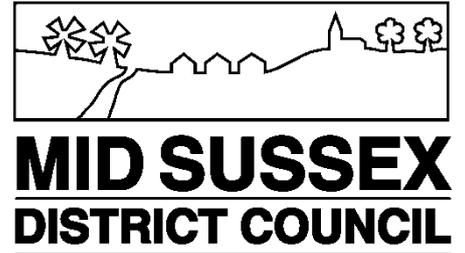


# Mid Sussex District Council



## Topic Paper Green Infrastructure

June 2016

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## Abbreviations and Acronyms

<b>AONB</b>	Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty
<b>CIL</b>	Community Infrastructure Levy
<b>GI</b>	Green infrastructure
<b>IDP</b>	Infrastructure Delivery Plan
<b>LNR</b>	Local Nature Reserve
<b>NPPF</b>	National Planning Policy Framework
<b>NPPG</b>	National Planning Practice Guidance
<b>SAC</b>	Special Area of Conservation
<b>SANG</b>	Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace
<b>SNCI</b>	Site of Nature Conservation Importance
<b>SPA</b>	Special Protection Area
<b>SSSI</b>	Site of Special Scientific Interest
<b>SuDS</b>	Sustainable Drainage Systems

## 1. Introduction

- 1.1. This paper sets out Mid Sussex District Council’s (the ‘District Council’) approach to green infrastructure (GI). It is intended that this paper supports the examination of the District Plan and provides the Inspector with an understanding of the current position of the District Council with respect to green infrastructure.
- 1.2. This paper brings together evidence contained in other documents and provides updates as appropriate. As such, this document should be read in conjunction with other green infrastructure-related documents (Figure 1).

Document
Assessment of Open Space, Sport and Recreation (September 2006) <a href="http://www.midsussex.gov.uk/planning-licensing-building-control/planning-policy/local-development-framework/evidence-base/assessment-of-open-space-sport-and-recreation/">http://www.midsussex.gov.uk/planning-licensing-building-control/planning-policy/local-development-framework/evidence-base/assessment-of-open-space-sport-and-recreation/</a>
Biodiversity 2020: A Strategy for England’s Wildlife and Ecosystems Services (2011) <a href="http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/biodiversity-2020-a-strategy-for-england-s-wildlife-and-ecosystem-services">www.gov.uk/government/publications/biodiversity-2020-a-strategy-for-england-s-wildlife-and-ecosystem-services</a>
Biodiversity Action Plan <a href="http://www.biodiversitysussex.org">www.biodiversitysussex.org</a>
Biodiversity Opportunity Areas <a href="http://www.biodiversitysussex.org">www.biodiversitysussex.org</a>
Green Infrastructure mapping (Mid Sussex District Council)
Habitats and Species Records <a href="http://www.sxbrc.org.uk">www.sxbrc.org.uk</a>
Mid Sussex Ancient Woodland Survey (February 2007) <a href="http://www.midsussex.gov.uk/planning-licensing-building-control/planning-policy/local-development-framework/evidence-base/a-revision-of-the-ancient-woodland-inventory-for-mid-sussex-district-council/">http://www.midsussex.gov.uk/planning-licensing-building-control/planning-policy/local-development-framework/evidence-base/a-revision-of-the-ancient-woodland-inventory-for-mid-sussex-district-council/</a>
Mid Sussex Infrastructure Delivery Plan <a href="http://www.midsussex.gov.uk/planning-licensing-building-control/planning-policy/local-development-framework/evidence-base/infrastructure-delivery-plan/">http://www.midsussex.gov.uk/planning-licensing-building-control/planning-policy/local-development-framework/evidence-base/infrastructure-delivery-plan/</a>
South Downs Access Network and Accessible Natural Green Space Study (July 2014) <a href="http://www.southdowns.gov.uk/planning/planning-policy/local-plan/evidence-and-supporting-documents/Access-Network-and-Accessible-Natural-Green-Space-Study">www.southdowns.gov.uk/planning/planning-policy/local-plan/evidence-and-supporting-documents/Access-Network-and-Accessible-Natural-Green-Space-Study</a>
The High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty Management Plan 2014-2019 (3 <sup>rd</sup> Edition, adopted March 2014) <a href="http://www.highweald.org">www.highweald.org</a>
The Natural Choice: Securing the Value of Nature (June 2011) <a href="http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-natural-choice-securing-the-value-of-nature">www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-natural-choice-securing-the-value-of-nature</a>
West Sussex Sites of Nature Conservation Importance (SNCI) Register <a href="http://www.westsussex.gov.uk/leisure/enjoy_west_sussex/countryside_and_wildlife/conservation_biodiversity_and/sites_of_nature_conservation_i.aspx">www.westsussex.gov.uk/leisure/enjoy_west_sussex/countryside_and_wildlife/conservation_biodiversity_and/sites_of_nature_conservation_i.aspx</a>

Figure 1 - Key evidence base documents relating to green infrastructure.

## Definition of green infrastructure

- 1.3. There are several definitions of green infrastructure, but at its most basic, it is a connected network of multi-functional greenspace. Whilst the majority of definitions of green infrastructure relate to each other, for the purposes of this paper, two definitions have been highlighted that are appropriate for this context.
- 1.4. The definition in the National Planning Policy Framework<sup>1</sup> is:

A network of multi-functional greenspace, urban and rural, which is capable of delivering a wide range of environmental and quality of life benefits for local communities.
- 1.5. The definition applied in the District Plan<sup>2</sup> is:

Green infrastructure is a connected network of multi-functional greenspace, both urban and rural, that delivers a wide range of environmental, social and economic benefits, including promoting ecosystem services and improving quality of life.
- 1.6. It is clear that green infrastructure not only has an ecological and environmental focus, but also delivers socio-economic benefits, thus helping to meet sustainability objectives. In particular, the importance of greenspace is becoming increasingly important to the health and well-being agenda.
- 1.7. Individually, greenspace is unlikely to deliver all the functions of ecosystem services, but taken together as a connected network of greenspace, the range of benefits of green infrastructure are more likely to be achieved.
- 1.8. The planning system has a key role to play in delivering green infrastructure as it provides an opportunity to embed green infrastructure in policy and for it to be given consideration in the decision-making process.

## 2. National planning context

- 2.1. The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) published in March 2012 sets out the Government's planning policies and planning guidance for both plan-making and decision-taking.
- 2.2. Green infrastructure is only specifically mentioned a couple of times in the NPPF, however, it has close links to many of the themes included in the NPPF, particularly as it is important to the delivery of high quality sustainable development, alongside other forms of infrastructure such as transport, energy, waste and water.

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<sup>1</sup> National Planning Policy Framework (2012): <http://planningguidance.planningportal.gov.uk/>.

<sup>2</sup> Mid Sussex District Plan: [www.midsussex.gov.uk/districtplan](http://www.midsussex.gov.uk/districtplan).

- 2.3. Paragraph 99 of the NPPF considers green infrastructure in the context of climate change as being an adaptation measure:

Local Plans should take account of climate change over the longer term, including factors such as flood risk, coastal change, water supply and changes to biodiversity and landscape. New development should be planned to avoid increased vulnerability to the range of impacts arising from climate change. When new development is brought forward in areas which are vulnerable, care should be taken to ensure that risk can be managed through suitable adaptation measures, including through green infrastructure.

- 2.4. Paragraph 114 of the NPPF states that ‘local planning authorities should set out a strategic approach in their Local Plans, planning positively for the creation, protection, enhancement and management of networks of biodiversity and green infrastructure’.

- 2.5. The National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG) is a web-based resource and was launched in March 2014 by the Department for Communities and Local Government.

- 2.6. The NPPG emphasises that green infrastructure is not simply an alternative description for conventional open space, rather it provides multiple benefits for individuals, society, the economy and the environment. As such, green infrastructure needs to be well planned, designed and maintained, and should, therefore, be a key consideration in both local plans and planning decisions<sup>3</sup>.

- 2.7. The NPPG identifies that green infrastructure can help to deliver a variety of planning policies including:

- Building a strong, competitive economy
- Delivering a wide choice of high quality homes
- Requiring good design
- Promoting healthy communities
- Meeting the challenge of climate change, flooding and coastal change
- Conserving and enhancing the natural environment

- 2.8. The NPPG also states<sup>4</sup> that:

Where appropriate, planning proposals should incorporate green infrastructure in line with local and neighbourhood plan policies and site specific considerations. As a component of sustainable development, green infrastructure should be considered at an early stage of a planning proposal. Depending on individual circumstances, planning obligations, conditions or the Community Infrastructure Levy may all be potential mechanisms for securing and funding green infrastructure.

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<sup>3</sup> National Planning Practice Guidance – Reference ID: 8-028-20160211  
<http://planningguidance.communities.gov.uk/blog/guidance/natural-environment/green-infrastructure/>

<sup>4</sup> National Planning Practice Guidance – Reference ID: 8-032-2160211  
<http://planningguidance.communities.gov.uk/blog/guidance/natural-environment/green-infrastructure/>

### 3. District Plan

- 3.1. Mid Sussex District Council has prepared a District Plan which will guide development to 2031. The District Plan sets out a vision for how Mid Sussex wants to evolve and a delivery strategy for how that will be achieved.

#### District Plan policy

- 3.2. District Plan Policy DP38 is concerned with green infrastructure.

#### **DP38: Green Infrastructure**

*Strategic Objectives: 3) To protect valued landscapes for their visual, historical and biodiversity qualities; 5) To create and maintain easily accessible green infrastructure, green corridors and spaces around and within the towns and villages to act as wildlife corridors, sustainable transport links and leisure and recreational routes; 6) To ensure that development is accompanied by the necessary infrastructure in the right place at the right time that supports development and sustainable communities. This includes the provision of efficient and sustainable transport networks; and 15) To create places that encourage a healthy and enjoyable lifestyle by the provision of first class cultural and sporting facilities, informal leisure space and the opportunity to walk, cycle or ride to common destinations.*

*Evidence Base: Biodiversity Action Plan; Biodiversity Opportunity Areas, Green Infrastructure mapping; Habitats and Species Records; Mid Sussex Ancient Woodland Survey; West Sussex SNCI Register; Mid Sussex Infrastructure Delivery Plan.*

#### **Green infrastructure will be protected and enhanced by ensuring development:**

- **Contributes to the establishment of green infrastructure and supports its improvement, enhancement, management and restoration to develop a connected network of multi-functional greenspace, including linking with rivers and floodplains; and**
- **Responds to existing on-site green infrastructure and provides on-site natural greenspace enhancements for all new developments where practicable, including making land available for this purpose; and**
- **Promotes the restoration, management and expansion of priority habitats in the District; and**
- **Improves access to and understanding of natural greenspace and nature conservation features, including recognising the importance and role of green infrastructure to the ecosystem, biodiversity, public rights of way, health and well-being, the water environment, community facilities, climate change, and allotments.**

**Land which will be required to create and deliver a multi-functional ‘Green Circle’ around Burgess Hill will be safeguarded from development. In**

particular, the following areas as shown on the Policies Map will be allocated for informal open space.

- Batchelors Farm;
- Land south of Nightingale Lane;
- Land adjoining Jane Murray Way, Work Road and Sussex Way;
- Land to the north of Sheddingdean and Leylands Park, including Bedelands Farm; and
- The ‘Railway Land’ to the north and south of Wivelsfield Station.

**Developer contributions will be used to secure delivery of the Green Circle.**

- 3.3. Green infrastructure has close links to other policies in the District Plan, for example, Policy DP37: Biodiversity.

#### **DP37: Biodiversity**

*Strategic Objectives: 3) To protect valued landscapes for their visual, historical and biodiversity qualities; 5) To create and maintain easily accessible green infrastructure, green corridors and spaces around and within the towns and villages to act as wildlife corridors, sustainable transport links and leisure and recreational routes.*

*Evidence Base: Biodiversity 2020; Biodiversity Action Plan; Biodiversity Opportunity Areas, Green Infrastructure mapping; Habitats and Species Records; Mid Sussex Ancient Woodland Survey; The Natural Choice: Securing the Value of Nature; West Sussex SNCI Register.*

**Biodiversity will be protected and enhanced by ensuring development:**

- **Contributes and takes opportunities to improve, enhance, manage and restore biodiversity, so that there is a net gain in biodiversity, including through creating new designated sites and locally relevant habitats, and incorporating biodiversity features within developments; and**
- **Protects existing biodiversity, so that there is no net loss of biodiversity. Appropriate measures should be taken to avoid and reduce disturbance to sensitive habitats and species. Unavoidable damage to biodiversity must be offset through ecological enhancements and mitigation measures (or compensation measures in exceptional circumstances); and**
- **Minimises habitat and species fragmentation and maximises opportunities to enhance and restore ecological corridors to connect natural habitats and increase coherence and resilience; and**
- **Avoids damage to, protects and enhances the special characteristics of internationally designated Special Protection Areas, Special Areas of Conservation; nationally designated Sites of Special Scientific Interest, Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty; and locally designated Sites of Nature Conservation Importance, Local Nature Reserves and Ancient Woodland or to other areas identified as being of nature conservation or**

**geological interest, including wildlife corridors, aged or veteran trees, Biodiversity Opportunity Areas, and Nature Improvement Areas.**

**Designated sites will be given protection and appropriate weight according to their importance and the contribution they make to wider ecological networks.**

**Valued soils will be protected and enhanced, including the best and most versatile agricultural land, and development should not contribute to unacceptable levels of soil pollution.**

**Geodiversity will be protected by ensuring development prevents harm to geological conservation interests, and where possible, enhances such interests. Geological conservation interests include Regionally Important Geological and Geomorphological Sites.**

### **District Plan strategic development**

- 3.4. The District Plan also requires strategic development to make provision for green infrastructure. Relevant extracts are set out below.

#### **DP7: General principles for strategic development at Burgess Hill**

[...]

Strategic development will:

[...]

- Provide new and/ or improved and well connected sports, recreation and open space in and around Burgess Hill, including the continuation of the existing 'Green Circle' of linked areas of informal open space around the town along with its associated network of multi-functional paths, the Green Circle network, and links into the town centre;
- Support the delivery of a multi-functional route between Burgess Hill and Haywards Heath;
- Identify and respond to environmental, landscape and ecological constraints and deliver opportunities to enhance local biodiversity and contribute to the delivery of green infrastructure in and around the town in accordance with policies elsewhere in the Plan including DP37 Biodiversity and DP38 Green Infrastructure;

[...]

#### **DP9: Strategic allocation to the north and north-west of Burgess Hill**

[...]

- Identify and take account of environmental, landscape and ecological constraints including where possible avoiding or minimising harm to sensitive receptors and appropriately responding to the landscape setting including retention of woodland, hedgerows and other important natural features wherever possible and appropriate landscaping and safe design of balancing ponds and water/

drainage features; and deliver opportunities and requirements as set out in Policy DP7 General Principles for Strategic Development at Burgess Hill, DP37 Biodiversity and DP38 Green Infrastructure including new publicly accessible open space and routes including the continuation of the existing ‘Green Circle’ comprising multi-functional paths and areas, mostly within a 20 metre to 30 metre corridor along the stream running through the Strategic Allocation Area, with spokes to the north and south which incorporate and respond to ecological constraints, topography, flooding issues and landscaping features; links into the town centre; provision of natural and semi-natural green space, children’s play space and community allotments; and provision of pedestrian and cycle links to such spaces.

[...]

#### **DP9A: Strategic allocation to the east of Pease Pottage**

[...]

- Identify and respond to environmental and ecological constraints and deliver opportunities to enhance green infrastructure and local biodiversity, including the provision of an appropriate buffer to the ancient woodland to the east of the site;

[...]

- Provide new formal play facilities and informal open space on the site, alongside the provision of new allotments to encourage healthy lifestyles.

[...]

### **District Plan consultation responses**

- 3.5. The majority of consultation responses to the District Plan mentioning green infrastructure have welcomed the green infrastructure policy and its requirements. For example, support has been received from the Environment Agency, Natural England, Sussex Wildlife Trust, and the West Sussex Local Access Forum.

## **4. Benefits of green infrastructure**

- 4.1 Ecosystem services are the benefits provided by the natural environment and are necessary for life. These ecosystem services link closely to economic prosperity and quality of life, and so should be considered in policy formulation and decision-making. Ecosystem services are categorised into four types<sup>5</sup>, however, there is significant interaction between them:

- **Supporting services** are necessary for the production of all other ecosystem services including soil formation, photosynthesis, primary production, nutrient cycling and water cycling;
- **Provisioning services** are the products from ecosystems, including food, fibre, fuel, biochemical and fresh water;

<sup>5</sup> South Downs Green Infrastructure Framework: <https://www.southdowns.gov.uk/planning/planning-advice/south-downs-green-infrastructure-framework-informal-consultation/>

- **Regulating services** are the benefits obtained from the regulation of ecosystem processes, including air quality regulation, climate regulation, water regulation, erosion regulation, water purification, disease regulation, pest regulation and pollination;
- **Cultural services** are non-material benefits gained through spiritual enrichment, reflection, recreation and aesthetic experiences.

### Green infrastructure maps

- 4.2 Maps have been included in the Appendices to illustrate some of the different types of green infrastructure found in Mid Sussex. Taken together, it can be seen that the majority of Mid Sussex District has some component of green infrastructure and it is clear that it is multi-functional and forms a connected network.
- 4.3 The maps in the Appendices show that a lot of the highlighted green infrastructure is concentrated in the same areas as the two landscape designations: High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) and South Downs National Park. For example, this is particularly the case for woodland, however, woodland, particularly ghyll woodland, is a key feature of the High Weald AONB. Biodiversity designations also seem to spatially link to the landscape designations.
- 4.4 Mid Sussex District benefits from an extensive network of public rights of way totalling around 597.8km including:
- Footpaths – 475.2km
  - Bridleways – 117.2km
  - Byways – 4.8km
  - Restricted byways – 0.6km
- 4.5 Due to the nature of the open space facilities, these are clustered around the towns and villages. These provide valuable greenspace for built-up areas and opportunities for physical activity. Contributions from developers are also used to improve these facilities.
- 4.6 Whilst the area of Mid Sussex between the High Weald AONB and the South Downs National Park, and around Burgess Hill does not necessarily have formal designations, it does present the opportunity for potential green infrastructure enhancement, particularly through the delivery of the strategic allocation to the north and north-west of Burgess Hill. There are areas of flood risk here which may provide an opportunity for green infrastructure along the river corridors. There is also a high density of public rights of way which may help to encourage people to access the countryside.
- 4.7 Examples of how Mid Sussex benefits from its green infrastructure are shown below.

## Landscape and biodiversity

- 4.8 Mid Sussex has a high quality natural environment. Around 60% of the District is covered by protected landscape designations – nearly 50% is within the High Weald AONB and over 10% is within the South Downs National Park. Mid Sussex is the tenth most wooded district in the South East and two-thirds of this woodland is classified as ‘ancient’, according to the Ancient Woodland Inventory for Mid Sussex (2007) (see Appendices B and C).
- 4.9 There are three landscape character areas within the District: the High Weald, the Low Weald and the Sussex Downs. Mid Sussex contains areas of ancient and ghyll woodland within the stream valleys of the High Weald. There are a significant number of standing water and wetland habitats such as ponds (including historical mill sites and hammer ponds), lakes, reservoirs and water meadows. There are also many linear/ running water habitats of small streams and ditches, for example, the Upper Adur Streams, which act as a network of wildlife corridors throughout the District.
- 4.10 There are a variety of nature conservation sites within the District which are important for biodiversity (Figure 2 and Appendix A). There are no European-designated or Ramsar sites within the District, but the Ashdown Forest Special Protection Area (SPA)/ Special Area of Conservation (SAC) lies adjacent to the north-east boundary of Mid Sussex and within Wealden District.

Designation	Description	Number of sites within Mid Sussex District	Area of the District covered by the designation	Percentage of the District covered by the designation
<b>SSSI</b>	Site of Special Scientific Interest – a national designation for nature conservation or geological value	13	639.7 Ha	1.9%
<b>SNCI</b>	Site of Nature Conservation Importance – local designation for flora and fauna interest and value	50	1,094 Ha	3.3%
<b>LNR</b>	Local Nature Reserve – local designation for wildlife or geological importance	6	158 Ha	0.5%

Designation	Description	Number of sites within Mid Sussex District	Area of the District covered by the designation	Percentage of the District covered by the designation
<b>Ancient woodland</b>	Areas with continuous woodland cover since 1600AD	1,443	5,282 Ha	15.81%

Figure 2 - Nature conservation sites in Mid Sussex.

## Health and well-being

4.11 Numerous studies have highlighted the benefit of greenspace to health and well-being, particularly through increasing physical activity and having a positive impact on mental health (Appendices D and E). Green infrastructure can help address health inequalities by providing access to greenspace and enhancing quality of life. In Mid Sussex, a series of free healthy walks are led by the Park Rangers<sup>6</sup>. These walks are designed to help improve fitness levels, explore new areas of the Mid Sussex countryside and to get to know other people.

## Food production

4.12 Allotments form part of green infrastructure and deliver some ecosystem services through food production and pollination. Allotments can also enable a more healthy and sustainable lifestyle. Most allotments in Mid Sussex are managed by the town and parish councils and due to high demand, there are proposals to create more allotments.

## Climate change

4.13 Green infrastructure can help communities mitigate the risks associated with climate change, for example, through flood and water management, and by reducing the urban heat-island effect. Floodplains can act as corridors for wildlife and as flood management (Appendix F). By being a connected network of multi-functional greenspace, green infrastructure can also help species adapt to climate change by providing opportunities for movement across habitats. In Mid Sussex, existing green infrastructure will help increase resilience to the effects and impacts of climate change, particularly where small-scale green infrastructure is included within new developments, for example, green roofs and green walls.

<sup>6</sup> Mid Sussex Healthy Walks: <http://www.midsussex.gov.uk/leisure-recreation-tourism-events/parks-places-of-interest-and-things-to-do/park-rangers/healthy-walks/>

## 5. Key green infrastructure projects

- 5.1 There are several green infrastructure projects being planned or implemented in the District, and a number of stakeholders may be involved in the delivery of green infrastructure.
- 5.2 As part of the District Plan strategy, town and parish councils will be encouraged to produce neighbourhood plans. Twenty Neighbourhood Plan Areas have been designated and nine neighbourhood plans have been made by the District Council: Ardingly, Burgess Hill, Crawley Down, Cuckfield, Hurstpierpoint & Sayers Common, Lindfield & Lindfield Rural, Turners Hill, Twineham, and West Hoathly. A number of neighbourhood plans in the District have included policies on green infrastructure or listed projects for enhancing green infrastructure.
- 5.3 Identified green infrastructure projects are included in the Mid Sussex Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP). The three main purposes of the IDP are:
- To provide evidence for the District Plan by identifying the infrastructure required to support the delivery of development during the plan period.
  - To provide evidence for the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) by demonstrating a need for infrastructure investment in Mid Sussex and to form the basic justification for a CIL charge.
  - To provide evidence for Section 106 planning obligations by indicating suitable infrastructure schemes to which developer contributions can be directed in order to make a development acceptable in planning terms.
- 5.4 Further details are provided below for selected green infrastructure projects.

### Burgess Hill Green Circle

- 5.5 The Burgess Hill Green Circle is an aspiration to create a ring of green open spaces around Burgess Hill. There are or will be footpaths, cycle tracks and bridleways linking the greenspaces to the countryside and town centre forming a series of spokes. The Green Circle to the south and west of Burgess Hill has already been completed, and Bedelands Farm Local Nature Reserve to the north-east of Burgess Hill also forms part of the Green Circle.
- 5.6 The route of the Green Circle will continue through the Burgess Hill Northern Arc development as allocated in the Mid Sussex District Plan and the development, along with other developments in Burgess Hill, will make contributions towards creating and enhancing routes into the town centre. District Plan Policy DP38: Green Infrastructure safeguards land for the Green Circle.

## South Downs National Park Green Infrastructure Framework

- 5.7 The South Downs National Park Authority is preparing a Green Infrastructure Framework<sup>7</sup>. This work provides an opportunity to create a multi-functional green infrastructure network over a landscape scale crossing local authority boundaries. It represents a partnership approach to delivering green infrastructure across the sub-region; this will also help to meet the duty to co-operate<sup>8</sup>. Mid Sussex District Council has contributed to the preparation of this document and is supportive of this work.
- 5.8 Several spatial priorities for green infrastructure have emerged during the preparation of the Green Infrastructure Framework. These areas are termed ‘Green Infrastructure Investment Areas’ (GIAs), and Haywards Heath and Burgess Hill is one such area. It is considered appropriate to identify Burgess Hill and Haywards Heath as an area for green infrastructure investment as a significant amount of development is planned. The justification given for identifying this as a GIA is that this area will remain the focus of development pressure, lying between two protected landscapes, necessitating an integrated ‘future-proofing’ approach. Green infrastructure in this area would create opportunities to link the South Downs National Park with the High Weald AONB. It would be highly beneficial to create green corridors linking the South Downs National Park through to the High Weald AONB and the three towns in Mid Sussex: Burgess Hill, Haywards Heath and East Grinstead. The Burgess Hill Green Circle would also fall within this proposed area for green infrastructure investment.

### Projects identified in neighbourhood plans

- 5.9 A number of green infrastructure objectives, policies and projects have been identified in neighbourhood plans. Most of the neighbourhood plans have included reference to green infrastructure in some form, even if not specifically by name. Examples of green infrastructure projects identified in neighbourhood plans<sup>9</sup> are listed in Figure 3.

Neighbourhood Plan	Green Infrastructure Reference
Albourne	<b>Aim: Amenities</b> supports proposals to upgrade the children’s play equipment and expand the facilities at Albourne Recreation Ground.
Ansty & Staplefield	<b>Policy AS9</b> allocates land immediately north of Ansty Recreation Ground for recreational use, as an extension to the existing playing fields.

<sup>7</sup> South Downs Green Infrastructure Framework: <https://www.southdowns.gov.uk/planning/planning-advice/south-downs-green-infrastructure-framework-informal-consultation/>

<sup>8</sup> The cross-boundary nature of green infrastructure is mentioned in the NPPG and that this will help address the duty to co-operate – Reference ID: 8-029-20160211

<http://planningguidance.communities.gov.uk/blog/guidance/natural-environment/green-infrastructure/>

<sup>9</sup> The neighbourhood plans can be found at: <http://www.midsussex.gov.uk/planning-licensing-building-control/planning-policy/neighbourhood-plans/>.

Neighbourhood Plan	Green Infrastructure Reference
	<p><b>Policy AS14</b> supports the provision of improved walking and cycling routes to Cuckfield, Haywards Heath and other surrounding villages. Ansty &amp; Staplefield Parish Council will work with Mid Sussex District Council, West Sussex County Council and other interested parties to put in place an improved walking and cycling network.</p>
Ardingly	<p><b>Policy ARD 4</b> supports proposals that will deliver Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace (SANG).</p> <p><b>Policy ARD 6</b> designates several areas as Local Green Space.</p> <p><b>Policy ARD 7</b> supports proposals for new allotments.</p> <p><b>Policy ARD 8</b> supports proposals that protect and enhance the rich natural features that are a key component of the High Weald cultural landscape and which provide habitats for Ardingly’s diverse species populations. Proposals that provide favourable conditions for biodiversity including maintenance and enhancement of habitat connectivity and landscape scale conservation will be supported. Mitigation measures will be sought where any loss would be unavoidable and cause significant harm.</p> <p>A <b>Community Action</b> supports proposals to establish a cycle route from the northern edge of the South of England Showground to the entrance of Wakehurst Place.</p>
Ashurst Wood	<p><b>Policy ASW 3</b> supports proposals for new allotments.</p> <p><b>Policy ASW 4</b> resists the loss of the Recreation Ground or John Pears Field unless equivalent or enhanced replacement facilities are provided in a convenient and accessible location.</p> <p>Identified infrastructure requirements include provision of cycle paths towards East Grinstead and Forest Way.</p>
Balcombe	<p><b>Policy 8</b> designates several areas as Local Green Space.</p> <p><b>Policy 9</b> allocates land for a burial ground extension.</p>
Bolney	<p><b>Policy BOLE1</b> requires development proposals to protect and enhance biodiversity. Ecological networks should be preserved and there should not be a loss of or unacceptable harm to protected species or their habitats.</p> <p><b>Policy BOLA1</b> designates areas as Local Green Space</p> <p><b>Policy BOLA2</b> allocates land for an extension to Batchelor’s Field for recreation uses which must be appropriate for the green open setting.</p>

Neighbourhood Plan	Green Infrastructure Reference
	<p><b>Proposed additional green infrastructure:</b>                      Extension of Batchelor’s Field to include woodland area to the east.                      New footpath joining footpath 18Bo (from Ryecroft Road to Primary School) to the extension of Batchelor’s Field.                      Additional green infrastructure within new development or adjoining areas.</p>
Burgess Hill	<p><b>Policy G1</b> protects areas of open space and resists their loss, and supports new areas of open space.</p> <p><b>Policy G2</b> supports the continuation of the Green Circle.</p> <p><b>Policy G3</b> protects existing areas of nature conservation and biodiversity and seeks improvements to the habitat network.</p> <p><b>Policy G4</b> designates several areas as Local Green Space.</p> <p><b>Policy G5</b> protects existing allotment sites and resists their loss, and identifies areas for new allotments.</p> <p><b>Policy G6</b> retains existing footpath and cycle links and expects new development to provide links to the existing network.</p> <p>Enhancement of open space, greenspace and the public realm is also proposed to be delivered through new development.</p>
Cuckfield	<p><b>Policy CNP4</b> aims to protect and enhance biodiversity including preserving ecological networks and promoting the creation of wildlife habitats as well as providing a net gain in flora and fauna.</p> <p><b>Policy CNP17</b> allocates land for amenity open space.</p> <p><b>Policy CNP21</b> expects new development to ensure provision of green infrastructure.</p>
East Grinstead	<p><b>Policy EG3</b> requires development proposals to make provision for green infrastructure and biodiversity enhancement.</p> <p><b>Policy EG14</b> resists the loss of publicly accessible open space and green spaces of visual amenity.</p> <p><b>Policy EG15</b> identifies sites for informal open space and play space.</p> <p><b>Policy EG16</b> requires new residential development to provide for SANG.</p>

Neighbourhood Plan	Green Infrastructure Reference
	<p><b>Policy SS7</b> aims to retain St. Margaret’s Loop as a green area and supports proposals for provide a new combined pedestrian and cycle route.</p> <p><b>Policy SS8</b> supports proposals for public open space, SANG, playing fields, allotments and cemetery uses on land south of Birches Industrial Estate and West of Imberhorne Lane.</p>
Hassocks	<p><b>Policy 3</b> designates several areas as Local Green Space.</p> <p><b>Policy 4</b> supports development proposals that seek to conserve, maintain and enhance the existing green infrastructure network. The Policy also supports development proposals that include the provision of additional green infrastructure where they seek to link to the existing path and open space networks, and where planting contributes to wildlife and links to existing woodland, hedges and streams. The Policy also resists development proposals that would result in the loss of green infrastructure.</p> <p><b>Policy 8</b> supports development proposals that contribute to the village’s green infrastructure network.</p> <p><b>Policy 9</b> resists the loss of open space and supports new proposals for open space.</p> <p><b>Aim 11</b> supports the development of a circular route around Hassocks through the creation of link footpaths, and <b>Aim 12</b> supports the provision of cycleways and bridleways.</p>
Haywards Heath	<p><b>Policy E1</b> resists the loss of existing open space.</p> <p><b>Policy E2</b> requires new development to provide new multi-functional green/ open spaces as part of the development or to make contributions for off-site provision.</p> <p><b>Policy E3</b> allocates land for new allotments (linked with Policy H1 allocating land for housing).</p> <p><b>Policy E4</b> allocates land for a new cemetery (linked with Policy H1 allocating land for housing).</p> <p><b>Policy E5</b> designates land between Haywards Heath and neighbouring towns/ parishes as a landscape buffer that will support and enhance ecological connectivity.</p> <p><b>Policy E6</b> requires new development to support the enhancement of footpaths/ cycle paths and proposals should retain links between</p>

Neighbourhood Plan	Green Infrastructure Reference
	<p>current green infrastructure and promote internal green links within new developments.</p> <p><b>Policy E7</b> requires new development to incorporate SUDS.</p> <p><b>Policy L3</b> allocates land as open space.</p> <p><b>Policy L9</b> resists the loss of existing playing fields and sporting facilities.</p>
Horsted Keynes	<p><b>Policy HK5</b> designates several areas as Local Green Space.</p> <p><b>Policy HK6</b> seeks the provision of publicly accessible green open space within residential developments.</p> <p><b>Policy HK8</b> seeks to protect and enhance existing habitats.</p> <p><b>Policy HK10</b> seeks the provision of Sustainable Drainage Systems in new developments.</p>
Hurstpierpoint & Sayers Common	<p><b>Policy HurstC6</b> provides that an area of ancient woodland will be protected and conserved.</p> <p><b>Policy HurstA1</b> concerns the provision of a new area of countryside open space for informal recreation to be delivered alongside new development, and to include areas for the conservation and preservation of flora and fauna.</p> <p><b>Policy HurstA2</b> allocates land for the extension of Fairfield Recreation Ground to provide additional formal playing space.</p> <p><b>Policy HurstC5</b> allocates land for a cemetery.</p>
Lindfield & Lindfield Rural	<p><b>Policy 6</b> designates several areas as Local Green Space.</p> <p><b>Policy 8</b> supports the provision of new allotments.</p> <p><b>Proposal 3</b> supports a cycle path between Lindfield and Scaynes Hill.</p>
Turners Hill	<p><b>Policy THP11</b> supports proposals for new sporting and recreational facilities including allotments and resists the loss of open space, sports and recreational land.</p> <p><b>Proposal THP16</b> supports proposals for footpath improvements.</p> <p><b>Proposal THP17</b> supports proposals to improve and protect the</p>

Neighbourhood Plan	Green Infrastructure Reference
	existing Public Rights of Way network, and opportunities will be sought to provide new links especially to the Worth Way.
Twineham	Tree and hedge planting will be encouraged to help reduce run-off and prevent flooding.
West Hoathly	<p><b>Policy WHP3</b> supports enhancements to the Public Rights of Way network.</p> <p><b>Policy WHP10</b> requires new residential development to provide for SANG.</p>
Worth – Crawley Down	<p><b>Policy CDNP01</b> mentions that proposed development should provide the necessary green infrastructure.</p> <p><b>Policy CDNP02</b> designates several areas as Local Green Space.</p> <p><b>Policy CDNP09</b> aims to protect and enhance biodiversity.</p> <p><b>Proposal 03</b> is designed to enhance the green infrastructure of the parish including supporting street tree planting and allotments.</p>

Figure 3 - Examples of green infrastructure projects identified in neighbourhood plans.

5.10 It can be seen that there are several key themes to green infrastructure in neighbourhood plans, namely resisting the loss of existing open space; the provision of allotments; the protection of biodiversity; and the enhancement of the Public Rights of Way network.

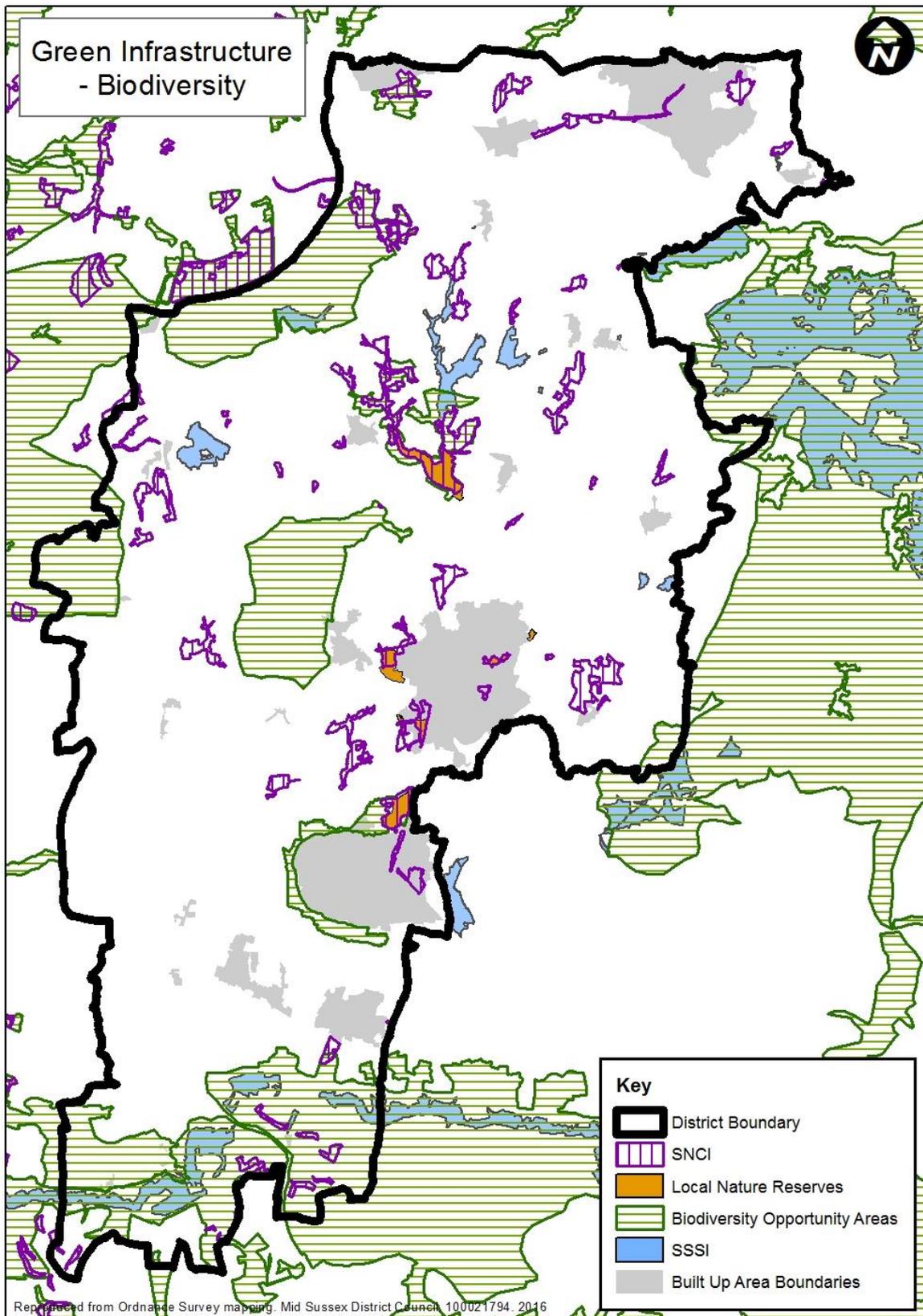
## 6. Summary

6.1 Green infrastructure as a connected network of multi-functional greenspace has important benefits for individuals and communities. Both the plan-making and planning application processes of the planning system offer the ability to plan, manage and fund green infrastructure.

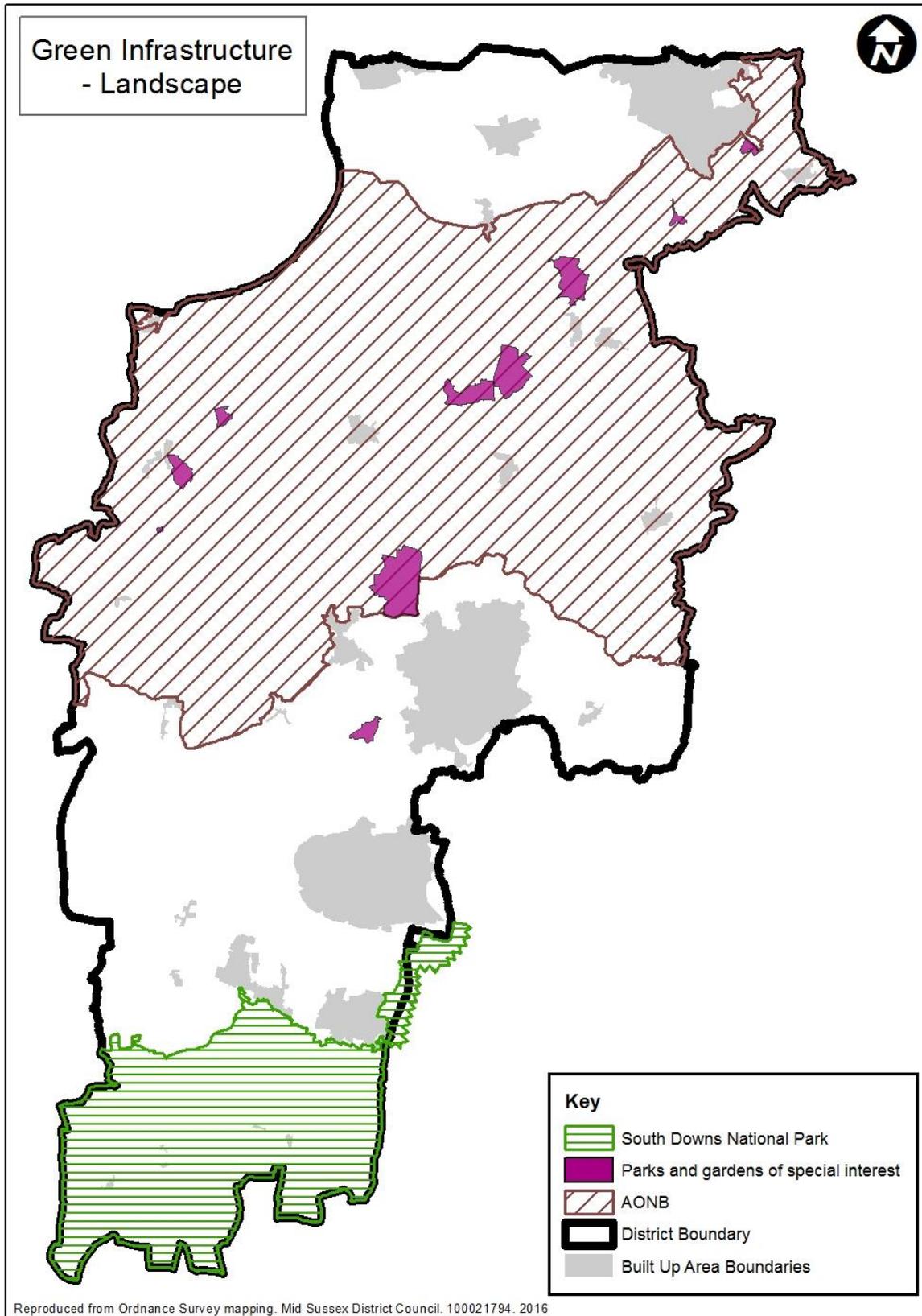
6.2 There are several opportunities for enhancing green infrastructure in Mid Sussex District and these should be explored further. The South Downs National Park green infrastructure work provides a potential partnership approach to delivering green infrastructure across the sub-region. Funding mechanisms should also be considered, particularly developer contributions through Section 106 planning obligations and the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL).

## 7. Appendices

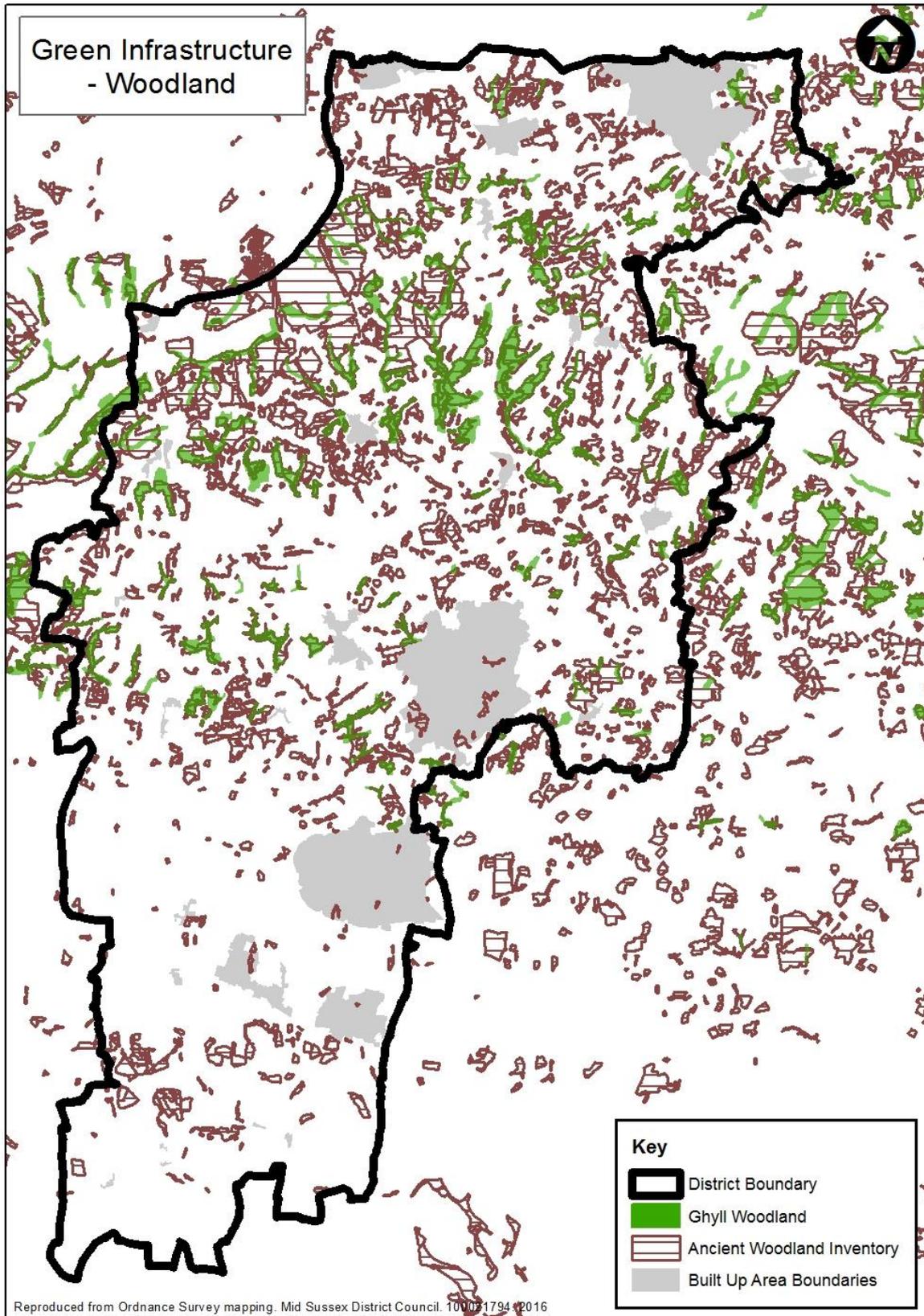
## Appendix A: Biodiversity designations



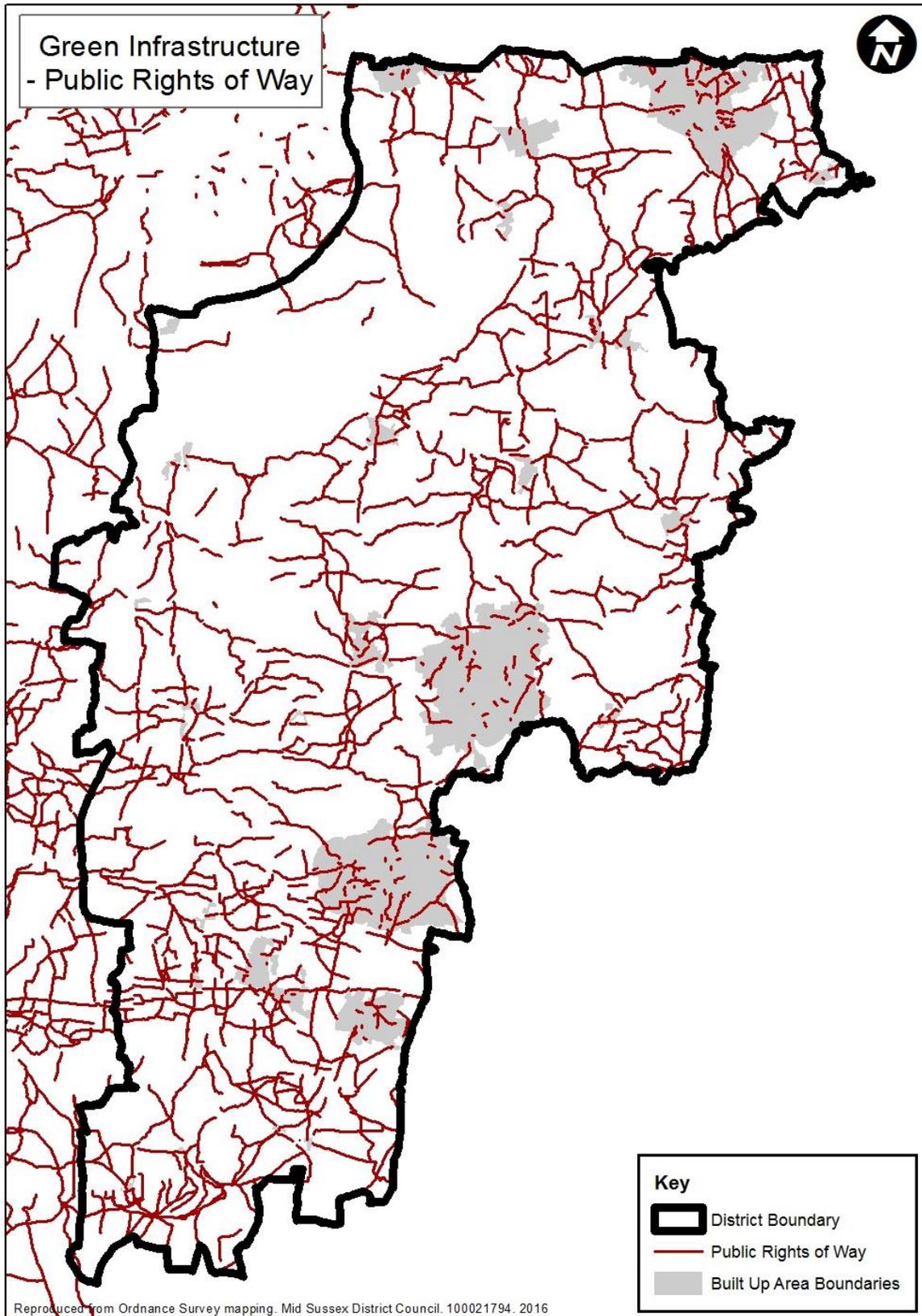
## Appendix B: Landscape designations



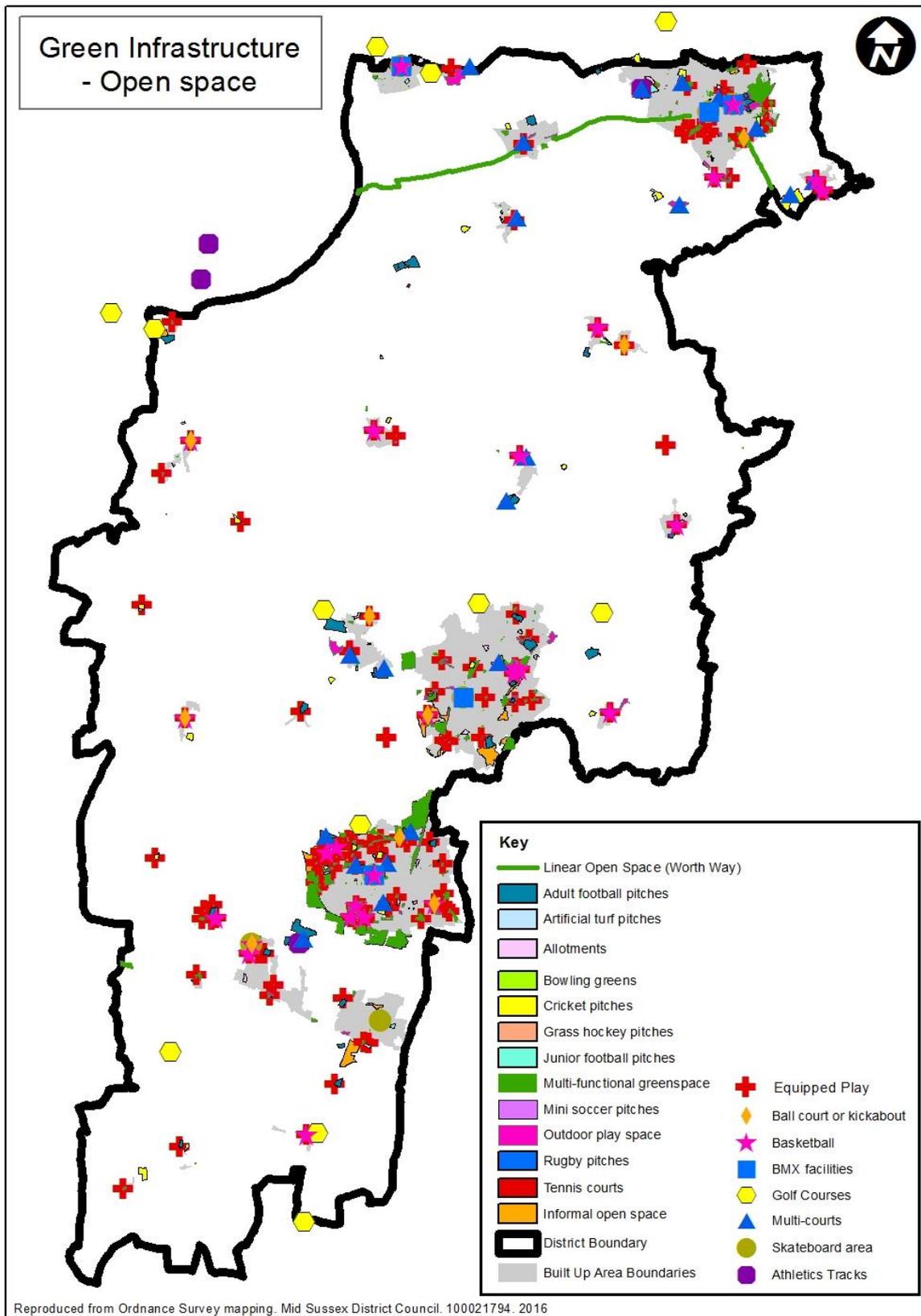
## Appendix C: Woodland



## Appendix D: Public rights of way



## Appendix E: Open space



## Appendix F: Flood zones

