

Natural Capital & Infrastructure Community of Practice (NC&I COP)

10th June 2026

Meeting notes:

- **Review of CSOC Command Strategy and Defence Environmental Updates:** Will Masters led a discussion on the newly released CSOC command strategy, highlighting its alignment with the community's focus on climate change, data-centricity, and operational resilience, with contributions from Fergus, Jim Goodship, and Philip Anderson regarding implications for procurement, environmental regulations, and ISO 14001 changes.
 - **CSOC Command Strategy Overview:** Will Masters presented key elements of the CSOC command strategy, emphasising climate and environmental pressures, data-centricity, social value, and resilient infrastructure as central principles, and noted their relevance to ongoing community discussions and defence operations.
 - **Implications for Procurement and Industry:** Will Masters and Fergus Hawkins discussed the need for strategic principles to be embedded in procurement processes, questioning how CSOC strategy would translate into industry tenders and operational delivery, and highlighting the importance of integrating sustainability and resilience into defence contracts.
 - **Defence Environmental Protection Regulator Engagement:** Will Masters shared updates on engagement with the Defence Environmental Protection Regulator (DEPR), noting a focus on air, land, and water protection, and proposed future collaboration through the Defence Green Network, with Jim Goodship expressing interest in cross-group engagement and reframing environmental case boundaries.
 - **ISO 14001 and Corporate Compliance Updates:** Philip Anderson explained recent changes to ISO 14001, which now require broader consideration of environmental sustainability themes and life cycle assessment, and discussed the International Sustainability Standards Board's clarification on IFRS S1, emphasising the need for businesses to disclose financially material impacts related to nature.
 - **Policy and Legislative Developments:** Philip Anderson provided updates on global and UK policy developments, including COP17 on biodiversity, ongoing consultations on biodiversity net gain and habitat regulations, and the importance of strategic mitigation for MOD estates, with the group agreeing to monitor these changes and share relevant links.

- **Development of Community Framework for Natural Capital and Sustainability:** Eion Bailey, Philip Anderson and Will Masters introduced a new structured framework for the community, based on the Enabling a Natural Capital Approach, aiming to coordinate case studies, policy drivers, and data sources to support MOD business cases for nature-based solutions, with input from Eion Bailey, Fergus Hawkins, and other members.

- **Framework Structure and Purpose:** Philip Anderson described the four-stage framework—**Frame, Scope, Measure and Value, and Apply**—adapted from the Natural Capital Protocol, [Natural Capital Protocol – Capitals Coalition](#) to guide the community’s work in assessing and articulating the value of natural capital for MOD projects, and to facilitate structured knowledge sharing.
 - **Collaborative Approach and Stakeholder Engagement:** Will Masters and Eion Bailey emphasised the collaborative nature of the framework, encouraging diverse perspectives and stakeholder input to shape strategic drivers, material impacts, and outputs, and proposed using Kahootz for ongoing documentation and annual reporting.
 - **Application to Case Studies and Lessons Learned:** The group discussed integrating case studies and lessons learned into the framework, with Philip Anderson suggesting the framework would help translate presentations and insights into actionable outputs, and Fergus Hawkins highlighting the importance of sustainment and support disciplines in embedding sustainability from the outset.
 - **Feedback and Continuous Improvement:** Members were invited to provide feedback on the framework, with plans to circulate slides and draft models for input on desired outputs and information, and to use the framework for agenda setting and evidence building throughout the year.
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- **Insight Session: Mega Trends and Energy Management in Defence Estates:** Andrew Slaney from Low Carbon Estates delivered an insight session on mega trends affecting defence estates, covering urbanisation, digitisation, electrification, energy consumption, and climate impacts, with discussion on resilience, adaptation, and operational challenges, and contributions from Philip Anderson and others regarding business case articulation and data quality.
 - **Mega Trends and Chronology:** Andrew Slaney outlined key mega trends since 2019, including urbanisation, ageing population, digitisation, and electrification, and described shifts in government and public attitudes towards sustainability, net zero, and climate change, noting the increasing importance of data and operational resilience.
 - **Energy Consumption and Decarbonisation:** Andrew Slaney presented data on energy consumption across MOD commands, highlighted the challenge of decarbonising heat (primarily from gas), and discussed the transition to electricity as a cleaner energy source, with reference to peak demand avoidance and innovative energy management solutions.
 - **Resilience, Adaptation, and Risk Assessment:** The session addressed the need for resilience in defence estates, the importance of designing for continuity, and the challenges of articulating adaptation costs versus reactive costs, with Philip Anderson and Andrew Slaney discussing difficulties in making the financial case for proactive adaptation.
 - **Data Quality and Financial Risk:** Andrew Slaney and Philip Anderson discussed issues with data quality, the recording of environmental incidents,

and the need to link incident data to financial impacts to strengthen business cases, with additional input on insurance industry practices and risk modelling.

- **Case Study: Natural Capital Assessment at RAF Stations:** Sarah Martin presented a case study on a collaboration with Ferra Science to assess natural capital at RAF Coningsby, detailing carbon storage, biodiversity, operational impacts, and practical recommendations, with discussion on resource prioritisation, funding, and engagement with local authorities and stakeholders.
 - **Strategic Priorities and Operational Benefits:** Sarah Martin described the team's focus on energy and utility resilience, severe weather adaptation, digitalisation, awareness, and long-term climate resilience, noting the shift from net zero to operational benefit in communicating sustainability initiatives.
 - **Natural Capital Assessment Methodology:** The collaboration with Ferra Science used the Land 360 product to establish a natural capital baseline, assess carbon sequestration, and identify opportunities for improvement, with consideration of operational constraints such as bird hazards and security.
 - **Recommendations and Implementation:** Recommendations included soil health and grassland management, rotational mowing, native species reintroduction, buffer zones, hedgerow expansion, and on-site renewables, with practical examples of stations implementing these measures and balancing operational and environmental needs.
 - **Resource and Funding Challenges:** Sarah Martin discussed challenges in resource prioritisation, leadership engagement, and funding, including reliance on grounds maintenance contracts, station commander support, and opportunities for grant funding and private finance, particularly for tree planting and biodiversity initiatives.
 - **Stakeholder Engagement and Wider Estate Considerations:** The project involved engagement with local authorities, tenant farmers, and charity groups, and considered impacts beyond the wire, including accommodation gardens and biophilic design in new builds, with ongoing efforts to promote policy change and maximise carbon and biodiversity gains.

Follow-up tasks:

- **Framework Development for Community of Practice:** Share the slides and draft framework model for the four framework sections with all members and request feedback on desired outputs and information. **Natural Capital Funding and Partnerships:** Understand and explore opportunities for local authority and private finance funding for natural capital improvements, including tree planting, and assess potential for further collaboration with charity groups.
- **Case Study Integration and Knowledge Sharing:** Send Andrew Slaney's presentation slides to the Boardroom for posting on the website page to share notes and insights with all members.
- **Conference Participation:** Register for the Defence Information Conference on 8th and 9th July via the Team Defence website or by contacting the Boardroom if interested. ([All Members](#)) for link.
- **Date of next meeting:** 30 September 2026