2.31 The structured consultation with the project team identified a number of common themes in relation to improvements to the project.
- 3.2.32 The project would have benefited from better communication within the project team and within CRT more widely to reduce changes to the planting on the canal corridor, specifically to avoid the CRT engineers' concerns around embankment access and land ownership.
- 3.2.33 Better planning for the aftercare and management of the canal corridor enhancements would have mitigated some of the losses which have occurred following the initial planting and seeding.
- 3.2.34 There is also some uncertainty about the maintenance of the floating reedbeds beyond the end of the funding period.

For projects with direct beneficiaries: did the project engage with and select the right beneficiaries? Were the right procedures and criteria in place to ensure the project focused on the right beneficiaries?

- 3.2.35 N/A – this project does not have direct beneficiaries.

How are project activities perceived by stakeholders and beneficiaries? What are their perceptions of the quality of activities / delivery?

- 3.2.36 A proportion of the enhancements along the canal corridor has not been completed at the time of the assessment, particularly the more visible enhancements such as the floating reedbeds. Therefore, there has been no opportunity to undertake a formal assessment of how the project is perceived by stakeholders and beneficiaries, i.e. the canal corridor users, since the completion of the enhancements. However, CRT has received direct feedback that demonstrates a positive perception among canal users and the local community of both the improvements at the wharf and the canal corridor. It is recommended that further feedback be gathered during the CRT's periodic canal user surveys.

To what extent have the horizontal principles been integrated into and shaped delivery?

- 3.2.37 This project specifically supports the Sustainable Development principles as an environmental enhancement project. In particular, the enhancements at the wharf have directly enabled the economic development of the area through the redevelopment of the buildings, creation of new businesses and new employment opportunities.
- 3.2.38 The way in which it supports other principles such as Equal Opportunities and Non-Discrimination, and Equality Between Men and Women are harder to ascertain. However, qualitative data gathered through the consultation process during the summative assessment indicates a greater number of canal users from Black and Ethnic Minority (BAME) communities using the canal corridor around the wharf.

Project outcomes and impacts

What progress has the project made towards achieving the outcome and impacts set out in its logic model?

3.2.39 Two project outcomes were required to be achieved for ERDF:

- To support the rehabilitation and full reuse of 0.79 hectares of land at Finsley Gate Wharf which will add to the natural capital of the site.
- To support enhancements across approximately 8 hectares of existing blue and green infrastructure with tangible benefits and protection for wildlife, biodiversity and people.

3.2.40 As previously discussed, the ERDF funding was specifically for the rehabilitation of the wharf site and the canal corridor enhancements and is distinct from other funding obtained from the Lottery Heritage Fund and the CRT to deliver the overall redevelopment of the buildings and other structures at Finsley Gate Wharf. Therefore, this summative assessment is limited to whether the project has achieved the two project outcomes identified in the original project application, the Summative Assessment Plan and the logic model, as detailed earlier in this report.

3.2.41 A number of other project outcomes and intended impacts were also identified in the logic model which in reality will be delivered directly as a result of the overall redevelopment of Finsley Gate Wharf (funded through the Lottery Heritage Fund and CRT) rather than directly as a result of the work funded by ERDF. These were as follows:

- Increased GVA;
- Attract up to 100,000 visitors per year;
- Biodiversity enhancements;
- Residents and visitors;
- Health and well being;
- Enhance public realm;
- Land rehabilitated;
- Increased accessibility of the site; and
- Economic benefits.

3.2.42 The logic model identified the following intended impacts of the project:

- Delivery of a significant regeneration scheme;
- Economic regen of local area;
- Improve access to site;

- Sense of place;
- Attract and support new businesses;
- Socio-economic benefits of green infrastructure; and
- Measurable biodiversity and ecosystem enhancements.

3.2.43 The ERDF funding for the rehabilitation and full reuse of 0.79 hectares of land at Finsley Gate Wharf was intended to support the delivery of the initial remediation and rehabilitation of the site to enable the delivery of the wider redevelopment of the wharf. The project application states:

“We [CRT] have now secured investment of £2.2m from Heritage Lottery Fund which alongside Canal & River Trust resources will be used to undertake the restoration of the buildings at the site. At Finsley Gate Wharf using European Regional Development Funds through Priority Axis 6 we will directly contribute to the objectives of that priority through the following actions.”

3.2.44 The summative assessment has considered these wider outcomes and impacts and how the work delivered using ERDF funding has contributed to achieving them, whilst acknowledging that many of the specific outcomes and impacts will be as a direct result of work undertaken using other funding sources.

3.2.45 Table 1 summarises the intended outcomes for the project based on the logic model

Table 1. Summary of intended outcomes for the project

Outcome	How is it measured	Achieved	Direct / Indirect	Evidence
Increased GVA	GVA outputs reported	Yes	Indirect	Table F2 summarises Gross and Net Additional Impact for Employment and GVA. Rehabilitation and full reuse of 0.79 hectares of land at Finsley Gate Wharf has enabled wider redevelopment of the site and supported the creation of new businesses.
Attract up to 100,000 visitors per year	Visitor numbers	No	Indirect	A full report on visitor number to Finsley Gate Wharf is yet to be completed although figures currently from the wharf operators indicate this is approximately 1,000 per week.
Biodiversity enhancements	Condition of habitats created and, value of natural capital, biodiversity value	Yes	Direct	Rehabilitation and full reuse of 0.79 hectares of land at Finsley Gate Wharf. Measurable improvement habitat condition (see Table 2) Measurable habitat creation and enhancement across 8 hectares of canal corridor (see Table 2)
Residents and visitors	Visitor numbers; Residents perceptions	Yes	Direct	Visitor numbers have increased from 0 to >1,000 per week as a result of the rehabilitation and full reuse of 0.79 hectares of land at Finsley Gate Wharf. Creation of one new business providing new services to the local area. Local community groups tending the landscaped areas on a voluntary basis. School and community groups using the forge building.
Health and well being	Increased numbers of people using the canal corridor for recreation and exercise	Yes	Direct	Visitor numbers have increased from 0 as a result of the rehabilitation and full reuse of 0.79 hectares of land at Finsley Gate Wharf. Canal corridor enhancements have not been in place for sufficient time to enable robust measurement health and well being impacts.
Enhance public realm	Sense of place among the local community, visitor numbers, businesses attracted	Yes	Direct	Visitor numbers have increased from 0 as a result of the rehabilitation and full reuse of 0.79 hectares of land at Finsley Gate Wharf. Local community groups tending the landscaped areas on a voluntary basis. One new community group set up by CRT at the wharf One new business created at the redeveloped wharf. Additional education space created in the Forge building for use by CRT and local community groups. New meeting/conference space created at the wharf. New overnight accommodation created at the wharf. Evidence of more BAME community members using the canal corridor.
Land rehabilitated	Area of land rehabilitated	Yes	Direct	Rehabilitation and full reuse of 0.79 hectares of land at Finsley Gate Wharf.
Increased accessibility of the site	Area now accessible	Yes	Direct	Rehabilitation and full reuse of 0.79 hectares of land at Finsley Gate Wharf has enabled full access to the site and enabled the wider redevelopment of the wharf.
Economic benefits	Business turnover, employment opps created	Yes	Indirect	One new business created at the wharf. Business turnover yet to be confirmed. XX FTE employment opportunities created. New meeting/conference space created at the wharf. New overnight accommodation created at the wharf.

Table 2. Intended impacts for the project

Impacts	How is it measured	Achieved	Direct / Indirect	Evidence
Delivery of a significant regeneration scheme	Area of land rehabilitated	Yes	Direct	Rehabilitation and full reuse of 0.79 hectares of land at Finsley Gate Wharf.
Economic regen of local area	Businesses created, employment opportunities	Yes	Indirect	One new business created at the wharf. Business turnover yet to be confirmed. XX FTE employment opportunities created. New meeting/conference space created at the wharf. New overnight accommodation created at the wharf.
Improve access to site	Area now accessible	Yes	Direct	Rehabilitation and full reuse of 0.79 hectares of land at Finsley Gate Wharf has enabled full access to the site and enabled the wider redevelopment of the wharf.
Sense of place	Sense of place among the local community, visitor numbers, businesses attracted	Yes	Direct	Visitor numbers have increased from 0 to c.1,000 per week as a result of the rehabilitation and full reuse of 0.79 hectares of land at Finsley Gate Wharf. Local community groups tending the landscaped areas on a voluntary basis. One new business created at the redeveloped wharf. Additional education space created in the Forge building for use by CRT and local community groups. One new community group at the wharf established by CRT New meeting/conference space created at the wharf. New overnight accommodation created at the wharf. Evidence of more BAME community members using the canal corridor.
Attract and support new businesses	Business turnover, employment opps created	Yes	Indirect	One new business created at the wharf. Business turnover yet to be confirmed. XX FTE employment opportunities created. New meeting/conference space created at the wharf. New overnight accommodation created at the wharf.
Socio-economic benefits of green infrastructure	Visitor numbers, Sense of place among the local community, businesses attracted	TBC	Direct	Canal corridor enhancements have not been in place for sufficient time to enable robust measurement health and well being impacts. New links formed with Burnley Woods community group and exploring potential joint funding opportunities
Measurable biodiversity and ecosystem enhancements	Condition of habitats created and, value of natural capital, biodiversity value	Yes	Direct	Rehabilitation and full reuse of 0.79 hectares of land at Finsley Gate Wharf. Measurable improvement habitat condition (see Table 2) Measurable habitat creation and enhancement across 8 hectares of canal corridor (see Table 2)

3.2.46 A number of additional points should be noted to support the delivery of the intended outcomes and impacts:

- The tree and vegetation clearance has enabled the redevelopment of the wharf and are a key part of the overall regeneration of Finsley Gate Wharf.
- The habitat enhancements do not directly contribute to economic regeneration but are a key part of the regeneration of the wharf.
- The wharf enhancements are beginning to result in visitor numbers and community engagement.
- Indirectly the project is supporting the new business on site through visitor numbers and community engagement.
- Biodiversity improvements on the wharf include tree planting to the rear of the wharf and Forge buildings. Canal corridor enhancements will contribute in a more diffuse way.
- The project has increased accessibility to the site as part of the wharf regeneration. Enhancements to the public realm is evidenced by local volunteers who tend the gardens. Access enhancements along the canal provide a more welcoming experience for canal users.
- Qualitative evidence indicates that the wharf enhancements and the Forge are attracting more residents and visitors. There is also direct evidence that at least one job has been created for a resident of the local area.
- Qualitative evidence indicates that the wharf enhancements are attracting more residents and community volunteers. This is evidenced by

To what extent are the changes in relevant impact and outcome indicators attributable to project activities?

3.2.47 As discussed previously, the ERDF funding was specifically for the rehabilitation of the wharf site and the canal corridor enhancements and is distinct from other funding obtained from the Lottery Heritage Fund and the CRT to deliver the overall redevelopment of the buildings and other structures at Finsley Gate Wharf. Therefore, the assessment is limited to whether the project has achieved the two project outcomes identified in the original project application, the Summative Assessment Plan and the logic model, as detailed earlier in this report.

3.2.48 However, a number of other project outcomes and intended impacts were also identified in the logic model which in reality will be delivered directly as a result of the overall redevelopment of Finsley Gate Wharf (funded through the Lottery Heritage Fund and CRT) rather than directly as a result of the work funded by ERDF.

3.2.49 Therefore, Tables 1 and 2 summarise the delivery of the impact and outcome indicators for the project, along with the evidence to demonstrate their achievement, and whether they are classified as direct or indirectly attributable to the project activities.

3.2.50 The primary impact and outcome indicators for this project have made a measurable contribution to the regeneration of Finsley Gate Wharf through the site clearance to enable the main

construction works and create an accessible woodland habitat.

- 3.2.51 It has made a clear contribution to the accessibility of the site, sense of place and the socio-economic benefits of the blue/green infrastructure. The wharf enhancements have opened up the site and can demonstrate measurable biodiversity and ecosystem enhancements. Added value comes from the landscaping attracting community volunteers to tend the gardens.
- 3.2.52 The benefits on the canal corridor are more difficult to assess. The floating reedbeds have only recently been fully planted, other activities are being completed at the time of evaluation and some enhancements have not been as successful as anticipated. The dry stone walling and some areas which have been planted up/seeded have attracted positive feedback.

What are the gross and net additional economic, social and environmental benefits of the project (where relevant and applicable to project activities)?

3.2.53 The economic benefits are difficult to quantify as it contributes to a wider project which drives the majority of the economic activity. Social benefits include greater community engagement. Environmental benefits are driven by the works carried out under the grant funding. The direct and indirect outcomes and impacts are summarised in Tables 1 and 2. The Gross and Net Additional Impact for Employment and GVA are summarised in table F2.

Table F2. Gross and Net Additional Impact for Employment and GVA

		Impact Area 1: Lancashire LEP	
		Measure	Adjustment
Impact Indicator: Employment Unit = FTEs	Gross Impact	42	FTE estimate derived from data on jobs created at the businesses on the wharf
	Deadweight / reference	25.62	39% City Challenge Programme and Project Manager survey-based estimate (average) for environment and amenity
	Displacement / substitution	19.2	25% Displacement factors by type of intervention for Regeneration through physical infrastructure– BIS/CEA guidance
	Leakage	16.5	14% Leakage factors by type of intervention for Regeneration through physical
	Net Additional	22.0	1.33 Composite multipliers by type of intervention for Regeneration through physical infrastructure– BIS/CEA guidance
Impact Indicator: GVA Unit = £ms	Gross Impact	£920,556.00	Lancashire economy-wide average GVA per FTE 2017 applied
	Deadweight / reference	£561,539.16	39% City Challenge Programme and Project Manager survey-based estimate (average) for environment and amenity
	Displacement / substitution	£421,154.37	25% Displacement factors by type of intervention for Regeneration through physical infrastructure– BIS/CEA guidance
	Leakage	£362,192.76	14% Leakage factors by type of intervention for Regeneration through physical
	Net Additional	£481,716.37	1.33 Composite multipliers by type of intervention for Regeneration through physical infrastructure– BIS/CEA guidance

Can these benefits be quantified and attributed to the project in a statistically robust way?

To what extent has / will the project contribute to the achievement of ERDF programme result indicators?

3.2.54 The outcome indicators for the project were as follows:

- (C22) Total surface area of rehabilitated land: 0.79 hectares; and
- (C23) Surface area of habitats supported in order to attain better conservation status: 8 hectares.

3.2.55 Both of these outcome indicators have been assessed as having been achieved. For indicator C22, the site has been regenerated to enable the wider redevelopment of Finsley Gate Wharf. This has included improvements to the onsite habitats including the woodland as well as soft landscaping and enhancements to the small canal basin immediately adjacent to the wharf. For indicator C23, a further 8 hectares along the canal corridor have been enhanced, albeit with a mixed degree of success.

3.2.56 Prior to the application being submitted a baseline survey was undertaken to establish the environmental condition of the canal corridor. A walkover survey was undertaken at the end of the project, following the completion of the majority of the canal corridor enhancement works, to provide an update on the original baseline survey. As part of this survey, an assessment of the likely future condition of the habitats in the areas of enhancement on the canal corridor was made. This is summarised in Table 3.

Table 3. Summary of habitat condition for the enhancements at Finsley Gate Wharf

Habitat assets	Baseline condition	Current condition	Target condition
Open water	Degraded, significant management required	Degraded, significant management required	Satisfactory, opportunities for improvement
Marginal fringe	Degraded, significant management required	Degraded, significant management required	Good, some opportunity for improvement
Grassland	Poor, management required	Poor, management required	Satisfactory, opportunities for improvement
Woodland (Canal corridor)	Degraded, significant management required	Satisfactory, opportunities for improvement	Good, some opportunity for improvement
Hedgerow	Not present	Satisfactory, opportunities for improvement	Very Good, no threats or improvements
Woodland (Wharf)	Poor, management required	Satisfactory, opportunities for improvement	Good, some opportunity for improvement

3.2.57 Therefore, these benefits can be quantified in a robust way. The biodiversity enhancements implemented as part of the project have been measured and a habitat condition has been assigned

to each of the habitats. This has enabled a comparison with a baseline survey which was carried out prior to the application being submitted. This survey identified the condition of the habitats at the wharf and the canal corridor.

- 3.2.58 On the wharf there have been measurable biodiversity enhancements and improvements to the condition of the existing habitats on site. This relates mainly to the woodland located behind the redeveloped buildings, which prior to this project was assessed to be poor with improvement and management required. The habitat enhancement completed as part of the regeneration of the wharf has led to a substantial improvement in the condition of the woodland through extensive new woodland planting and new woodland understorey planting.
- 3.2.59 Figures 2 and 4 later in this section provide a good visual comparison between the state of the woodland prior to the redevelopment of the wharf and the current condition of the woodland enhancements with the enhancements. In particular, it shows a clear distinction between the new woodland planting at the fringe of the existing woodland behind the wharf buildings, and the lack of understorey structure prior to the redevelopment. Figure 4 also provides an indication of the emerging soft landscaping which has been delivered as part of the regeneration of the wharf.
- 3.2.60 On the canal corridor, the results are more mixed and the reasons for this are discussed in more detail in 'project value for money' section later in this report. There are several areas of enhancement along the canal corridor where planting and seeding has either failed or for which aftercare has not been managed effectively. Figures 6 and 7 illustrate examples of where planting of native species has failed or is currently assessed to be in poor condition.
- 3.2.61 Furthermore, the floating reedbeds were planted at the end of the project programme and at the time of the assessment had not been fully stocked with the proposed planting. Therefore, the condition of the enhancements around the margins of the canal corridor could not be assessed to be of more than a 'degraded' condition as there were not actual habitats to assess. This is something which should be further evaluated over the next 12 months and beyond as the reedbeds become established.
- 3.2.62 Habitat creation projects are complex and multi-faceted. Measuring the benefits and benchmarking outputs against previously measured baselines is difficult. This is particularly the case with this project where the enhancements had only just been delivered, and in some cases were only partially complete or had not been completed at all. Habitat management plans are generally developed to deliver target condition status for habitats over a thirty year period. This is particularly the case for woodland planting which take a significant time to establish and mature.



Figure 1. Finsley Gate Wharf prior to rehabilitation and redevelopment



Figure 2. The Forge building prior to rehabilitation and redevelopment



Figure 3. Finsley Gate Wharf post redevelopment



Figure 4. Finsley Gate Wharf post redevelopment illustrating habitat improvements and soft landscaping



Figure 5. Are of canal corridor enhancement – reedbeds immediately adjacent to the wharf



Figure 6. An example of apparently failed planting along the canal corridor



Figure 7. An example of planting in poor condition along the canal corridor

What are the main sources of Strategic Added Value that the project has created?

3.2.63 The two main areas of strategic added value are:

1. Contribution to positive conditions for economic growth and social regeneration in Burnley in combination with wider developments in the Weavers Triangle including the UCLAN campus.
2. Improved local community engagement through attracting volunteers from the local community to tend the gardens.

Project value for money

Please provide a brief analysis of the value for money that the project has provided and, where possible, benchmarks against other similar interventions.

- 3.2.64 Habitat creation projects are complex and multi-faceted. Measuring the benefits and benchmarking outputs against other projects is difficult. Interventions are site specific and tailored to the local environment, climate, topography and landscape. They should be assessed in isolation and comparison to other interventions must be treated carefully. They should also be assessed in the context of any wider projects which they are part of contribute to.
- 3.2.65 The project should be considered as two separate but linked interventions. The first aimed to support the rehabilitation and re-use of Finsley Gate Wharf by increasing the biodiversity value of 0.79 hectares of land as part regeneration of the wharf and the second to enhance approximately 8 hectares of habitat along the adjacent canal corridor.
- 3.2.66 The outcomes included delivering tangible benefits and protection for wildlife, biodiversity and people, including health and well-being benefits for the local population and improve adjacent land values by providing quality blue and green infrastructure for future development.

Wharf enhancements

- 3.2.67 The refurbishment of the forge and stables has delivered a high quality educational facility which retains a significant proportion of the heritage of the original buildings. It is fulfilling the outcomes relating to visitor numbers, the regeneration of the wider wharf
- 3.2.68 The habitat enhancements delivered as part of the wharf element of the project in particular have been a success in terms of habitat improvement as part of the wider regeneration of Finsley Gate Wharf. This has contributed to the accessibility of the site and led to a marked improvement in the quality of the onsite habitat.

Canal corridor enhancements

- 3.2.69 There are some activities along the canal corridor which could be considered as not providing value for money. These include areas of planting and seeding which have either failed or for which aftercare has not been managed effectively.
- 3.2.70 Furthermore, the floating reedbeds appear expensive for the overall improvement to biodiversity along the canal corridor in the context of the area of new habitat they will provide. However, the choices made should be considered in the context of the site itself. Improving the habitats around the margins of the aquatic environment of the canal corridor provides limited (and for the majority of its length no) opportunity due to the nature of the environment (little or no marginal substrate for planting, hard retaining structures such as buildings and retaining walls). Therefore, from a habitat enhancement perspective within the aquatic corridor of the canal, the floating reedbeds can be considered an appropriate selection from a practical point of view. They also provide the potential for enhancement where otherwise there would be no natural vegetation. Furthermore, the costs also include the physical placement of the reedbeds from within the canal, which involved specialist craft.
- 3.2.71 It should also be noted that the reedbeds were planted towards the end of the funding period and it is too early to make an assessment of the success and value for money of the planting. This is something which should be further evaluated over the next 12 months and beyond as the beds become established.

Conclusions and lessons learnt

Please provide a brief description of the strengths and weaknesses of the project

Please use quantitative data to illustrate your conclusions (e.g. achievement of financials and outputs, of outcomes and impacts etc.) and complete 'Spend and outputs performance' and 'Gross and Net impact' in the next two worksheets.

Strengths

- 3.2.72 The grant recipient has shown robust project management, robust cost control and ability to deliver to programme. The project was delivered in full within the prescribed programme and within the revised budget.
- 3.2.73 The project management team demonstrated flexibility and responsiveness to the enforced and unforeseeable changes to the enhancements along the canal corridor enhancements as a result of vandalism. An alternative solution, and one with arguably more impact, was quickly identified and implemented within the existing budget for this aspect of the project.
- 3.2.74 The enhancements on the Wharf have been well integrated with the wider Finsley Gate Wharf regeneration and have demonstrably achieved a key objective for the project as a whole, which is improving accessibility to the site. These enhancements have also improved the accessibility to the habitats and wildlife on site.
- 3.2.75 The redevelopment of the Forge is contributing to wider community engagement through school visits and other community activities. Its proximity to the habitat enhancements and the accessibility of these from the Forge is also a key strength of the project.
- 3.2.76 The enhancements at the wharf have played an important role in engaging people from the local community with residents from local community tending the gardens on a voluntary basis. This is also considered to make a positive contribution to the sense of place, enhanced public realm and potentially wellbeing, although this is much more difficult to measure.

Weaknesses

- 3.2.77 Multiple project management changes (both at ERDF and within CRT) resulted in additional complexities to the project.
- 3.2.78 The assessment has highlighted the need for better communication within CRT around issues such as land ownership and accessibility due to safety issues. This resulted in changes to the planting proposals along the canal corridor.
- 3.2.79 The canal corridor element felt like a bit of an 'add on' later in the project and as such was not planned as effectively as it could have been. There was also a need for more effective project planning for the canal corridor enhancements, particularly around the co-ordination of the reedbed placement and the planting of the aquatic plants. This was delayed until the end of the project which limited the time for plants to establish prior to the summative assessment. More effective project planning also applies to the planning of aftercare of seeding and planting along the canal corridor which has seen the greatest degree of failure.
- 3.2.80 Some feedback has indicated that there should be more time allocated within the project team to review landscape and planting proposals and to manage consultants to ensure successful delivery

of outcomes.

3.2.81 There was a missed opportunity to clear some invasive plant species (particularly Himalayan Balsam) from the embankment adjacent to the straight mile which could have opened up further areas for habitat enhancement.

Insert comments on specific lessons for the following audience (max 250 words per box):

Grant Recipient/ project delivery body

3.2.82 There are a number of lessons learnt which have been identified on this project:

- Consider land access and landownership early in a project such as this one. This would involve wider consultation and engagement within the organisation to ensure that all potential interests are taken into account. This would ensure that planned interventions are realistic and implementable, or that appropriate changes can be made where constraints are identified.
- Ensure that any seasonal constraints with regard to habitat manipulation and planting is considered at the application stage and integrated into project planning from an early stage in project delivery. This would ensure that potential project delays are minimised and that planting and seeding are done at the appropriate times of year to maximise the chances of the interventions succeeding. This would also ensure that proposed species are available at the time of planting through more effective forward planning.
- Ensure that the aftercare of seeding and planting is considered early in the project and that it is planned and budgeted for. This would help to minimise the potential losses from a lack of maintenance following planting and that subsequent management regimes are appropriate to maximise the success of seeding and planting.
- Consider the need for early engagement with external bodies such as local planning authorities to ensure sufficient time to obtain planning permissions and other consents. This would help to minimise delays.

Those designing and implementing similar interventions

3.2.83 Many of the lessons learnt identified for the grant recipient / project delivery body are equally applicable to other organisations designing and implementing similar interventions. In addition to these, the following should be considered:

- It is important to identify constraints and opportunities at an early stage in the project. This can be done through site walkovers and detailed ecology, landscape and arboriculture surveys. This will help to identify any potential constraints to the project, such as the presence of protected species or invasive species which might need to be dealt with either under a licence

or using specialist contractors, or ground conditions / topography which might lead to specific challenges.

- This approach will also help to identify appropriate planting and habitat manipulation in relation to the specific characteristics of the site, the wider habitats and the local landscape character.
- Early planning for habitat creation will also help to identify any issues relating to the seasonality of habitat creation and planting and can support more efficient procurement of specimens by targeting periods of lower demand to maximise the availability of plants. This is particularly an issue at the moment due to high demand for certain plans (trees for instance) as a result of large-scale infrastructure projects such as HS2.
- Ensure close engagement of all specific disciplines within the organisation and the supply chain. The success of habitat manipulation schemes depend on collaboration between ecologists, landscape architects, arboriculturists (where relevant), contractors and suppliers.
- Include the long-term management and maintenance within the project plan and ensure sufficient budget to maximise the sustainability of the scheme.

Policy makers

3.2.84 Habitat creation projects are complex and multi-faceted. Measuring the benefits and benchmarking outputs against other projects is difficult. Therefore, it should be understood that interventions are almost always site specific and must be tailored to the local connected habitats, local climate, topography and landscape character. As a result they must be treated in isolation rather than in comparison to other interventions. In doing so it would be helpful to identify site- or project-specific metrics rather than generic ones which might not necessarily be appropriate.

3.2.85 Furthermore, it is important to engage relevant specialist disciplines at an early stage in the project to ensure that all of these variables are considered and that site-specific constraints are identified early and mitigated for as much as possible.

3.2.86 However, there are some common themes and lessons learnt which have been identified throughout this summative assessment and which can be applied to other habitat creation and manipulation projects. In essence, plan early, engage specialists, and understand the local context and seasonal constraints in relation to the proposed interventions. Finally, ensure that the long-term management of the habitats is considered as part of the project to minimise the chances of failure and to maximise the chances of success.

Insert any other comments in box below

3.2.87 This is a high profile project in an area of relative deprivation which taken in its entirety (the

regeneration of the Finsley Gate Wharf as a whole) has been delivered successfully and is achieving measurable positive outcomes for Burnley. These include a positive contribution to the local economy and local employment as well as contributing to creating positive conditions for economic growth and social regeneration in Burnley in combination with wider developments in the Weavers Triangle including the UCLAN campus.

- 3.2.88 The activities delivered under the ERDF grant funding are clearly demonstrating that they are a key part of the overall success of the scheme. There is verifiable qualitative and anecdotal evidence that the improvements delivered through the ERDF grant finding are promoting improved local community engagement through attracting volunteers from the local community to tend the gardens, which also contributes to outcomes for visitor numbers, residents and visitor perceptions, health and wellbeing, enhanced public realm and the sense of place among the local community.
- 3.2.89 The high quality of the scheme, particularly the development of the Forge and the rehabilitation and enhancement of the habitats on the wharf, as well as some of the enhancements to the canal corridor, have contributed directly to the objectives of improved access to the site, the sense of place and enhanced public realm.
- 3.2.90 The enhancements funded under the ERDF have contributed to the wider economic and social benefits of the Finsley Gate Wharf development. Specifically these include area of land rehabilitated, improved access to the site, sense of place and enhanced public realm.
- 3.2.91 There are lessons which can be learned from the delivery of this project and there are some aspects which have not been as successful as the grant holder had originally anticipated. The reasons for this have been explored in detail in this summative assessment and are specific to the proposed interventions rather than any systemic issues with the management of the project, which can be considered in a positive light, particularly given some of the challenges on the project.
- 3.2.92 Some of those were unforeseeable and unavoidable. Notably Covid-19 and the vandalism of the floating reedbeds along the straight mile. However, in response to these challenges the project team showed adaptability and resilience to identify solutions which were delivered effectively within the programme and budget.

