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East Hampshire Green Infrastructure Strategy interim report 2018

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East Hampshire Green Infrastructure Strategy interim report 2018

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1 Introduction

- 1.1 East Hampshire District Council commissioned LUC to prepare a Green Infrastructure Strategy for the District, excluding the area covering the South Downs National Park, hereinafter referred to as the Planning Authority Area (PAA). The Strategy and the evidence underpinning it will inform spatial planning and development management in the PAA by identifying ways in which existing green infrastructure (GI) can be protected and enhanced and how new GI can be delivered.
- 1.2 This report provides an update on the progress of the Strategy so far to inform the Regulation 18 consultation of the East Hampshire Local Plan. The report includes a summary of the key issues and opportunities derived from an updated baseline. It also sets out details of an emerging strategic GI project. This project exemplifies the format of individual strategic project proposals, which will be included within the final Strategy.
- 1.3 The structure of this report is as follows:
 - **Section 1** – Introduction: includes the aim of the Strategy and outlines why GI is important.
 - **Section 2** – Approach to the Strategy: describes the key stages followed during the development of the Strategy.
 - **Section 3** – Planning policy context: sets out existing local and national policy and guidance including a review of Neighbourhood Plans.
 - **Section 4** – Green Infrastructure Themes: provides a summary of the key issues and opportunities derived from the baseline review.
 - **Section 5** – Example strategic projects: introduces the role of strategic projects in the Strategy and provides an example of an emerging project.
 - **Section 6** – Next steps: notes the next steps to progress the strategy.

What is green infrastructure?

- 1.4 National Planning Practice Guidance¹ defines GI as:

“A network of multifunctional green space, urban and rural, which is capable of delivering a wide range of environmental and quality of life benefits for local communities. Green infrastructure is not simply an alternative description for conventional open space. As a network it includes parks, open spaces, playing fields, woodlands, but also street trees, allotments and private gardens. It can also include streams, canals and other water bodies and features such as green roofs and walls.”
- 1.5 GI can be in public or private ownership and be various sizes and be in any condition. The multifunctional nature of GI refers to the range of benefits it affords to human health (both physical and mental wellbeing), biodiversity, landscape, reducing local temperatures, the decreasing the impact of climate change and alleviating flood risk. The benefits of GI can be felt at a local, regional and national scale.
- 1.6 As well as offering environmental benefits, GI affords economic and social benefits through increasing the attractiveness of the local area which is an asset to employers and employees, supporting the tourism sector and reducing healthcare costs.
- 1.7 The following Box provides a summary outlining why GI is important.

¹ MHCLG 2018 Planning Practice Guidance for the Natural Environment – Paragraph: 027 Reference ID: 8-027-2160211 <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/natural-environment#para027>

Why green infrastructure is important

Health and wellbeing

GI can help to provide safer, more attractive routes for active travel (walking and cycling) and a venue for outdoor recreation, helping to increase activity levels, with associated health benefits. Increased walking, cycling, and better routes to public transport hubs also contribute to improved air quality by reducing car use.

Living in greener environments (high presence of natural features around the residence) delivers benefits for: mental health and wellbeing; development and maintenance of a healthy immune system; reduction of inflammatory based diseases; and a reduction in health inequalities experienced by lower socio-economic groups. GI can also benefit community cohesion, for example by providing space for community food production, an 'outdoor classroom', or 'green gym'.

Biodiversity

The GI network contains a range of biodiversity designations and habitats and plays a key role in connecting these areas to ensure that the movement of organisms and biological processes continue to function. GI can directly benefit biodiversity by providing new habitats, by buffering existing habitats, and by increasing habitat connectivity.

GI that increases access to or interpretation of nature can help to build long-term support for biodiversity conservation. Where biodiversity is sensitive to recreation pressure, GI can help to alleviate this by providing alternative greenspace for recreation.

Economic growth

GI can also support economic growth by helping to make attractive places for living and working.

Landscape, historic environment and sense of place

GI, if appropriately designed and located, can help to restore degraded landscape character and enhance the setting of historic environment assets.

GI provides a multifunctional landscape that creates a balance between the built and natural environment. The components of the GI network add environmental and social value whilst also contributing to landscape quality.

Climate change adaptation and flooding

Creation of biodiversity corridors can provide climate change adaptation by increasing the connectivity and resilience of species populations. GI can help to reduce flood risk by providing areas for flood storage, natural drainage routes, increased soil permeability, and rainfall interception.

Climate change mitigation

GI can help to provide safer, more attractive routes for active travel (walking and cycling), helping to encourage modal shift from motorised transport with its associated carbon emissions.

Vegetation and soils can also provide a carbon sink. Land management options likely to increase carbon storage/reduce carbon emissions include tree planting, conversion of arable farmland to semi-natural habitat (requires less soil disturbance and no fertiliser inputs), and preservation of peatland soils.

Aim of the Strategy

- 1.8 The overall aim of the Strategy is to **guide future investment in East Hampshire's GI**. It also provides up-to-date evidence to inform the East Hampshire Local Plan, which will be a key vehicle for securing GI enhancement.
- 1.9 To achieve the above aim the Strategy will:
- Update the evidence base that was prepared in 2013 and identify the key issues and opportunities associated with the following themes:
 - Landscape, heritage and sense of place
 - Biodiversity
 - Woodlands and associated habitats
 - Water environment
 - Access, recreation and transport
 - Local awareness
 - Health, wellbeing and inequality
 - Identify a number of GI projects to be delivered either by the Council and/or its partners. Alongside a Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace (SANG) policy, this will also help to mitigate adverse environmental effects of development in the PAA and secure environmental enhancement.
- 1.10 This Strategy works in tandem with the East Hampshire Open Space Study (2018) as both **documents will be used to inform policies of the District's emerging Local Plan and guide the** outcome of planning applications. In addition, these studies provide recommendations for how East Hampshire District Council should coordinate the protection, enhancement and creation of green spaces in East Hampshire.

Profile of East Hampshire

- 1.11 East Hampshire is a predominantly rural district and an attractive part of southern England. Within the PAA most of the population is concentrated within the main towns of Alton, and Whitehill & Bordon. **The District's population in 2016 was 118,000²** and is projected to grow to 128,000 by 2036.³ The District has an ageing population with the number of older people (those aged 65 and over) almost doubling between 1981 and 2011⁴.
- 1.12 The PAA has a rich variety of landscapes with many historic assets which play an important role in creating strong sense of place and identity for different parts of the PAA. These landscapes support a diversity of different habitats and species, including heathland, ancient semi-natural woodland on chalk and upper greensand, unimproved chalk grassland and the Wey River Systems. Many areas in the District containing these habitats are protected under various designations.
- 1.13 The PAA has numerous publicly accessible open spaces and an extensive network of public rights of way, which allow residents to partake in a wide variety of recreational activities such as running, walking, cycling and dog walking which help to increase access to nature, physical activity and promote health and wellbeing.
- 1.14 The South Downs National Park makes up a significant proportion of East Hampshire and is a separate Local Planning Authority. In April 2018, the Park Authority submitted the first Local Plan

² Nomis (2016), ONS Population estimates - local authority based by five year age band. Available at: <https://www.nomisweb.co.uk/reports/lmp/la/1946157301/printable.aspx>
Hampshire County Council (2012), *East Hampshire Ageing Factsheet*. Available at: http://www.hants.gov.uk/east_hampshire_ageing_factsheet_2011.pdf
⁴ Hampshire County Council (2012), *East Hampshire Ageing Factsheet*. Available at: http://www.hants.gov.uk/east_hampshire_ageing_factsheet_2011.pdf

to the Government for examination. The Park is an important resource for recreation for those within the PAA and visitors further afield.

- 1.15 The District as a whole demonstrates significantly lower than average socio-economic deprivation⁵. The exceptions to this include parts of Alton and to the north and east of Whitehill & Bordon. However, childhood obesity and an ageing, less physically mobile population is experienced across the District. Well planned and designed GI can play a role in helping to address these issues.⁶
- 1.16 The PAA has a number of significant transport corridors running through it, including the A3 and A31 trunk roads and two branches of the South Western Railway network. There is a high rate of car ownership within the District, reflecting its rural nature. The PAA has localised areas of poor air quality located along the A3 and A31 corridors, as well as settlements along these routes. An Air Quality Management Area (AQMA) is located in Whitehill & Bordon.
- 1.17 Provision and enhancement of GI will play an important role in positively addressing East Hampshire's shifting social and environmental context and the issues raised above. Further detail is provided on the Hampshire's context within **Section 2** of this report.

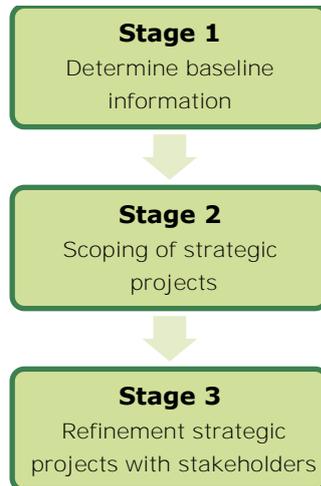
⁵ Index of Multiple Deprivation (2015)

⁶ Public Health England (2017). Health Profile for East Hampshire District

2 Approach to strategy

- 2.1 This section sets out the approach to the development of the GI Strategy, which involves three broad stages, as summarised in **Figure 2.1** below.

Figure 2.1: Approach to Strategy



Stage 1: Determine baseline information

- 2.2 This stage involved reviewing relevant policy and assembling relevant datasets. The policy review included national policy, in addition to a range of relevant evidence base and guidance documents available for this Strategy including:
- Review of national, regional and local planning policy and guidance.
 - Initial site visit with Council officers.
 - **Mapped information relevant to the 'GI themes'.**
 - Review of existing evidence base reports and strategies, including the adopted and emerging neighbourhood plan documents.
 - Email and telephone consultation with internal and external stakeholders.
- 2.3 From the above, the key GI issues and opportunities were identified for each GI theme.

Documents considered to inform the GI Strategy

- 2.4 The following evidence documents have been reviewed during the preparation of the Strategy:
- East Hampshire Open Space Assessment (2018)
 - East Hampshire Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (2008) and updated version 2018
 - East Hampshire Green Infrastructure Strategy (2013)
 - Infrastructure Delivery Plan April (2015)
 - Alton Neighbourhood Development Plan
 - Bentley Neighbourhood Development Plan
 - Medstead and Four Marks Neighbourhood Plan
 - Green Infrastructure Strategy for Basingstoke and Deane 2013 to 2029 (July 2013)

- Hart Green Infrastructure Strategy (2017)
- South Downs Green Infrastructure Framework (March 2016)
- East Hampshire Landscape Capacity Study (2018)
- Hampshire County Council Countryside Access Plan 2015 -2025
- A Cycling Plan for East Hampshire (2004)
- South Hampshire Green Infrastructure Strategy (2017)
- South Hampshire Green Infrastructure Implementation Plan (2018) Draft (November 2018)

Stakeholders consulted to inform strategy

2.5 Stakeholders consulted on for this strategy include:

- Hampshire County Council
- Natural England
- Forestry Commission
- Ministry of Defence
- Hampshire and Isle of Wight Wildlife Trust
- Environment Agency
- RSPB
- Historic England
- Sport England
- National Trust
- CPRE
- Partnership for Urban South Hampshire (PUSH)
- National Farmers Union
- Deadwater Valley Trust
- The River Wey Trust
- Portsmouth Water
- South Downs National Park Authority
- Waverley Borough Council
- Basingstoke and Deane Borough Council
- Winchester City Council
- Chichester District Council
- Havant Borough Council
- Hart District Council
- Hampshire Biodiversity Information Centre (HBIC)

Stage 2: Scoping of strategic projects

- 2.6 The second stage of the study involves identifying a number of strategic GI projects capable of being delivered within the forthcoming Local Plan period.
- 2.7 The projects will be informed by the opportunities identified in the baseline review (Stage 1) and email consultation with stakeholders. For the stakeholder consultation, external and internal organisations have been invited to highlight key GI issues relevant to their organisation and to suggest any project ideas.
- 2.8 Following the above steps, a list of strategic projects will be drafted.

Stage 3: Refinement of strategic projects with stakeholders

- 2.9 The list of strategic projects will be refined through further consultation with key stakeholders. This stage of consultation will seek to confirm the projects' **relevance and deliverability**.

3 Planning policy context

3.1 This section outlines the key national, regional and local policies that influence the GI Strategy.

National policy

25 Year Environment Plan

3.2 The government's recently published 25 Year Environment Plan⁷, provides support for 'net environmental gain' in development, habitat creation, multi-functional SUDS requirements, and natural spaces close to where people live and work.

National Planning Policy Framework

- 3.1 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) underlines the importance of GI and its relevance to the development of a Local Plan.
- 3.2 Paragraph 91 states that planning policies and decisions should aim to achieve healthy, inclusive and safe places which enable and support healthy lifestyles, especially where this would address identified local health and well-being needs – for example through the provision of safe and accessible green infrastructure.
- 3.3 Paragraph 96 highlights that planning policies should be based on robust and up-to-date assessments of the needs for open space, sports and recreation facilities.
- 3.4 The NPPF provides a mechanism by which local authorities can protect some open spaces under a 'Local Green Space' designation (paras.99-101), and provides high level criteria for such a designation.
- 3.5 The NPPF (para. 97) sets out the only circumstances in which an open space can be developed for different uses. It clarifies that existing open space should not be built on unless:
- an assessment has been undertaken which has clearly shown the open space, buildings or land to be surplus to requirements; or
 - the loss resulting from the proposed development would be replaced by equivalent or better provision in terms of quantity and quality in a suitable location; or
 - the development is for alternative sports and recreational provision, the benefits of which clearly outweigh the loss of the current or former use.
- 3.6 Paragraph 149 states that Local Plans should take a proactive approach to mitigating and adapting to climate change, taking into account the long-term implications for flood risk, coastal change, water supply, biodiversity and landscapes, and the risk of overheating from rising temperatures. Policies should support appropriate measures to ensure the future resilience of communities and infrastructure to climate change impacts, such as providing space for physical protection measures, or making provision for the possible future relocation of vulnerable development and infrastructure.
- 3.7 Paragraph 171 of the NPPF states that Local Plan should take a strategic approach to maintaining and enhancing networks of habitats and green infrastructure; and plan for the enhancement of natural capital at a catchment or landscape scale across local authority boundaries.
- 3.8 Paragraph 174 addresses the importance of protecting and enhancing biodiversity and geodiversity through mapping the components of ecological networks.

⁷ A Green Future: Our 25 Year Plan to Improve the Environment UK Government, Jan 2018

National Planning Practice Guidance

- 3.9 The National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG) encourages a strategic approach to implementing GI into Local Plans through an evidenced based approach. It states that local authorities are required to provide suitable mitigation for potential impacts on European sites of nature conservation and recommends the provision of open space such as Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace (SANG), either directly or through the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL)⁸.

Regional policy and guidance

South East Green Infrastructure Framework

- 3.10 Published in 2009, this document was developed by a partnership of regional governmental and non-governmental organisations in the South East and sets out the policy context and other resources needed to deliver high quality GI in the South East region. It provides guidance on how GI might be delivered effectively through the Local Plan process from the establishment of an evidence base, to policy development and delivery. The framework highlights the significance of an evidence base formed with diverse partner organisations (e.g. private and public landowners, expertise and specialisms) to provide GI in a specified area.
- 3.11 The East Hampshire GI Strategy has been informed through consultation with external organisations .

Local policy

Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace (SANG) allocation and delivery

- 3.12 The primary purpose of the SANG in East Hampshire is to divert existing recreational uses away from the Wealden Heaths Phase II SPA located in the north east of the PAA.
- 3.13 The Joint Core Strategy, Policy CSWB9 Biodiversity **states "Where avoidance and mitigation, as required in the Habitats Regulations Assessment, takes the form of provision of a Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace (SANG), a minimum requirement of 8 hectares of land should be provided per 1,000 new occupants (after discounting to account for the existing ecological value of sites and for current access and capacity within reasonable access of the new dwellings"**. The new Local Plan for the PAA will include policies relating to biodiversity and supporting policies covering the Wealden Heaths Phase II SPA, the Solent SPAs and Thames Basin Heaths SPA.
- 3.14 A guidance note⁹ **for applicants published in 2019 notes "Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace (SANGS Style Greenspace) – their role is to provide alternative greenspace to divert visitors from visiting the SPA. This form of mitigation is best considered for large new developments. The effectiveness of the SANG style greenspace will depend upon its location and design. Design measures to encourage dog walking away from the heathland areas of the SPA. This could include looking for alternative areas of existing greenspace, supported by interpretation boards and advertising by leaflet drops."**
- 3.15 The Council has no duty to be the sole provider of SANGs meaning that developments that are to be located within the Wealden Heaths II SPA zone of influence may need to contribute to SANGs administered by alternative providers or provide their own bespoke SANG.
- 3.16 This report will take into account the allocation and delivery of GI, including SANGs.

⁸ "The Community Infrastructure Levy is a planning charge, introduced by the Planning Act 2008 as a tool for local authorities in England and Wales to help deliver infrastructure to support the development of their area." Planning Portal https://www.planningportal.co.uk/info/200126/applications/70/community_infrastructure_levy

⁹ <http://www.easthants.gov.uk/sites/default/files/documents/HRAmitigationguidance.pdf>

Open space and new development

- 3.17 The new Local Plan for the PAA will include an open space policy that protects, maintains and enhances open spaces. This is likely to set out stringent criteria in which development proposals would result in the loss of open space (similar to that outlined in Joint Core Strategy Policy CP17).
- 3.18 The recent Open Space Study¹⁰ highlights the areas which experience deficiency in open space provision in terms of quantity, quality, value and accessibility.
- 3.19 In areas of deficiency, efforts should be made to ensure existing open spaces are multifunctional and are of a good quality and high value. Attempts should be made to also ensure all sectors of the community are able to easily access open spaces through the removal of physical barriers (e.g. providing safe crossing points across roads) and ensuring open spaces are appropriately promoted.
- 3.20 Taking into account the findings of the Open Space Study, the new Local Plan will set out the open space requirements to be provided by new developments. The area, type and whether the open space needs to be provided on-site or off-site are expected to be determined by the number of proposed dwellings and local need within a locality, in line with the provision standards set out in the Open Space Study.
- 3.21 This Strategy will highlight locations towards which the creation of off-site open space contributions could be channelled in conjunction with the evidence presented in the Open Space Study.

Gaps

- 3.22 The new Local Plan for the PAA is expected to include a 'Gaps Between Settlements' policy which will require the open and undeveloped nature of gaps between settlements to be protected to help prevent coalescence and to retain the settlements' separate identities.

Biodiversity

- 3.23 There will be a policy within the new Local Plan that will prevent developments from having adverse effects on biodiversity and key habitats, including the Wealden Heaths Phase II SPA.
- 3.24 To achieve best practice guidance, developments should result in biodiversity net gain whereby proposals should deliver greater levels of biodiversity compared to that before development. The **UK's first and latest guidance¹¹** sets out ten principles which provide a framework for development projects to follow to help improve the UK's biodiversity. As already mentioned, biodiversity enhancements are one of the benefits of GI and can therefore be integrated into developments as a mitigation strategy to minimise biodiversity loss or it can even contribute to biodiversity net gain.

Allotments

- 3.25 The provision of allotments supports local food production and encourages healthy lifestyles. **Allotments currently form part of the Council's intended** delivery of multi-functional GI as highlighted in the supporting text of Joint Core Strategy Policy CSWB10 Green Infrastructure. Although there is no specific policy of allotments it is likely that allotment provision will be a requirement of the new Local Plan, through policies which refer to specific new large planned development sites.

Play

- 3.26 Policies relating to **specific development sites in East Hampshire's new** Local Plan are likely to **outline the provision for children's play facilities**. Furthermore **polices relating to infrastructure** provision would be expected to outline that large development proposals are required to provide

¹⁰ LUC (2018) Open Space Assessment for East Hampshire District Council

¹¹ Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment (IEMA), Construction Industry Research and Information Association (CIRIA) and Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management (CIEEM) (2016) Biodiversity Net Gain: Good practice principles for development.

appropriate infrastructure, including children’s play, either on site, off site or through financial contributions.

Neighbourhood planning

3.27 Neighbourhood Plans have been prepared for a number of areas in East Hampshire. The relevant GI policies and objectives are summarised in **Table 3.1** below.

Table 3.1: Summary of relevant Neighbourhood Plan policies and objectives

Neighbourhood Plan: Relevant Green infrastructure policy/objectives
<p>Alton Neighbourhood Plan 2011 to 2028 (Adopted November 2015)</p>
<p>Policy TR3: Pedestrian Networks - seeks to ensure developments provide links for pedestrians, broadening footpath network.</p> <p>Policy TR4: Cycle Routes - seeks to ensure development proposals will provide linkages within, into and out of the site that provide safe cycle access.</p> <p>TRAP5: Press for footpaths and pedestrian alleyways in the town to be well maintained and clear pedestrian signposting provided, liaising with adjoining Parishes in relation to the surrounding network of public rights-of-way.</p> <p>TRAP7: Seeks to encourage actions that will reduce the use of cars for school pupil transport. Initiatives such as Walking Bus, or school minibus transport for those living in the outer areas of the town, will be actively supported.</p> <p>TRAP9: Lobby for improvements to be made to National Cycle Route 224 (Medstead to Farnham) on its route through the town and for all designated cycle routes to be maintained in a condition that encourages their use.</p> <p>TRAP10: Ensure that there is adequate direction signing for cyclists passing through the town, particularly along National Cycle Route 224 (Medstead to Farnham).</p> <p>TRAP11: Provide safe cycle connections between the town and surrounding villages.</p> <p>Open space, sports and recreation</p> <p>CH5 Local green space and open space: All existing areas of open space in the town with a community function should be retained. In addition, any areas of open space that enhance the character of the local area should similarly be considered for retention.</p> <p>CH6 Playing Fields: Proposals to provide additional playing field space and associated facilities will be supported. In particular, proposals that help meet the identified need in Alton for junior football pitches will be actively encouraged.</p> <p>Policy CH7: Allotments: Allotment land will be protected for this purpose for the duration of the plan period. Proposals to provide additional allotment land in the town will be actively encouraged.</p>
<p>Bentley Neighbourhood Plan 2015-2028: February 2016</p>
<p>Policy 3: Recreation Ground: Safeguards land at the recreation ground, as shown on the Policies Map, for future provision of a new building for community uses, and for a car parking area.</p> <p>Policy 5: Local Green Spaces: Resist proposals for housing or other inappropriate development on the recreation ground; Carters Meadow; and the allotment site by Somerset Field.</p> <p>Policy 6: Sustainable Drainage: all proposals for residential and commercial development will be supported provided they are able to demonstrate implementation one of a number of sustainable drainage features.</p> <p>Para 5.6 of the neighbourhood plan notes the Parish Council would like to see a number of infrastructure projects realised. Relevant to GI, this includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Investment in improved mains drainage for foul sewage and surface water to reduce the risk of flooding. • Provision of a pedestrian access way from Bonners Field to Eggars Field to facilitate children walking to Bentley Primary School.

Medstead & Four Marks Neighbourhood Plan 2015-2028

Policy 2: Local Gap between Medstead Village & South Medstead: protect this local gap to help prevent coalescence and retain the separate identity of the settlements.

Policy 7: Local Green Spaces: seeks to protect and enhance a number of Local Green Spaces in the neighbourhood plan area.

Policy 8: Medstead Village Wild Flower Walk: The formation and maintenance of a Wild Flower Walk in the village of Medstead, as shown on the Policies Map, for the enjoyment of the local community and visitors, will be supported.

Policy 9: Medstead & Four Marks Green Infrastructure Network: seeks to improve the network of footpaths and tracks for pedestrians and cyclists. Proposes the establishment of Green Infrastructure Network through linking existing Public Rights of Way.

Policy 10: Green Infrastructure & Biodiversity: seeks the retention of existing green infrastructure, corridors, ponds and other wildlife habitats; and support the connection of wildlife habitats in the settlements to those in the countryside.

Ropley Neighbourhood Plan: Pre-submission document (2018)¹²

Policy RNP4: New development should retain existing healthy mature trees which contribute to the amenity of the area, hedgerows, verges and banks. Any new planting in association with the new development should be of indigenous species.

In addition, new development should seek to protect and enhance the area's ecological networks.

Policy RNP8: seeks to protect Local Green Spaces

Policy RNP9: seeks to protect locally important heritage assets

Policy RNP10: identifies and protects wildlife corridors and stepping stones which link designated wildlife sites within Ropley. There are three such areas in Ropley, which the policy calls 'Local Nature Conservation Networks'. They are: the Ropley Ridgeline (the area running from Ropley Soke through Lyeway and Charlwood to Monkwood); Park Lane Woodlands (the area at the end of Park Lane to the parish boundary with Bishops Sutton); and Bowers Grove Wood (to the north west of the railway line).

Policy RNP11: Seeks to conserve and enhance the Public Rights of Way in Ropley

Bramshott & Liphook Neighbourhood Development Plan: Interim Report: March 2018

Bramshott & Liphook Parish Council is currently preparing a Neighbourhood Plan. An interim report outlines a number of draft policies relating to GI. These include:

SR3 Design and implement a series of outdoor trails aims to provide a wider range of sports and recreational facilities for different age groups.

SR4 The South Downs National Park aims to capitalise on the opportunity to become a gateway to SDNP. This includes enabling a circular cycle route around village, including across SDNP land.

PS3 Investment in water infrastructure aims to ensure sufficient investment in flood protection and associated infrastructure such as through widespread application of SuDS technologies and approaches.

PS4 Planning & design to achieve clean energy and air aims to use the planning system to ensure high standards of environmental sustainability such as through restricting HGV movement and increased tree planting along streets.

HD1 Rediscovery of Liphook Square aims to rediscover the historic centre of Liphook village by Investigate feasibility for a "shared space" scheme to better prioritise space between cars and people.

¹² Currently out for consultation on the Regulation 15 Submission Version

Relevant extant GI Frameworks

3.28 A number of relevant GI frameworks have been reviewed in preparation of this Strategy. These are summarised below.

East Hampshire Green Infrastructure Strategy 2013

3.29 The 2013 Green Infrastructure Strategy notes a number of issues relating to recreation, including:

- Desire of residents to have access to open space within walking distance of their homes.
- Need to provide a variety of different kinds of open space.
- Unequal distribution of open space across the District.
- Fragmented Public Rights of Way network in parts of the countryside.
- Major barriers to movement, such as the A3 trunk road.
- Dealing with the visitor pressures on existing key visitor sites, such as the Queen Elizabeth Country Park.
- Increasing access for less mobile people.
- Capitalising on opportunities to increase access to open space through development proposals.

South Downs Green Infrastructure Framework (March 2016)

3.30 The SDNP have set out a strategic framework for GI. The framework adopts a sub-regional approach to planning and delivering GI across the SDNP and within the surrounding areas of partner authorities and organisations. It notes a number of headline issues notably:

- **An interrelated area** - how pressures in one area can have an effect on another area with consequences for biodiversity and landscape quality.
- **Addressing deficits in existing green infrastructure provision** - there is a need to address deficits in existing GI provision based on standards, particularly outside the National Park.
- **The need for connectivity** – There is a need to improve biodiversity and physical access links both within the SDNP and out to surrounding areas.
- **Urban edge pressures** – There is pressure from urban areas on the SDNP in the form of declining biodiversity, urbanisation of the landscape, degradation of landscape quality and character. This pressure is particularly apparent along the southern boundary of the SDNP.

3.31 The Framework sets out a number of Green Infrastructure Investment Areas (GIAs) based on the review of evidence. There are two GIA areas relevant to the East Hampshire PAA summarised below:

- **East Hants and Heathlands GIA** - An area covering several heathland sites. Several European sites are recognised as being sensitive to recreation, for which mitigation measures are required, but many more have been highlighted as sensitive by land managers, for which mitigation of impacts is very challenging. Within this area there is opportunity to build on the success of the Heathlands Reunited Heritage Lottery Fund project to fully integrate landscape-scale habitat conservation and green infrastructure into the future.
- **South East Hampshire GIA** – This area lies across the northern PUSH area and the southern part of Winchester and East Hampshire districts. Alongside a large existing population, significant new housing is planned. The PUSH Green Infrastructure partners have plans and policy in place to provide GI within PUSH. Investment and co-ordinated planning needs to extend to the southern area of the National Park to protect the edge of the South Downs National Park. Within this area the Strategy notes there is opportunity to:
 - Provide an integrated recreation management to manage visitors to these highly visited and valued sites, especially around Queen Elizabeth Country Park/ Butser Hill SAC.
 - Extend woodland, provide more areas for recreation.
 - Link sites with access routes.

- o Forest of Bere - potential for landscape-scale project incorporating biodiversity, access, cultural heritage and landscape. Work with partners to develop this sub-regional project.

South Hampshire Green Infrastructure Strategy (2017-2034)

- 3.32 The PUSH Green Infrastructure Strategy identifies the key GI features and future requirements for South Hampshire, which includes part of the East Hampshire PAA. The primary purpose of the strategy is to enable and unlock development.
- 3.33 The strategy adopts a position statement which notes that *"Each of the PUSH authorities will in their Local Plans and where appropriate:*
- *Make provision for these strategic and other local GI proposals taking account of Natural England's Accessible Natural Greenspace Standards (ANGst); including where appropriate as an integral part of development proposals;*
 - *Protect and enhance the integrity, quality, connectivity and multi-functionality of the existing green infrastructure network and individual sites; and*
 - *Secure funding to deliver and manage these enhanced and new GI features and networks."*
- 3.34 Currently a GI Implementation Plan containing a number of strategic projects is being prepared to help deliver a strategy.

South Hampshire Green Infrastructure Implementation Plan (draft November 2018)

- 3.35 The South Hampshire GI Implementation Plan is the delivery plan for South Hampshire Green Infrastructure Strategy 2017-2034 and will support the enhancement of the area's GI network through the delivery of a number of key strategic GI projects/initiatives. Initial GI projects identified within the draft implementation plan relevant to East Hampshire District include:
- **Forest of Bere Woodlands Project** – the creation of new woodland together with extended and enhanced recreational access routes to improve connectivity, recreational and biodiversity opportunities. This project is to be confirmed.
 - **Strategic Transport Corridor GI Project** - Securing appropriate habitat management of vegetation on active road and rail corridors is crucial to the contribution that these linear GI assets make and can make to the biodiversity of South Hampshire and beyond. This project is to be confirmed.
 - **Greening the Urban Environment Initiative** - a myriad and diverse smaller scale local GI projects that will be required to enable the development, regeneration and enhancement of urban areas across South Hampshire, whilst protecting and enhancing the natural environment.
 - **Havant Thicket Reservoir GI Project** - deliver winter storage reservoir for Portsmouth Water in an area of woodland and open space north of Leigh Park, Havant, east of Rowlands Castle and close to Staunton Country Park to the south.

Hart Green Infrastructure Strategy (2017)

- 3.36 The Hart GI Strategy will guide future investment in Hart's GI. It also provides up-to-date evidence to inform the Hart Local Plan, which will be a key vehicle for securing GI enhancement. The Strategy sets out a number of priority projects to be implemented in the District including:
- Connecting Hart's valuable ecological features.
 - Promote access to the countryside, woods and SANGs.
 - Maximise the environmental benefits of Hart's woodlands.
 - Use GI to connect communities to existing green spaces.
 - Engage schools, young people, children and new residents to the District.

Green Infrastructure Strategy for Basingstoke and Deane 2013 to 2029 (July 2013)

- 3.37 The Basingstoke and Deane GI Strategy assesses the nature, extent and distribution of the borough's existing GI, and makes an initial assessment of where deficiencies exist. The Strategy sets out a number of high level future GI opportunities for addressing deficiencies.

4 Green infrastructure themes

4.1 This section provides a summary of the key issues and opportunities relating to seven GI themes. In addition, relevant mapping is also provided for context. The baseline text informing the issues and opportunities will be provided within the final GI Strategy Report.

4.2 The updated baseline has been informed by relevant GIS data, evidence base studies and input from stakeholders. The seven themes are listed below. Noted underneath each of the themes are the key features analysed related to that theme:

1 Landscape, heritage and sense of place

- Landscape character areas
- Designated historic assets
- Landscape capacity areas

2 Biodiversity

- Local, national and international biodiversity designations
- Priority habitat areas
- Ecological networks

3 Woodlands

- Woodlands
- Ancient woodland
- Publicly accessible woodland

4 Water environment

- Primary water bodies within the PAA
- Flood Zones

5 Access, recreation and transport

- Recreational open space including, designated open space, accessible woodland and registered common land
- Local and National Cycle routes
- Public Rights of Way

6 Health & wellbeing and inequality

- Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) domains, including Living Environment, Health Environment and Overall IMD score

7 Local awareness and involvement

4.3 For the purposes of this Strategy, the supporting maps have been split into three different Sub-Areas for analysis. These are:

- North West Sub Area
- North East Sub Area
- Southern Parishes

Landscape, heritage and sense of place

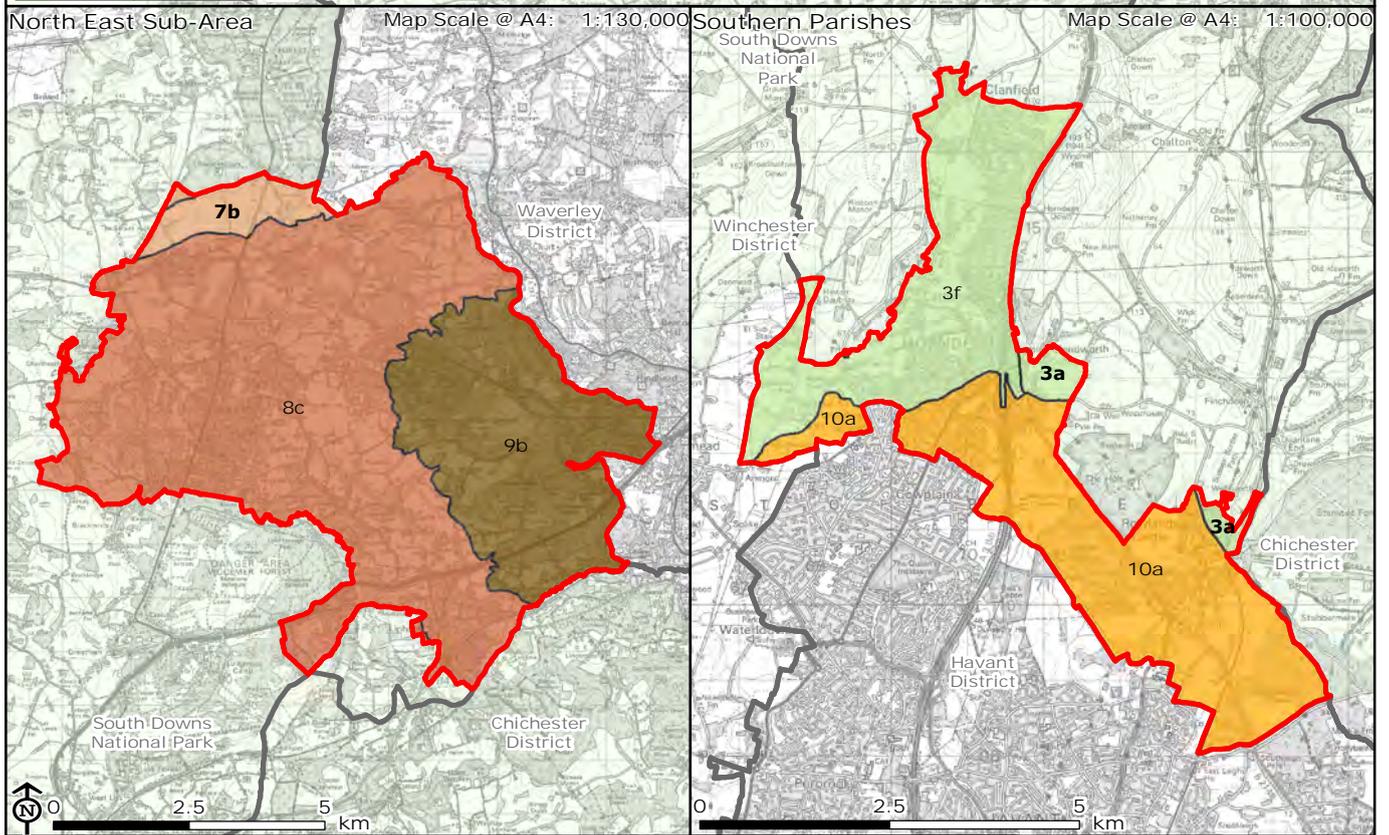
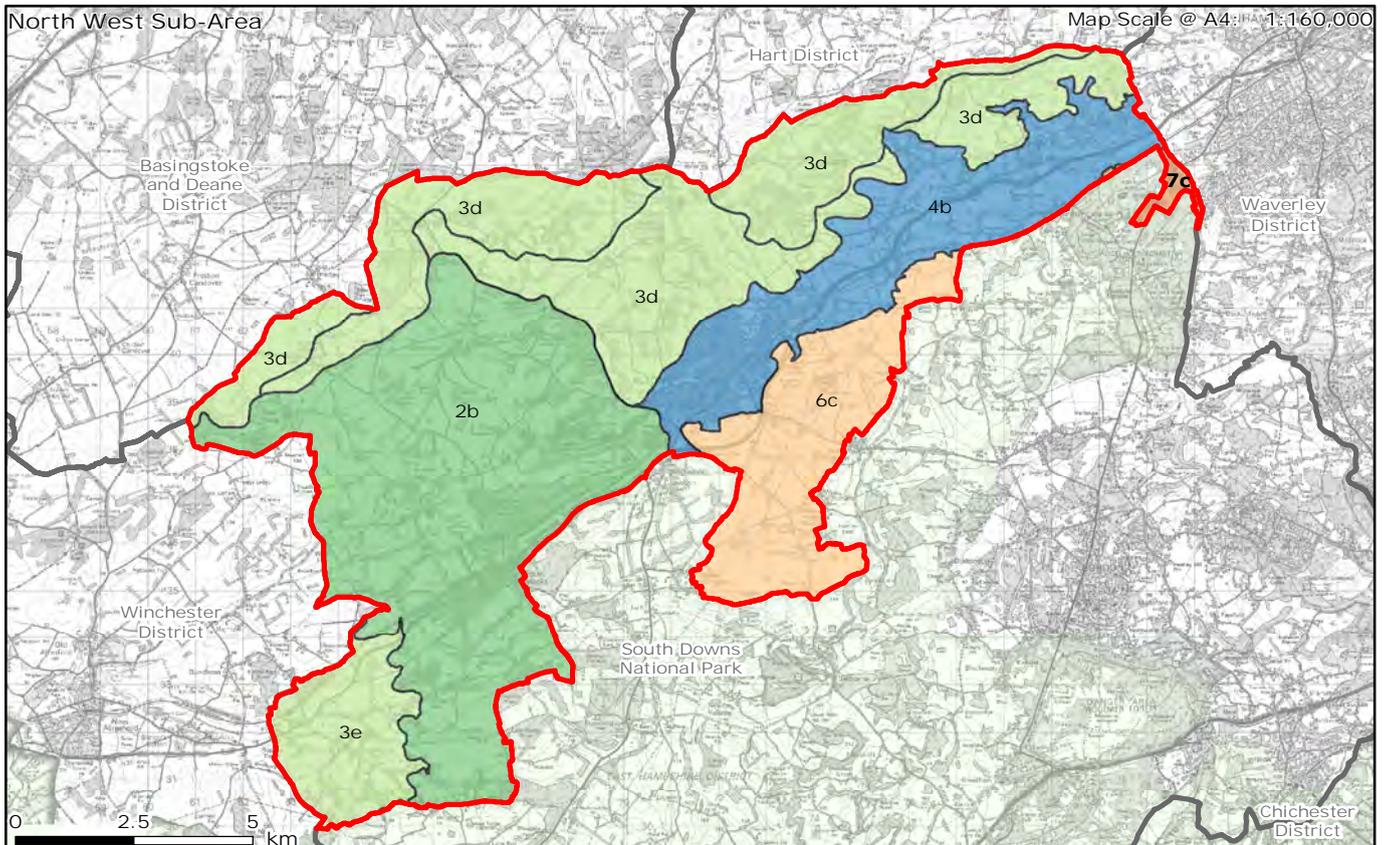
- 4.4 Listed below are the key issues and opportunities relating to landscape, heritage and sense of place. **Figure 4.1** and **Figure 4.3** represent the draft mapped outputs relating to this theme, which will be included within the final GI Strategy report.

Issues

- An increase in development, particularly around key settlements (Horndean, Clanfield, Liphook, Alton, Four Marks and Rowlands Castle), has the potential to detract from landscape character if not managed properly. Landscape character is particularly sensitive in areas that are more open.
- Pressure to build at higher densities at the expense of GI within development sites.
- There is pressure for development within settlement gaps, which could detract from the separate identities of settlements and the open quality of gaps.
- There is a lack of physical connection with important parts of the landscape such as the Southern and Northern River Wey.
- There can be a lack of awareness of the local landscape and its historic importance. This issue is likely to be particularly prevalent in young and new populations.
- GI in the form of street trees and grass verges, as well as vegetation within building plots, can contribute significantly to the rural character of settlements.

Opportunities

- Require developers to provide GI as part of a development proposal, for example through use of locally sourced plants and materials. This should accord with GI recommendations set out in the 2018 East Hampshire Landscape Capacity Study.
- Improve connectivity between settlements and the surrounding countryside by enhancing Public Rights Of Way, including along river corridors enhancing perceived and physical connectivity.
- Implement GI to enhance the setting of historic assets and improve access for people to enjoy them. This includes Conservation Areas, Listed Buildings and Scheduled Monuments **and other historic features e.g. historic features associated with the District's waterways and landscape.**
- **Improve awareness of East Hampshire's landscape by providing enhanced interpretation and guided trails.** This could adopt new technologies such as GPS guided trails.
- Increase woodland cover to strengthen landscape character and mitigate the visual impacts of new development.
- Protect and seek opportunities to link non-designated GI such as green verges and street trees to preserve the **special character of the PAA's towns in accordance of the findings of the Neighbourhood Character Study 2018.**
- Consider restoration of land to former historic land uses e.g. woodland, heathland restoration to reinforce historic sense of place.
- Support and implement projects, which enhance awareness and quality of the landscape.

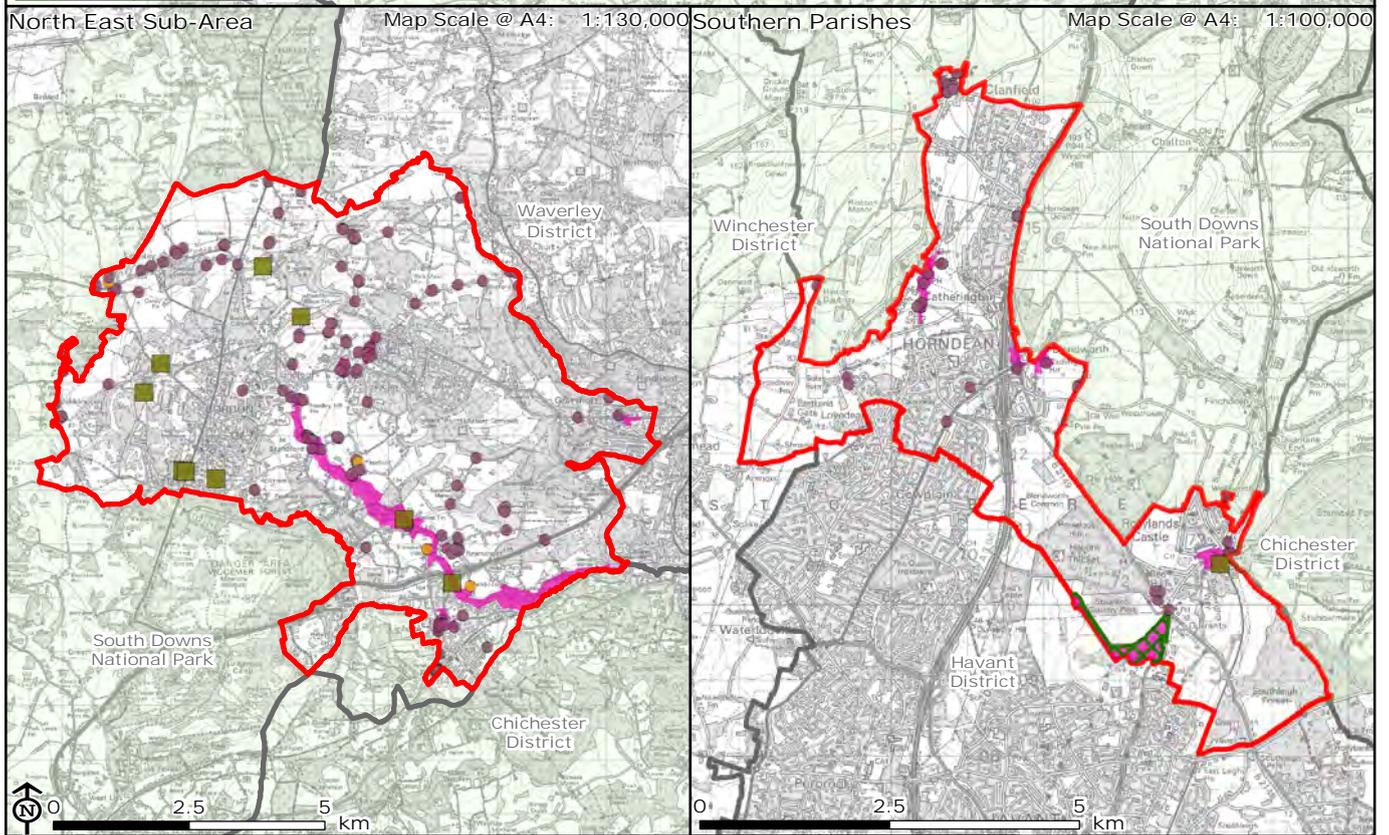
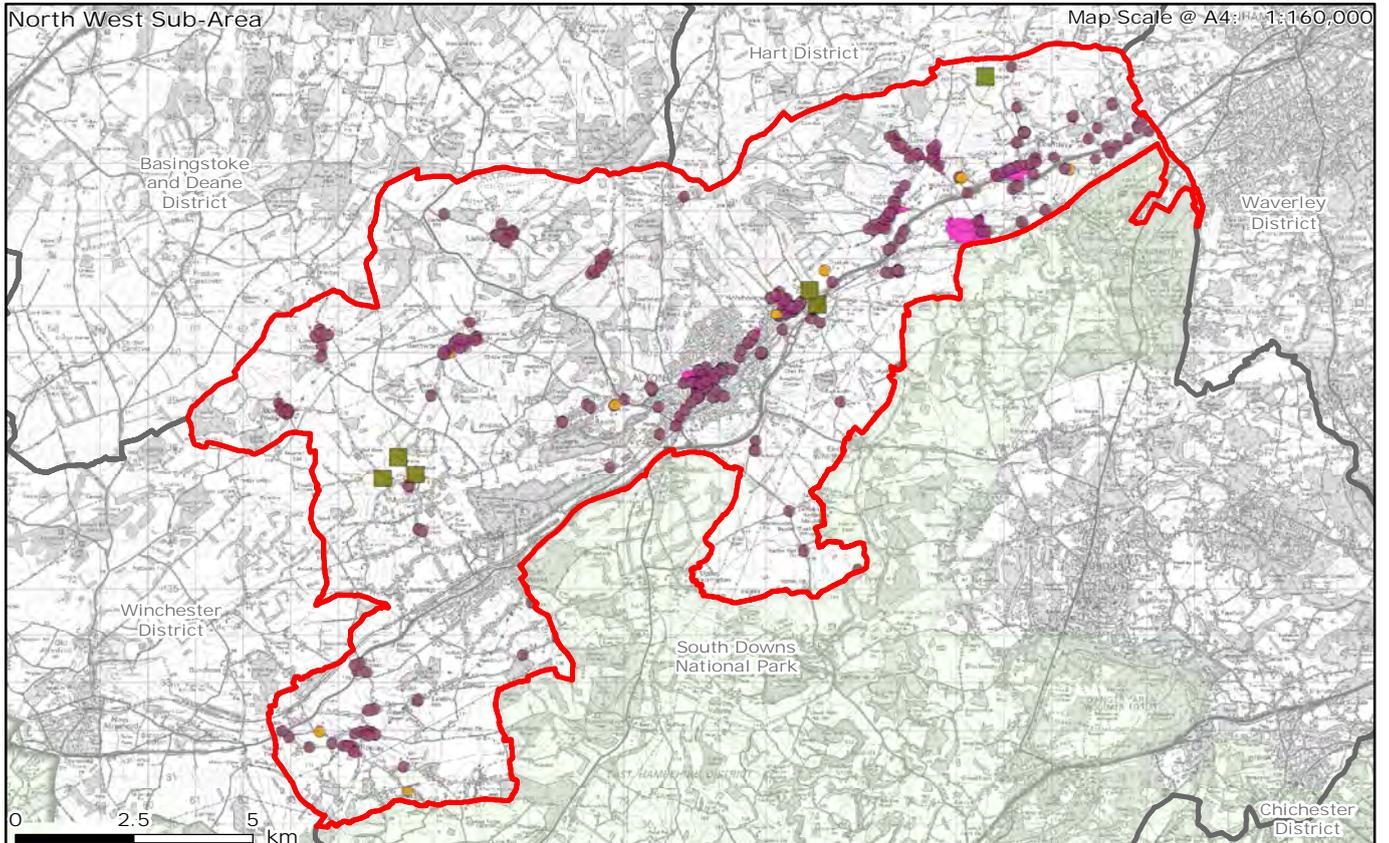


Study area	4 : Chalk Valley Systems
East Hampshire District	5 : Major Scarps
Other local authority	6 : Greensand Terrace
South Downs National Park	7 : Mixed Farmland and Woodland
Landscape Character Area	8 : Wealden Farmland and Heath Mosaic
1 : Wooded Estate Downland	9 : Greensand Hills
2 : Clay Plateau	10 : Wooded Claylands
3 : Downland Mosaic	

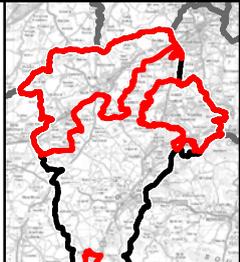
Source: EHDC, NE

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Figure 4.1:
Landscape Character Areas



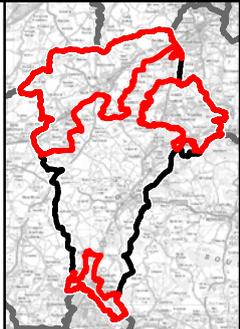
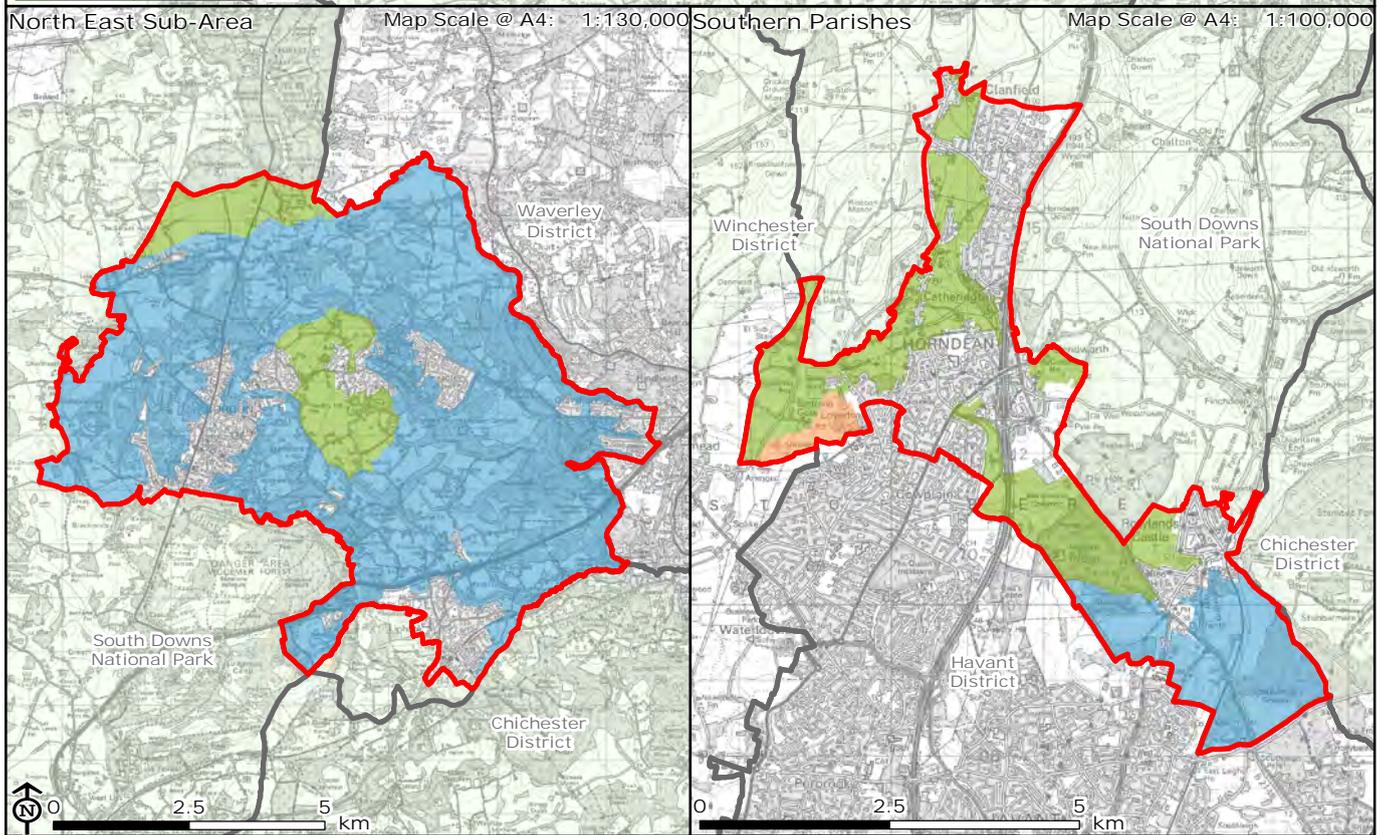
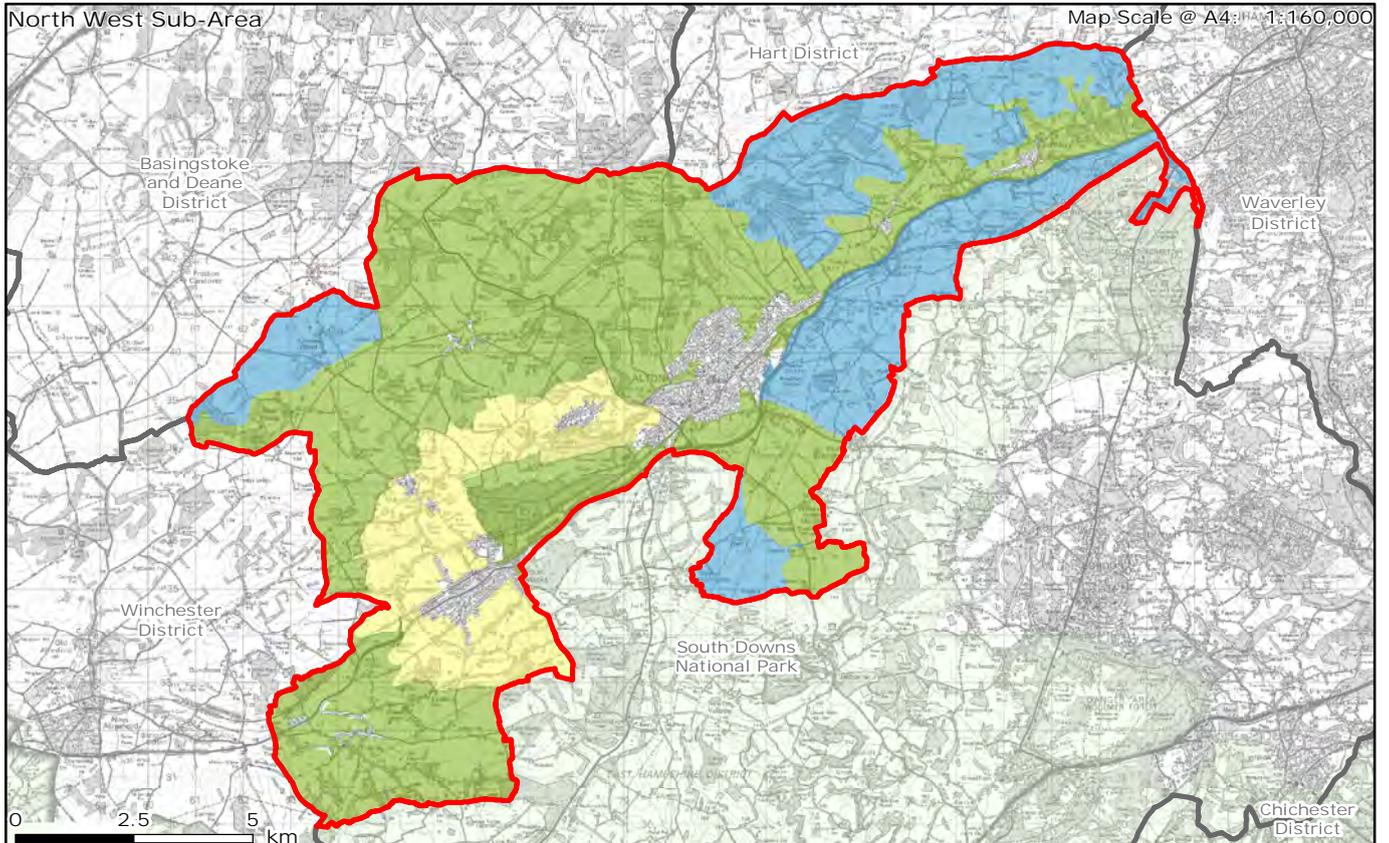
Study area	Listed building
East Hampshire District	Grade I
Other local authority	Grade II*
South Downs National Park	Grade II
	Scheduled Monument
	Registered Park and Garden
	Conservation Area



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Figure 4.2:
Historic Environment





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Figure 4.3: Landscape Capacity



Biodiversity

- 4.5 Listed below are the key issues and opportunities relating to Biodiversity. **Figure 4.4, Figure 4.5 and Figure 4.6** represent the draft mapped outputs relating to this theme, which will be included within the final GI Strategy report.

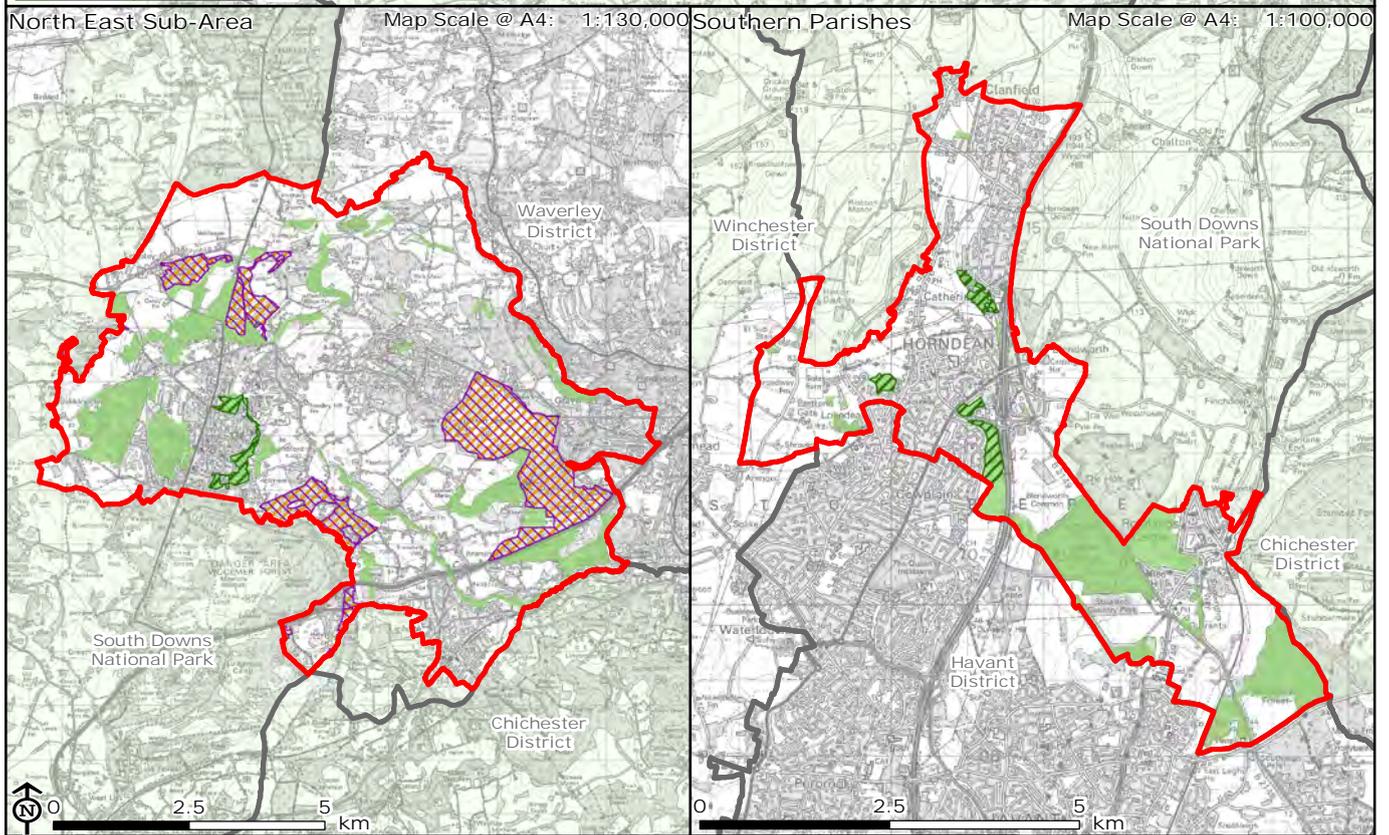
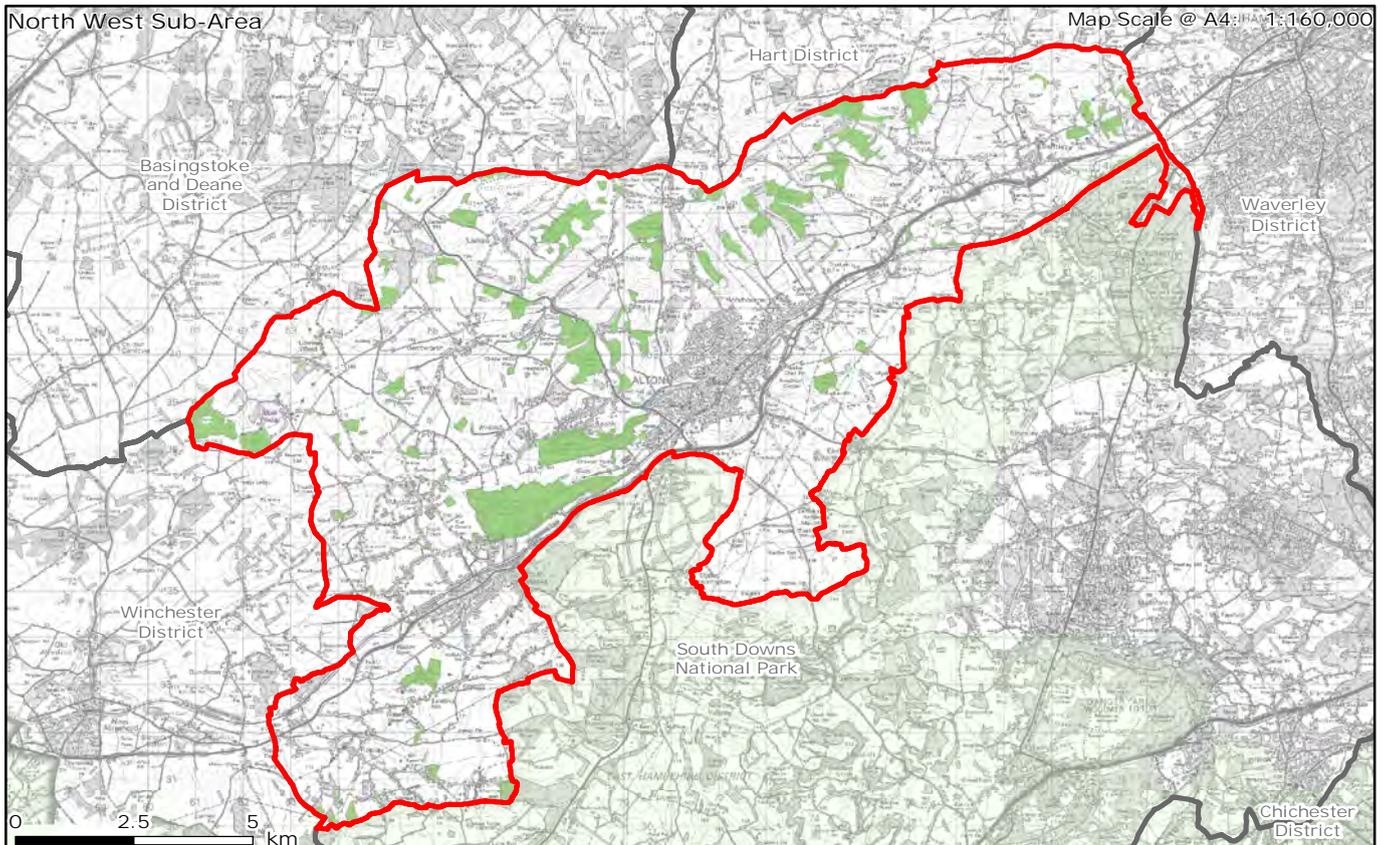
Issues

- There is pressure on designated sites from recreation. The Wealden Heaths Phase II SPA is particularly vulnerable to external influences such as dog walkers. Rare species depend on the heathland such as the sand lizard, smooth snake and Dartford warbler.
- Many habitats across the District and PAA have become fragmented through changing land uses and urban development. Fragmentation is an important cause of species decline.
- Some future development is likely to occur on greenfield land which could result in loss of habitats and biodiversity.
- Much farmland within the District is arable or improved grassland, which are species poor. However, the corners and edges of arable fields often contain rich arable plant flora. The increasing use of buffer strips at field margins is proving beneficial for a wide variety of wildlife.
- Research on long-term ecological change has found that woodlands are becoming less structurally diverse and less species rich. This has been caused by the cessation of active woodland management at many sites, whilst at others intensive silviculture prevails. Coupled with this, past habitat fragmentation has resulted in widespread reduction in habitat connectivity, which in turn inhibits the ability of woodland species to respond to external influences e.g. climatic change.
- Species-rich unimproved and semi-improved grassland is one of the rarest habitats in the UK and Hampshire. Many areas have been lost due to arable farming.
- Developments can lead to increased light pollution and non-native planting schemes which can affect the dispersal and foraging habitats of nocturnal species.
- There are many inter-related issues threatening and altering East Hampshire's freshwater habitats, including eutrophication recreational pressures, water level and reduced management, alien species and climate change.
- As well as rural areas, urban areas have considerable biodiversity. However, poor management such as mowing road verges and increased pressure to build on brownfield sites can decrease the biodiversity value of urban areas.

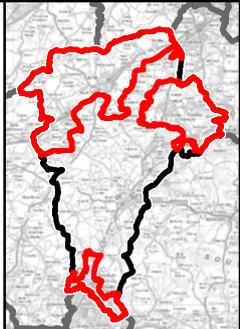
Opportunities

- Continue to rejuvenate Hampshire's heathlands through partnership working and focused conservation management work. This could involve introducing sustainable management regimes to sites where management is currently limited, and target heathland re-creation to re-connect isolated fragments.
- Educate the public about the sensitivities of heathland sites and encourage use of alternative sites for more sensitive activities, such as dog walking.
- Explore opportunities to reduce ecological fragmentation and improve ecological connectivity such as 'Network Opportunity Areas' identified by Hampshire Biodiversity Information Centre.
- Increase woodland cover where appropriate to improve habitat connectivity and improve the structural diversity of woodlands. This could be achieved by developing sustainable long-term management plans. Increased woodland cover could also be encouraged by increased support for 'wood fuel' initiatives, and encourage markets for local timber and wood products.
- Implement restoration and maintenance initiatives to improve the coverage and condition of semi-improved grassland such as through Environmental Stewardship Schemes.

- Implement GI such as sustainable urban drainage systems to improve and manage water quality thereby helping to improve the ecological value of freshwater sites.
- Ensure continued management of Road Verges of Ecological Importance through the project being conducted by Hampshire County Council.
- Implement GI as part of new developments to encourage biodiversity net gain. Where net gain cannot be achieved on-site, funding should be pooled into off-site biodiversity projects to offset any loss to biodiversity.



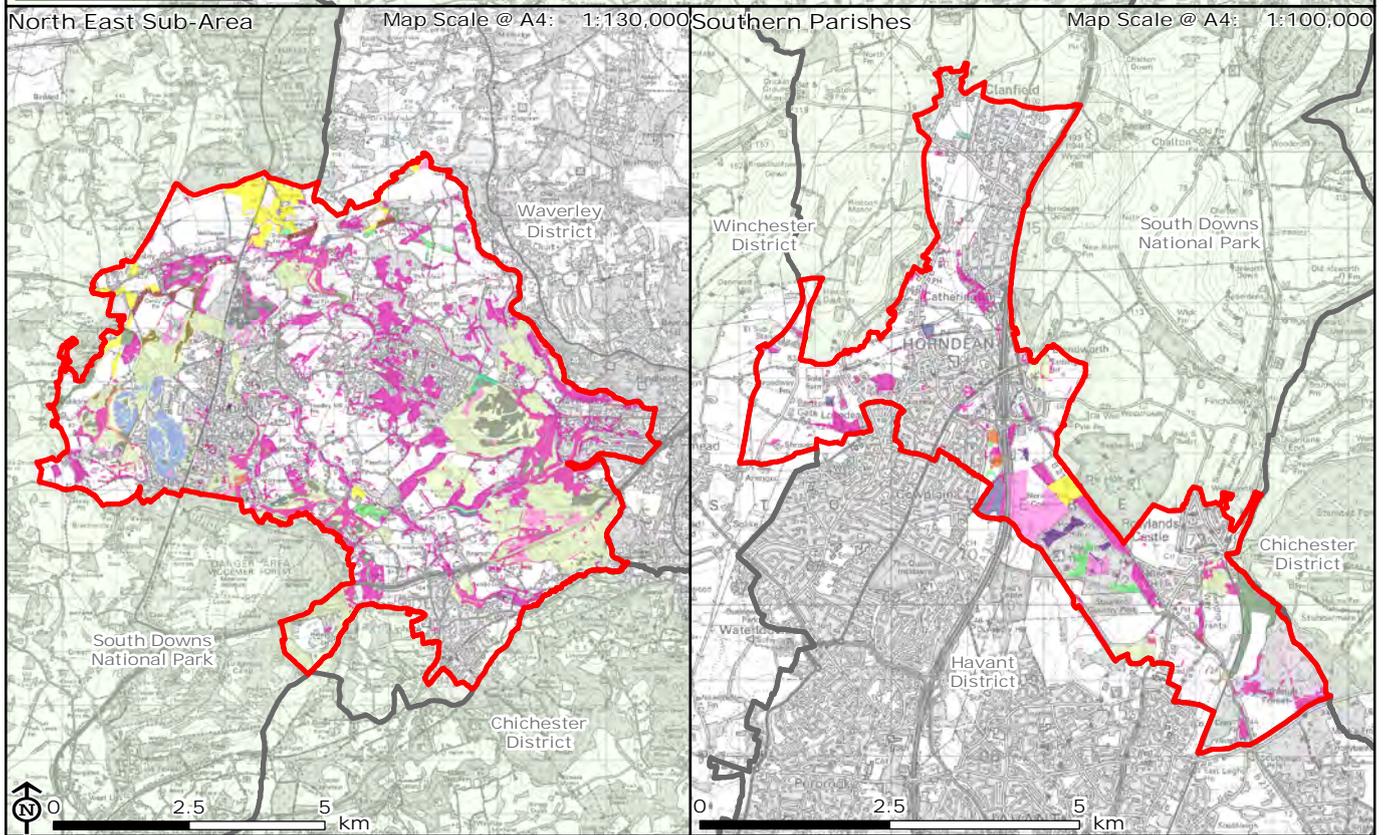
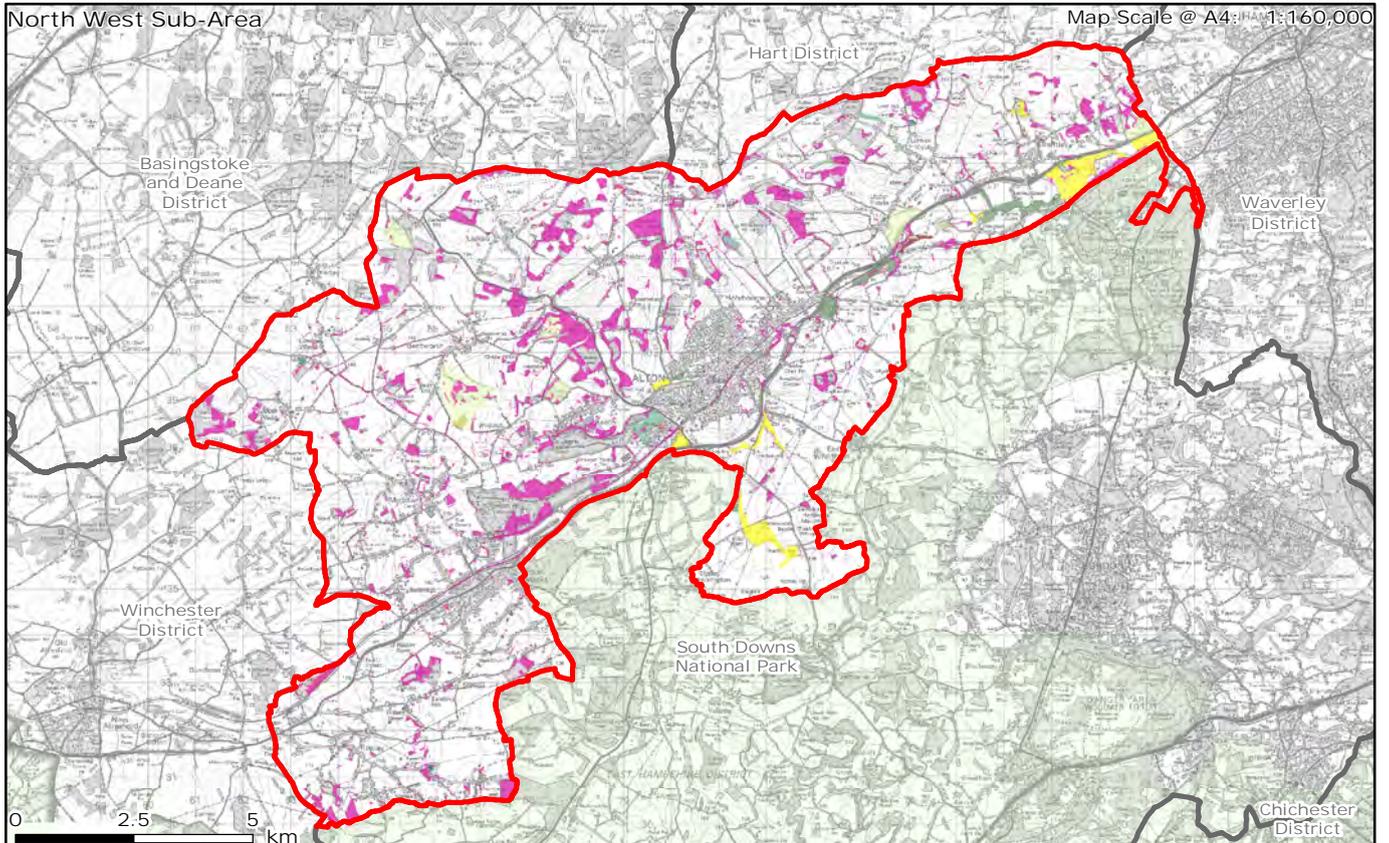
- Study area
- East Hampshire District
- Other local authority
- South Downs National Park
- Site of Special Scientific Interest
- International Nature Designations
- Local Nature Reserve
- Sites of Importance to Nature Conservation



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Figure 4.4: Biodiversity Designations



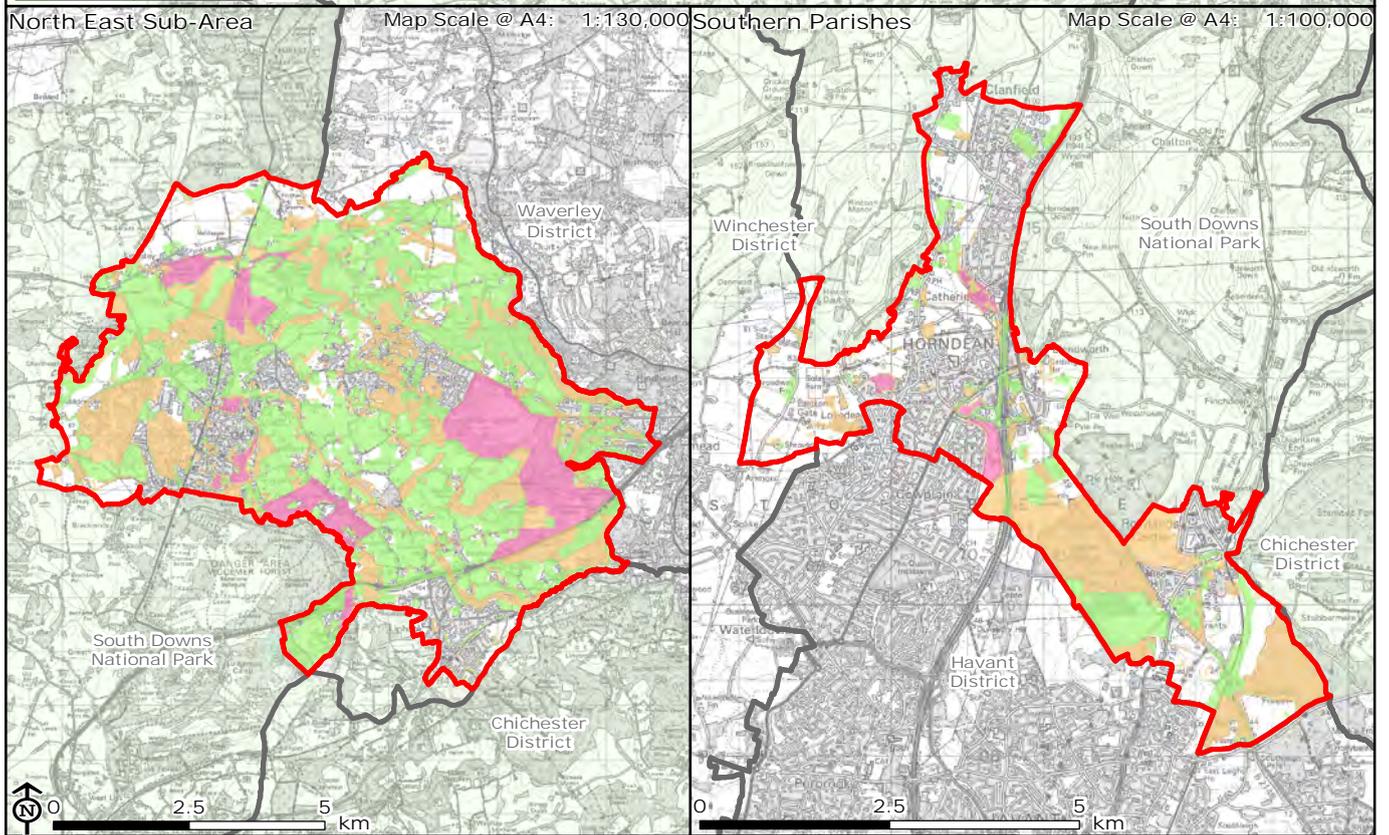
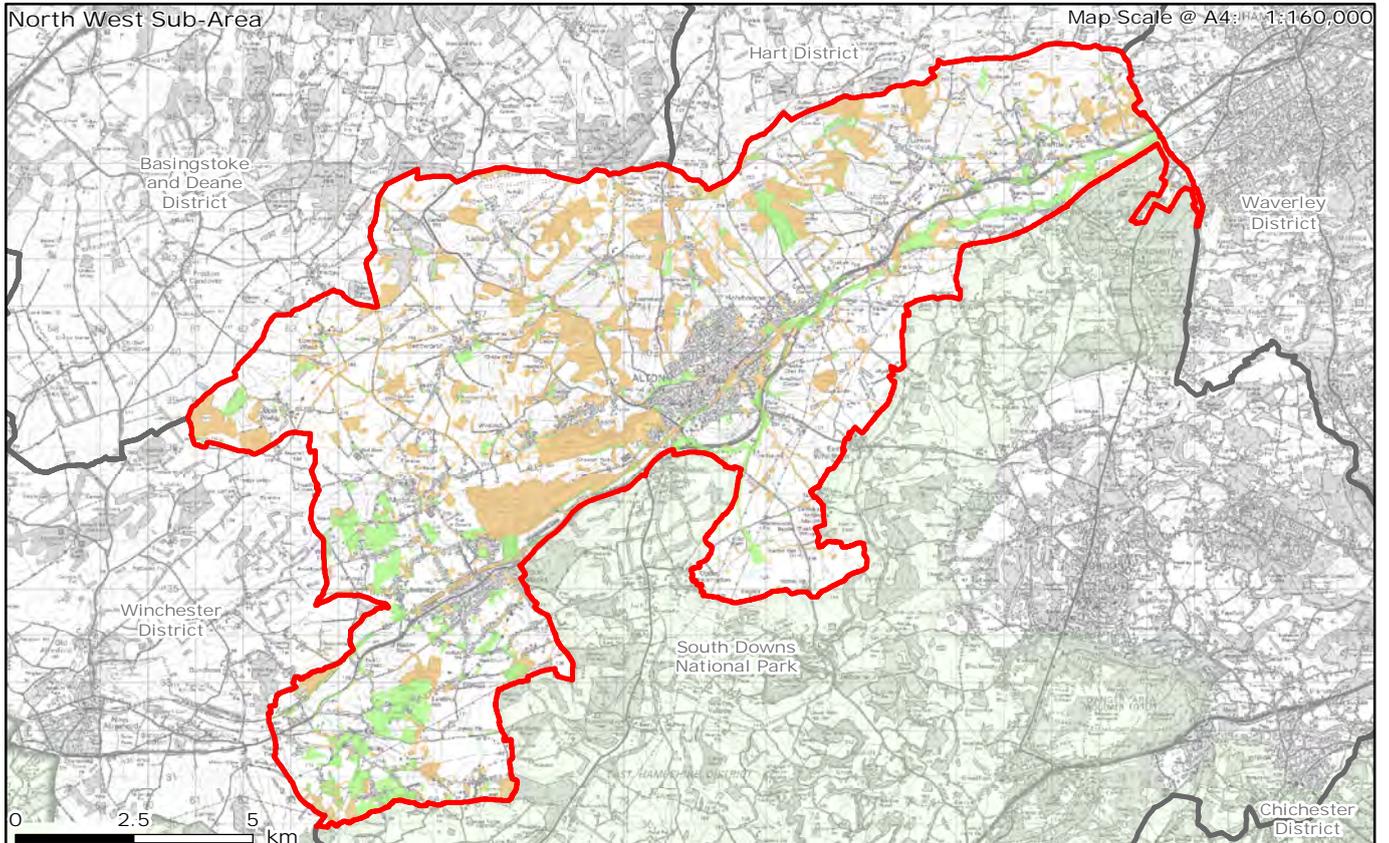


- | | |
|--|---|
| Study area | GNZ: Other neutral grassland |
| Other local authority | GP0: Grassland, probably improved |
| South Downs National Park | HE0: Dwarf shrub heath |
| Priority Habitat Inventory | |
| ASZ: Other standing open water and canals | HE1: European dry heaths |
| EM0: Fen, marsh and swamp | WB331: Lowland beech and yew woodland |
| EM4: Purple moor grass and rush pastures | WB332: Asperulo-Fagetum beech forests |
| EM4Z: Other purple moor grass and rush pastures | WB34: Wet woodland |
| GA1Z: Other lowland dry acid grassland | WB341: Alluvial forests |
| GC1: Lowland calcareous grassland | WB342: Bog woodland |
| GC11: Semi-natural dry grasslands and scrubland facies | WB34Z: Other wet woodland |
| GIO: Improved grassland | WB36: Lowland mixed deciduous woodland |
| GN1: Lowland meadows | WB36Z: Other lowland mixed deciduous woodland |
| GN1Z: Other lowland meadows | WCZ: Other coniferous woodland |
| | Wood pasture and parkland |

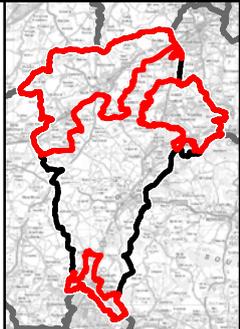
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Figure 4.5: Priority Habitats





- Study area
- East Hampshire District
- Other local authority
- South Downs National Park
- Network Opportunity Areas
- Core Non Statutory Areas
- Core Statutory Areas



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Figure 4.6: Ecological Network



Woodlands

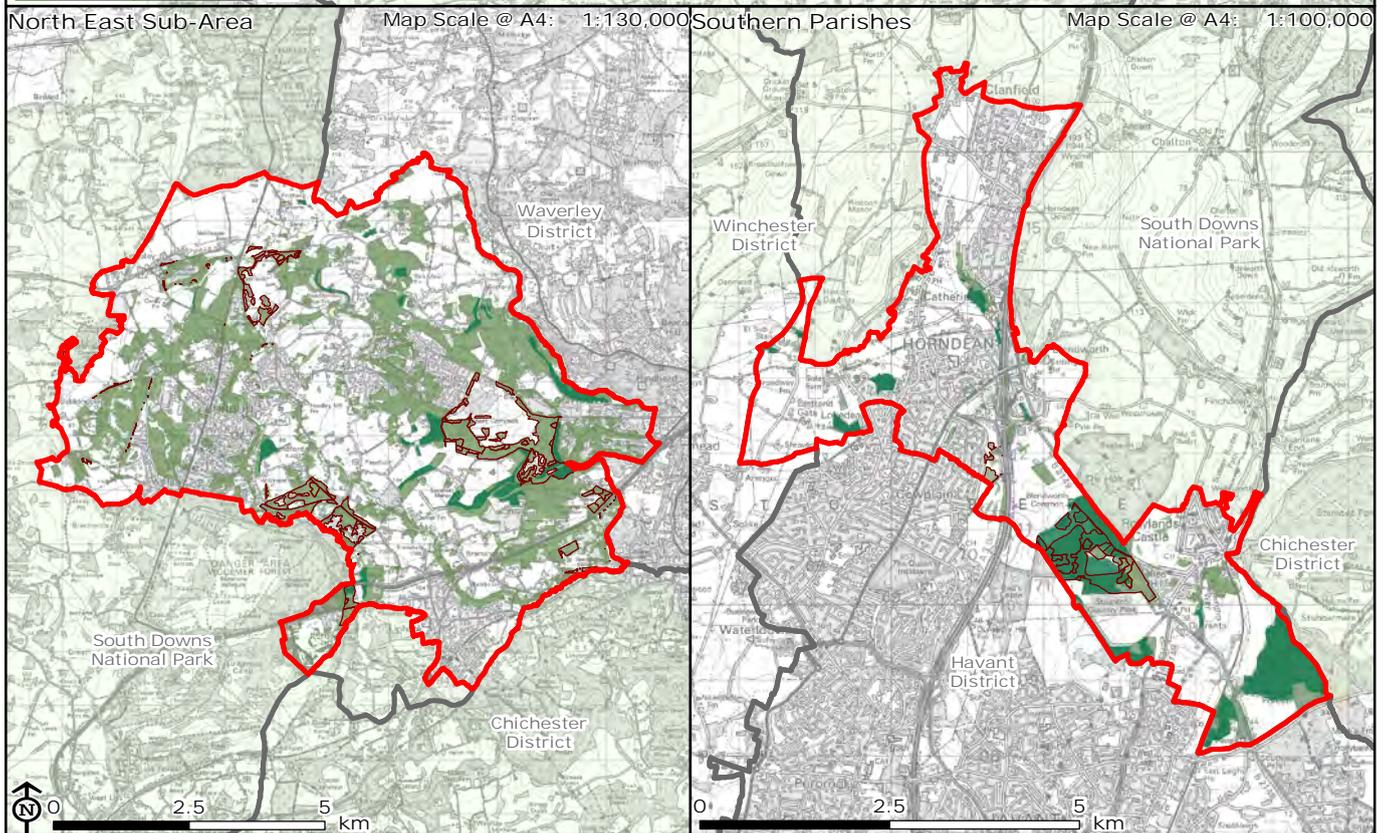
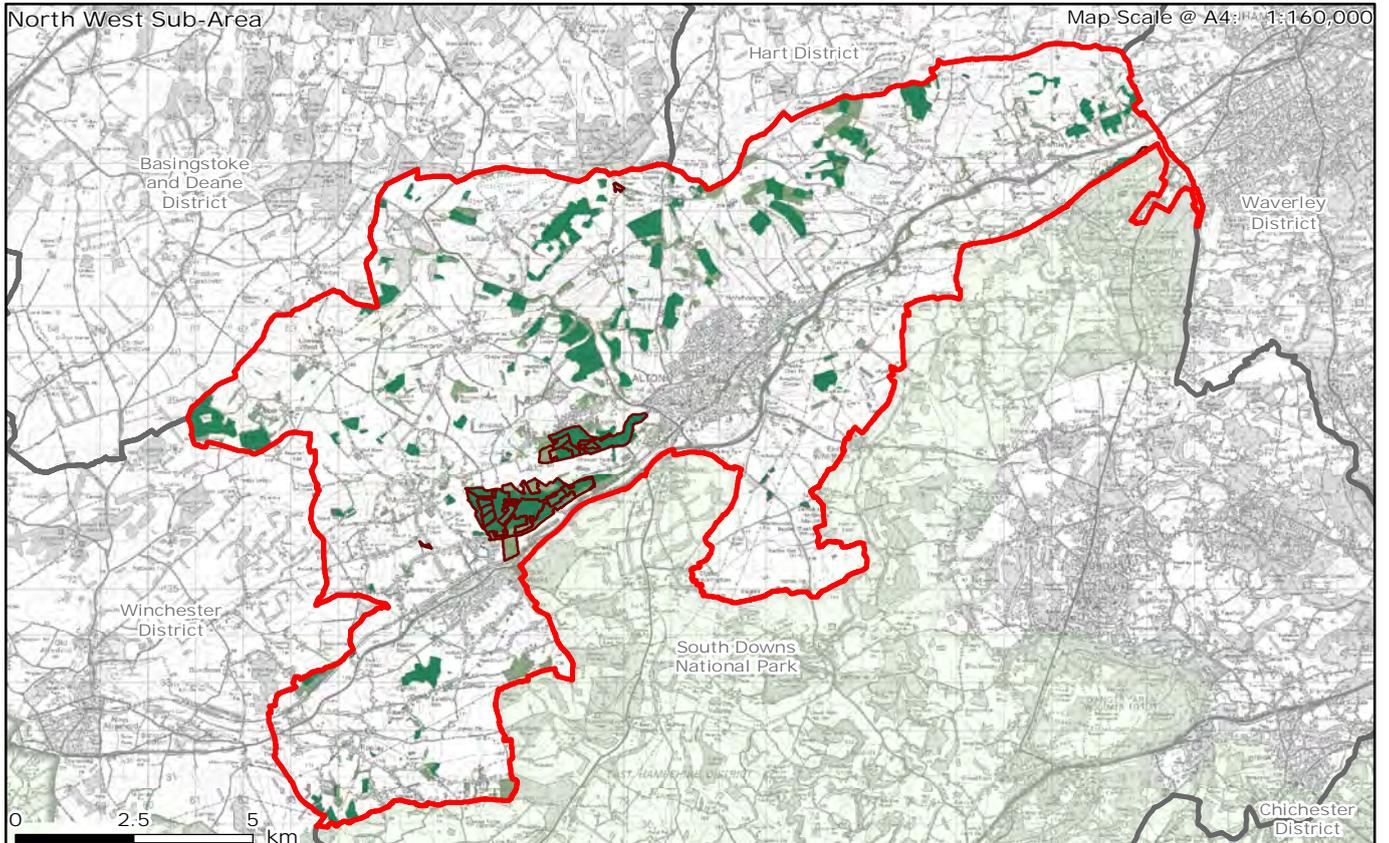
- 4.6 Listed below are the key issues and opportunities relating to Woodlands within the PAA. **Figure 4.7** represents the draft mapped outputs relating to this theme, which will be included within the final GI Strategy report.

Issues

- Overall quality of woodland in the District has declined due to lack of appropriate management.
- Although woodlands provide a valuable resource for biodiversity, plantations in inappropriate locations can come at the expense of other valuable habitat types.
- Woodland sites require a suitable stream of income to sustain active management.
- New development puts pressure on sensitive woodland and associated habitats, both directly through decreasing coverage and ecological viability, and indirectly through the potential for increased recreational use.
- Forestry management needs to be taken into account to ensure it remains economically viable.
- Woodland is at risk from the spread of invasive species, as well as from changes to climatic conditions (higher average temperatures, greater frequency of intense storms, and a wider range of pests and diseases).
- Many areas of woodland are inaccessible to the public for recreational purposes.

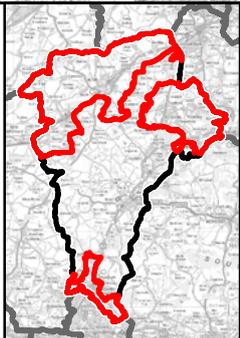
Opportunities

- Increase woodland coverage where appropriate to improve habitat connectivity and improve the structural diversity of woodlands. This could be achieved by developing sustainable long-term management plans for woodlands. Increased woodland cover could also be encouraged **by increased support for 'wood fuel' initiatives, and encourage markets for local timber and wood products.**
- Within the south of the PAA, conserve the mosaic of woodland, heath and pasture which forms the relic fragment of the former Royal Forest of Bere. Increase awareness of the Forest of Bere.
- Conserve and manage ancient woodland and monitor/ check the spread of introduced invasive species.
- Consider further opportunities for woodland planting within and around settlements and the urban edge to screen development and enhance landscape character.
- Aim for diversification of plantation woodland by creating a more diverse age and species structure, and increasing open areas.
- Encourage reintroduction of traditional woodland management techniques such as coppicing.



- Study area
- East Hampshire District
- Other local authority
- South Downs National Park
- Ancient woodland
- Other woodland
- Publicly accessible woodland

Source: EHDC, NE, FC



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Figure 4.7: Woodland



Water environment

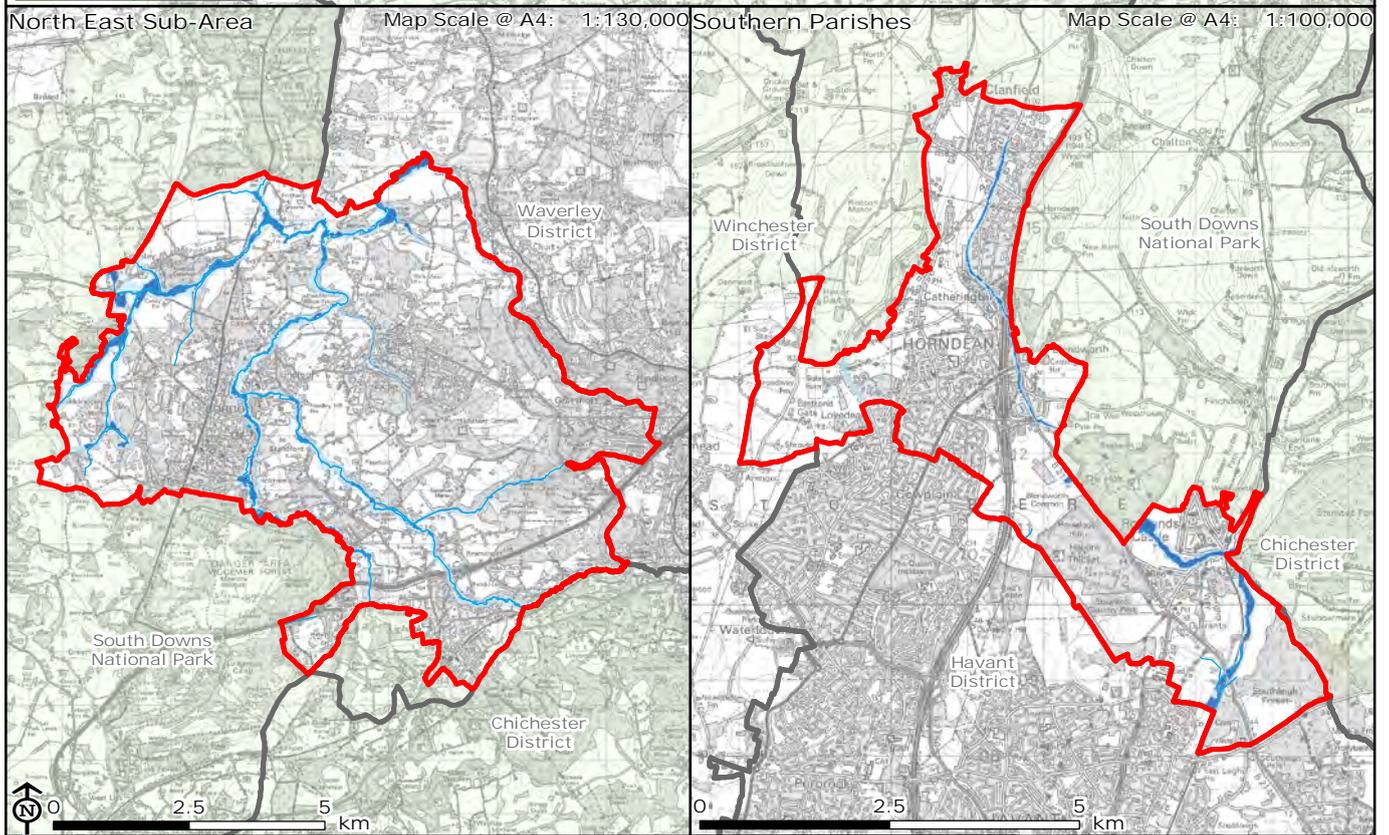
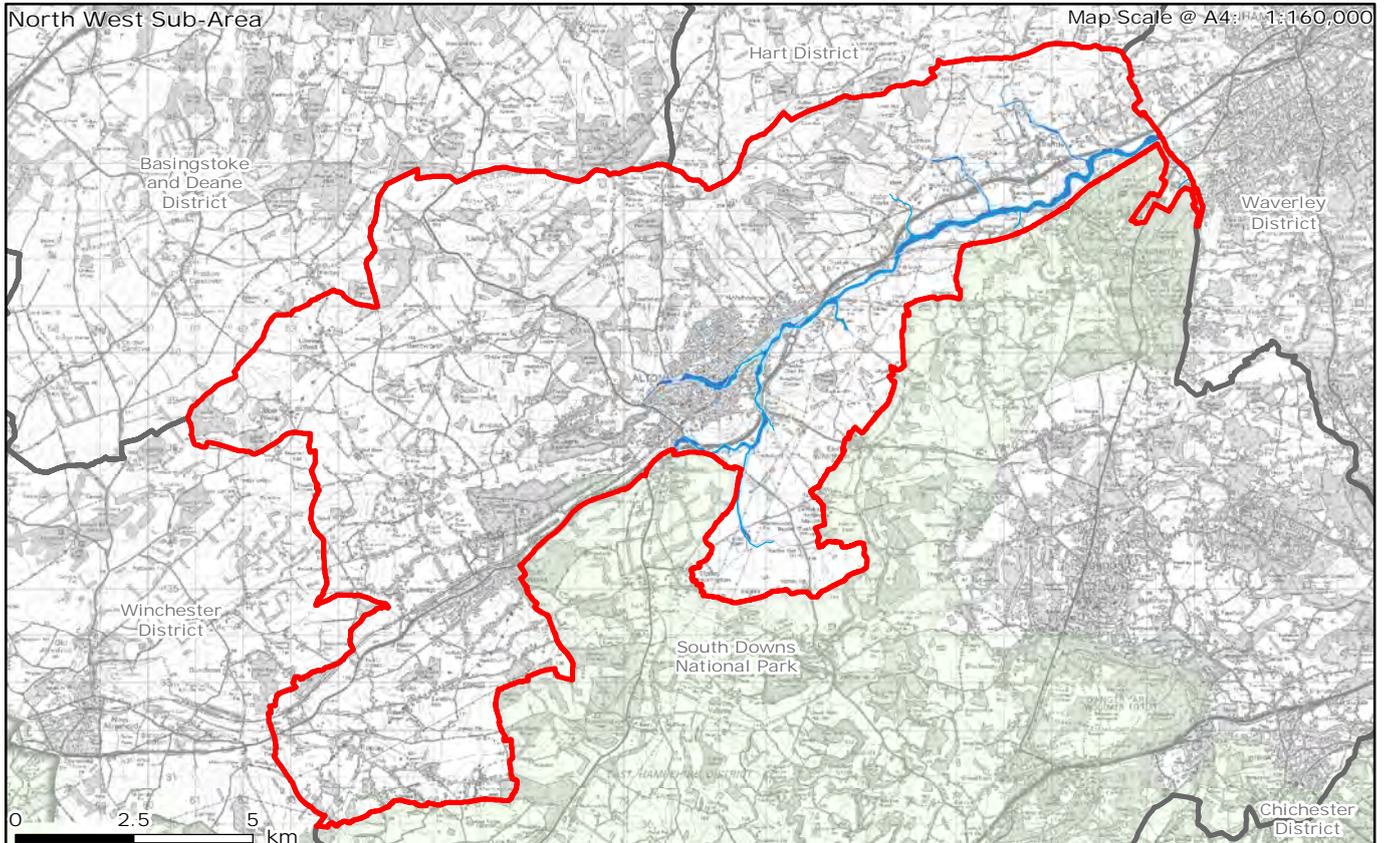
- 4.7 Listed below are the key issues and opportunities relating to the water environment. **Figure 4.8** represents the draft mapped output relating to this theme, which will be included within the final GI strategy report.

Issues

- Groundwater flooding is the predominant source of flooding within the PAA.
- The South Wey (Haslemere to Bordon) is classified as having 'poor' water quality, whilst the North Wey (Alton to Tilford) and North Wey (at Alton) were classified as having 'moderate' quality which restricts ecological value in these waterbodies.
- East Hampshire's growing population will increase pressure on water resources. This could increase levels of water abstraction and water treatment with negative impacts on the water quality.
- Flooding frequencies could increase significantly with climate change.
- Surface water runoff from agriculture and urban development can reduce water quality. These issues could be exacerbated by new development.
- Recreational access along the District's waterways is limited in many areas e.g. along parts of the River Wey (see next section on Access, Recreation and Transport).
- Water bodies such as the Northern and Southern River Wey contain invasive species such as Himalayan Balsam which detract from the ecology and character of wetland habitats.

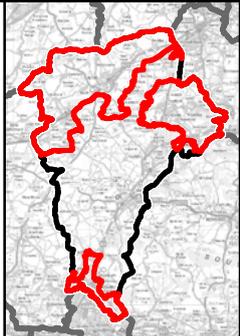
Opportunities

- Implement, where appropriate, sustainable urban drainage schemes within new developments to prevent surface water runoff and associated negative effects on water quality.
- Remove invasive species from the PAA's waterways to increase the ecological quality of wetland habitat.
- Promote the delivery of Havant Thicket Reservoir to ensure sustained supply of water to the PAA, as well as provide a new recreational asset.
- Enhance access to and along waterways, notably the River Wey and its tributaries.



- Study area
- East Hampshire District
- Other local authority
- South Downs National Park
- Rivers/canals
- Flood zone 3
- Flood zone 2

Source: EHDC, NE, EA



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Figure 4.8: Water Environment



Access, recreation and transport

- 4.8 Listed below are the key issues and opportunities relating to access, recreation and transport. **Figure 4.9**, **Figure 4.10** and **Figure 4.11** represent the draft mapped outputs relating to this theme, which will be included within the final GI Strategy report.

Issues

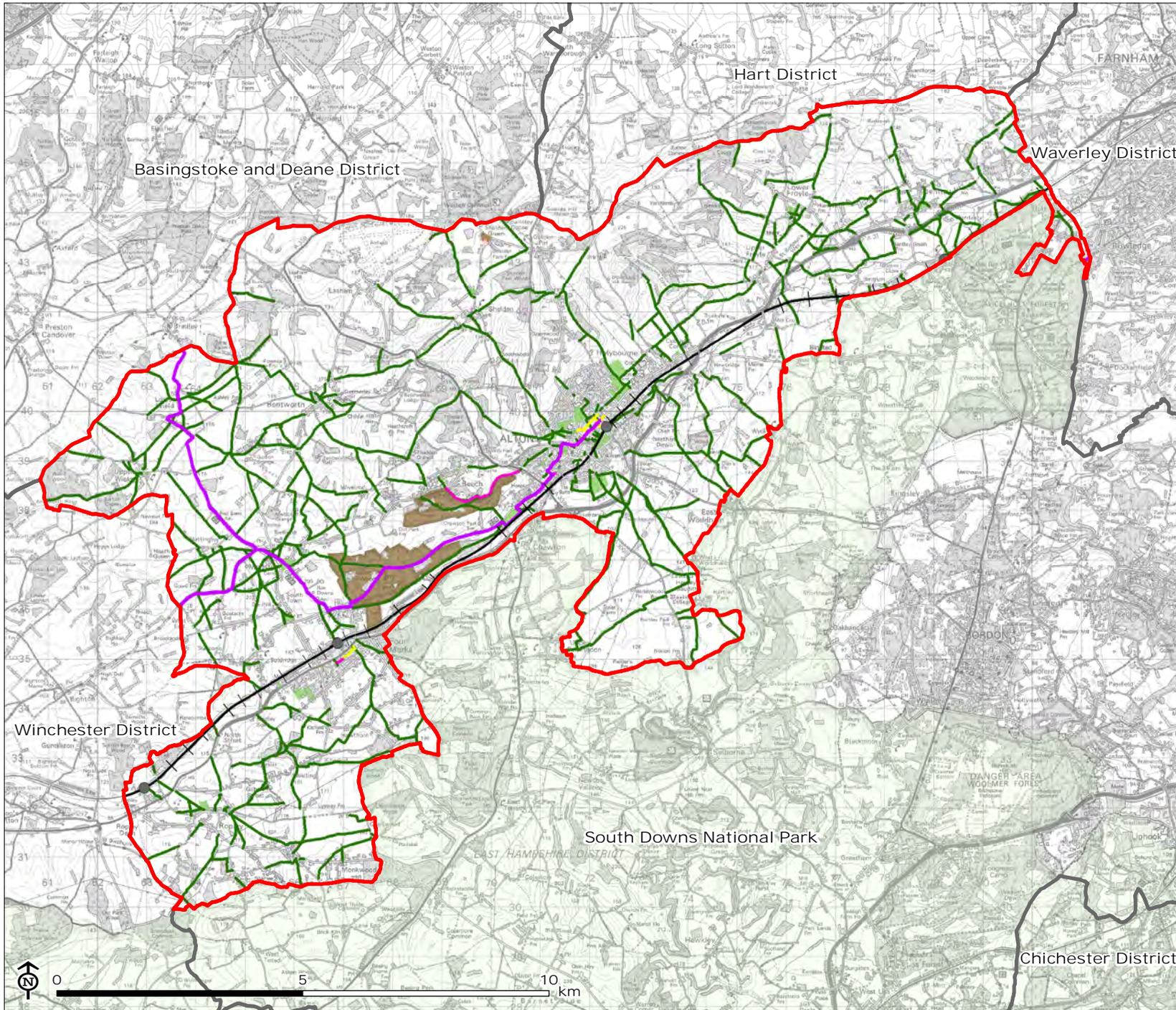
- There is deficiency in quantity of open space in the north west and south of the PAA, notably around Alton, Rowlands Castle and Four Marks/ South Medstead. This is likely to be exacerbated by increased housing development in these areas.
- Deficiency in quantity of parks and gardens and allotments within the Southern Parishes.
- Deficiency in quantity of sub-regional natural and semi-natural green space in the North West Sub-Area of the PAA.
- Deficiency in access to open space in Alton, particularly in the east.
- Deficiency in access to allotments in Clanfield and Rowlands Castle.
- There are a number of open spaces that are assessed as low quality due to poor facilities and limited number of GI functions.
- There are gaps within the Public Rights of Way network such as along sections of the Southern and Northern River Wey. Furthermore, severance from roads and railways can act as a physical and perceived barrier to access.
- There are limited routes by bicycle leaving the main towns. Many routes leaving towns are unsuitable due to high traffic speeds. This was noted to be the case in Alton within their Neighbourhood Plan, which highlights the need to improve Sustrans Route 224 between Alton and Farnham.
- Parts of the Public Rights of Way network and open spaces are unsuitable for those with physical disabilities and elderly due to lack of suitable pathways and facilities such as toilets and car parking.
- The South Downs National Park is a key recreational resource for the PAA yet there can be a lack of physical and perceived connectivity to the National Park from the surrounding settlements.
- Many woodlands within the PAA are inaccessible to the public.

Opportunities

- Reinforce and create walking Public Rights of Way links to the wider countryside, between settlements and towards the South Downs National Park addressing existing gaps in the network.
- Enhance open spaces and existing Public Rights of Way to increase accessibility for older people and those with physical disability.
- Increase the quantity of open space in the north-west and south of the PAA, notably in Alton, Rowlands Castle and Four Marks/ South Medstead.
- Provide allotments for the Southern Parishes, notably in Clanfield and Rowlands Castle.
- Improve low quality spaces that are high value by enhancing facilities and functionality.
- Enhance provision of off-road cycle routes, such as through improvements to Sustrans Route 224 between Alton and Farnham.
- Enhance access to woodlands.

Figure 4.9: Access, Recreation and Transport - North West Sub-Area

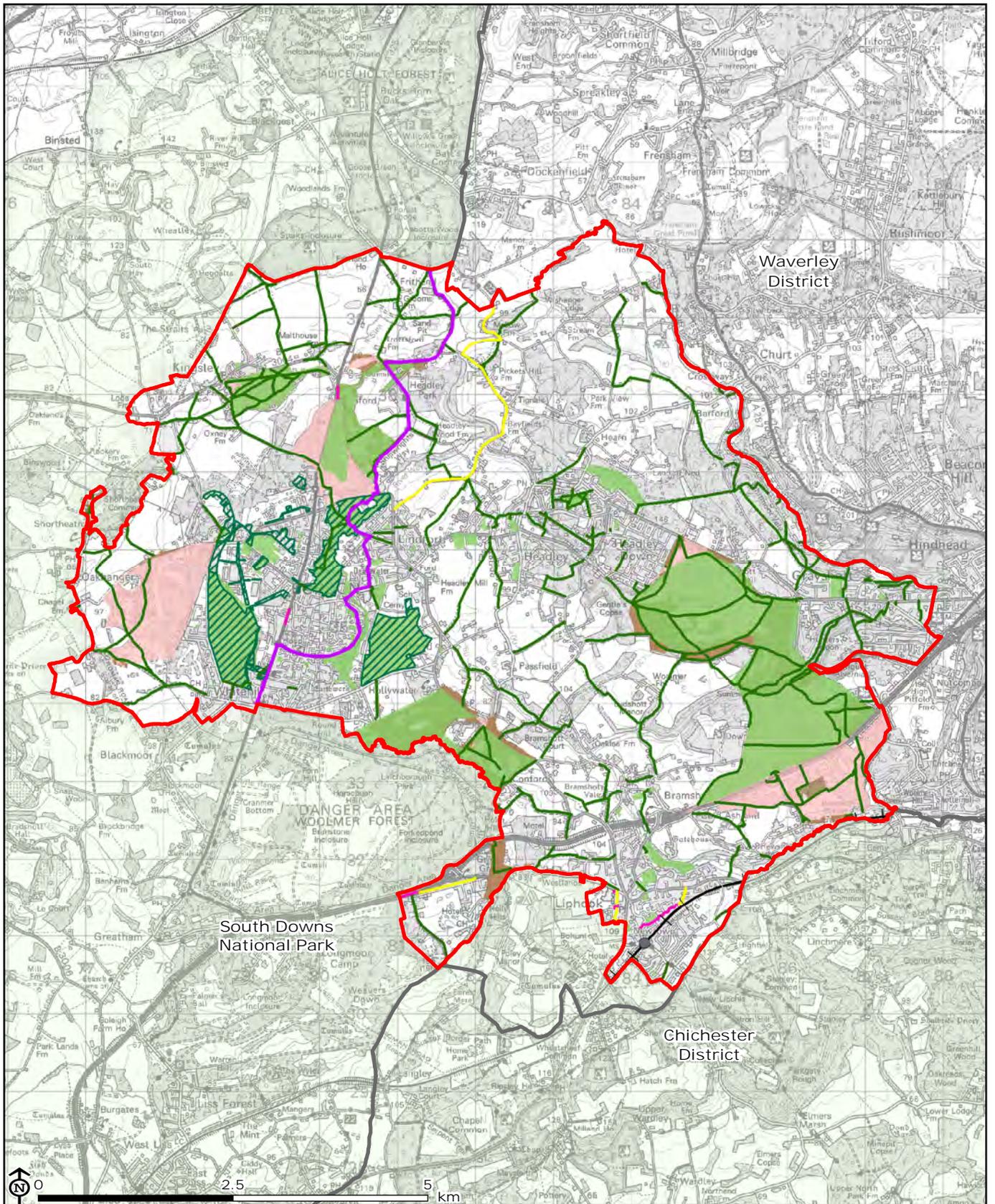
- Study area
- Other local authority
- South Downs National Park
- Railway stations
- Railway
- National cycle route
- Local cycle route on-road
- Local cycle route off-road
- Public Right of Way
- Designated open space
- Accessible woodland
- Registered common land



Source: EHDC, NE, Sustrans

Map Scale @ A4: 1:110,000





Waverley District

South Downs National Park

Chichester District

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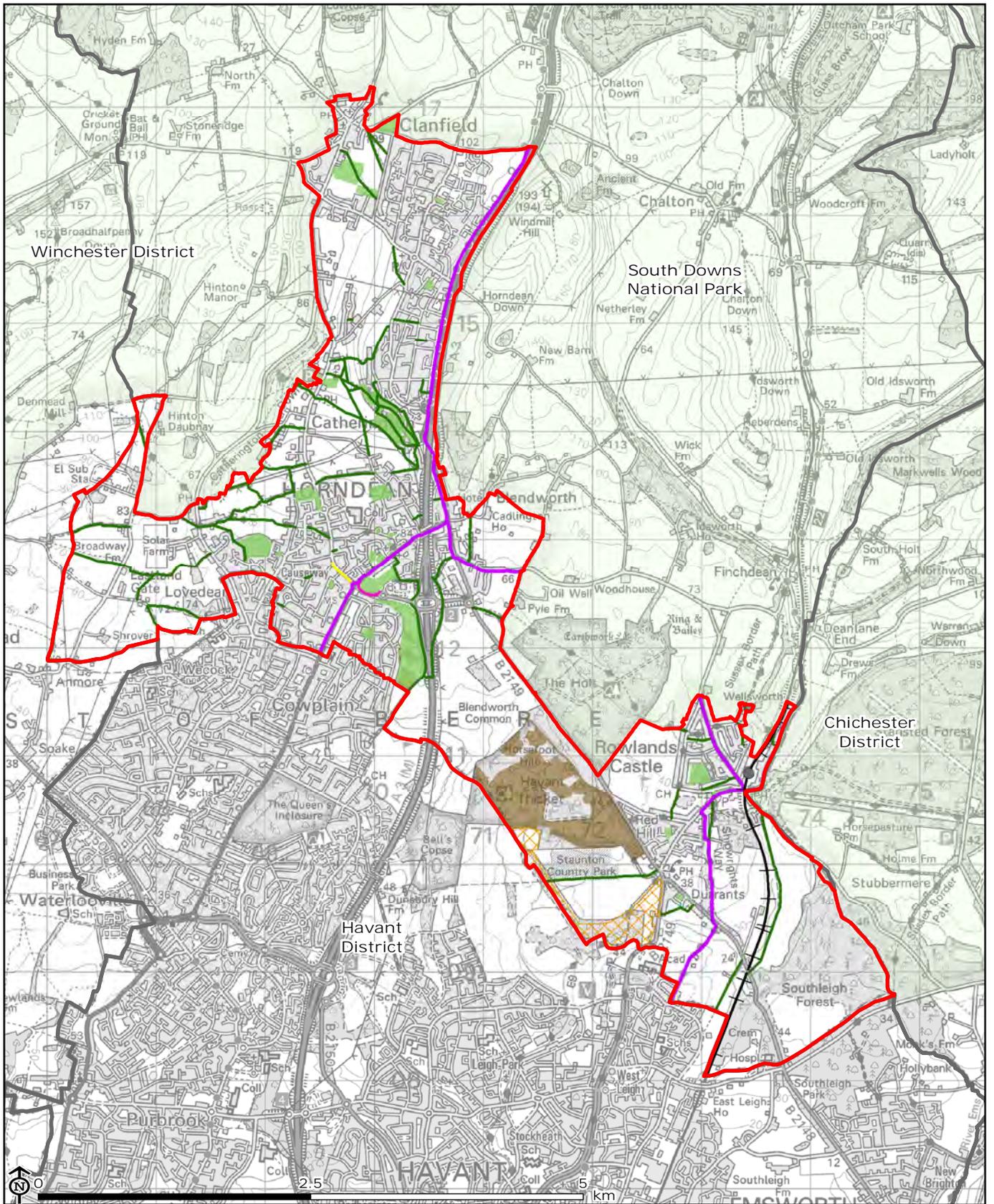
Figure 4.10: Access, Recreation and Transport - North East Sub-Area



- ▬ North East Sub-Area Boundary
- ▬ Local cycle route off-road
- Other local authority
- ▬ Public Right of Way
- South Downs National Park
- Suitable Alternative Natural Green Space
- Railway stations
- Designated open space
- + Railway
- Accessible woodland
- ▬ National cycle route
- Registered common land
- ▬ Local cycle route on-road

Source: EHDC, NE, Sustrans

Map Scale @ A4: 1:70,000



- Southern Parishes
- Other local authority
- South Downs National Park
- Railway stations
- Railway
- National cycle route
- Local cycle route on-road
- Local cycle route off-road
- Public Right of Way
- Country Park
- Designated open space
- Accessible woodland

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Figure 4.11: Access, Recreation and Transport - Southern Parishes



Health, wellbeing and inequality

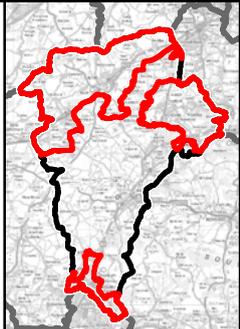
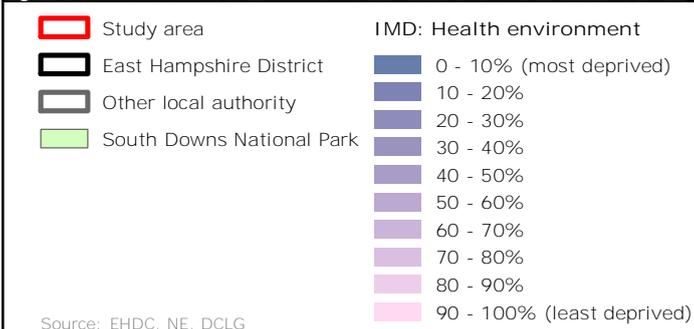
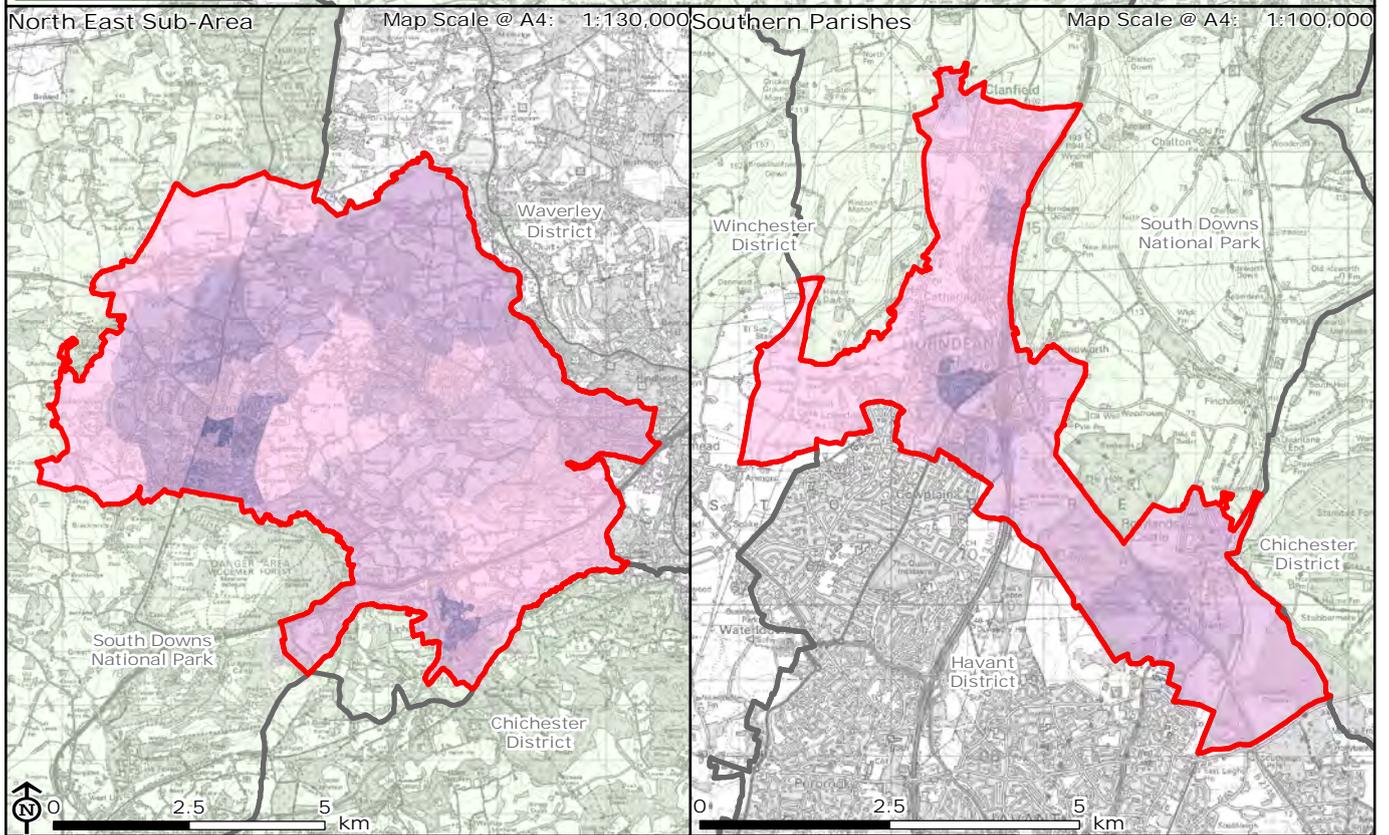
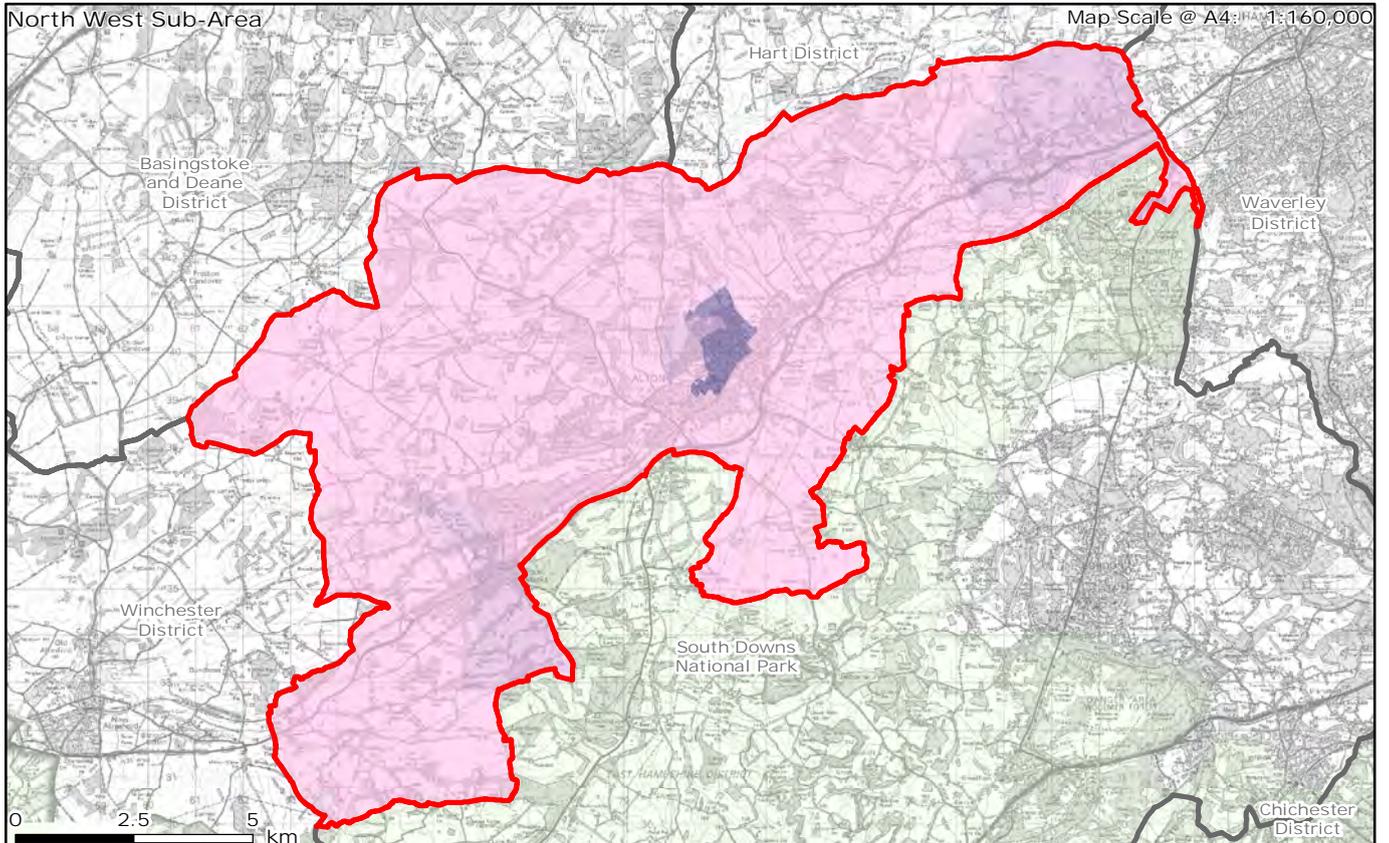
- 4.9 Listed below are the key issues and opportunities relating to health, wellbeing and inequality. **Figure 4.12**, **Figure 4.13** and **Figure 4.4** represent the draft mapped outputs relating to this theme, which will be included within the final GI Strategy report.

Issues

- There are areas with a deficiency in provision of accessible open space throughout the PAA. This has implications for health and wellbeing as some areas have limited opportunities for recreation.
- Poor air quality around heavily used roads adversely affects the mental and physical health of nearby communities, particularly children and those with respiratory problems. This could also discourage local people from adopting healthy transport options such as cycling and walking.
- There are small pockets of relative social deprivation in the PAA, notably in Alton and Whitehill & Bordon.
- GI within the south of the PAA could provide an important resource for neighbouring Havant, which experiences higher levels of social deprivation.
- The PAA has higher than average levels of overweight adults.
- Some parts of the GI network are inaccessible to those with physical disability or lack suitable facilities for older people.

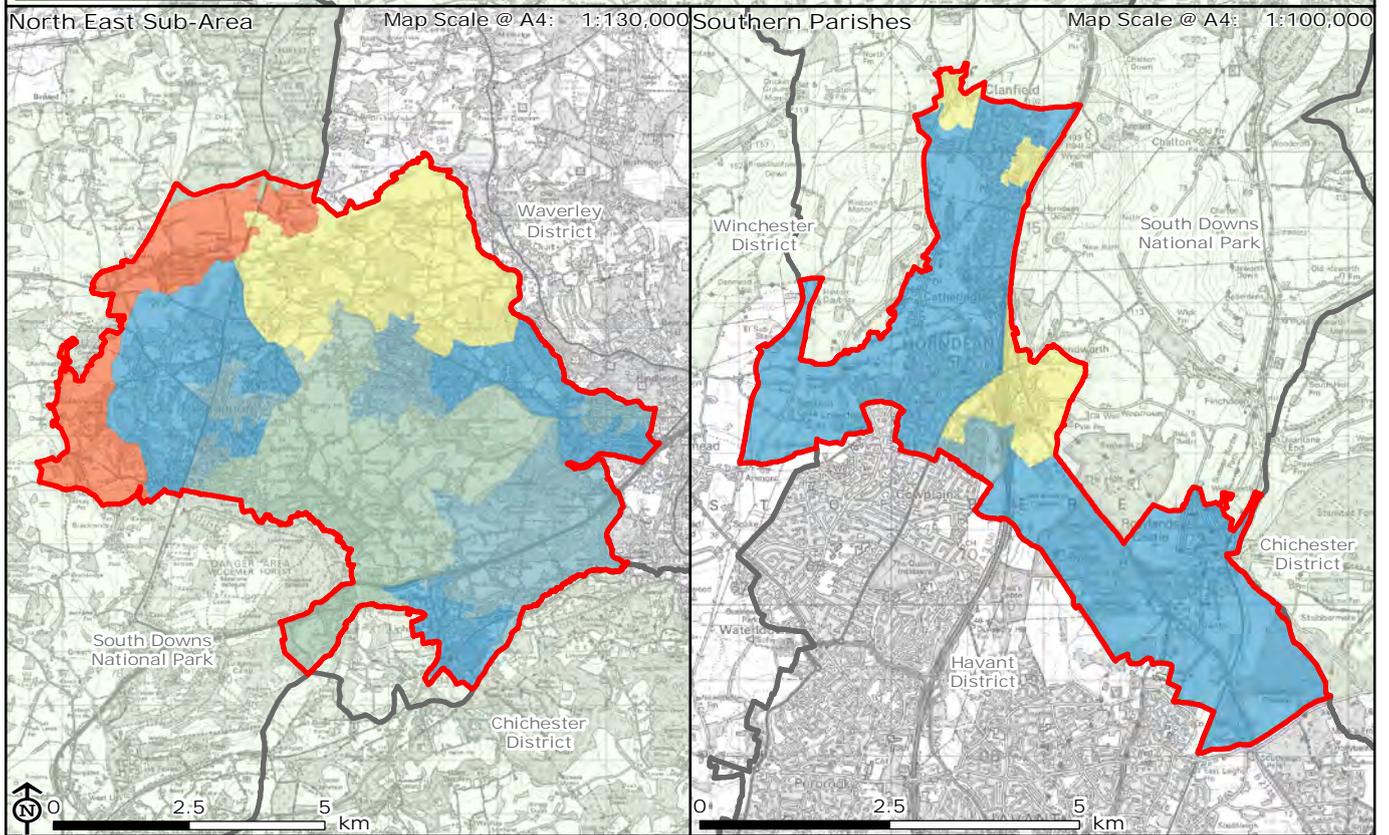
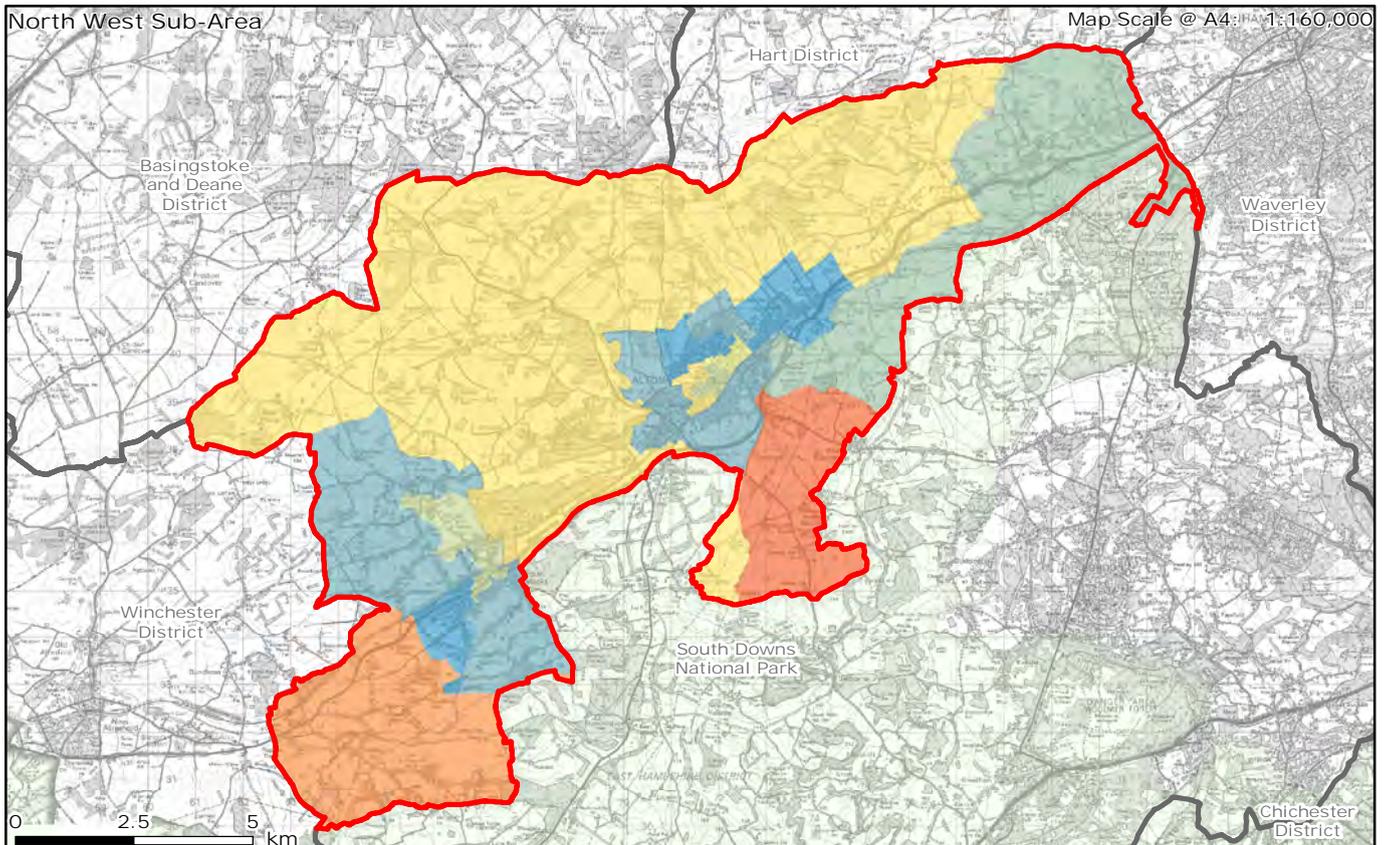
Opportunities

- Strong policies should be adopted to ensure that the health and wellbeing of all communities is enhanced, and adequate access to open spaces for healthy recreation is incorporated within all development proposals.
- Alleviate relatively poor health and living environments through provision of new open space and access enhancements to existing green spaces.
- Provide opportunities for outdoor recreation that is inclusive i.e. accessible to those of all ages and those with physical impairments.
- Enhance active travel routes in order to reduce car dependency thereby helping to improve air quality.

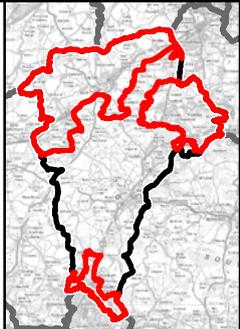


Updated Green Infrastructure Strategy for East Hampshire District Council

Figure 4.12: IMD Health Environment

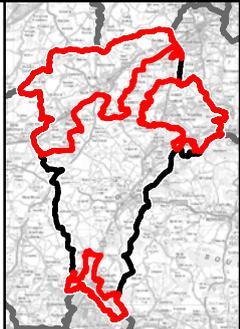
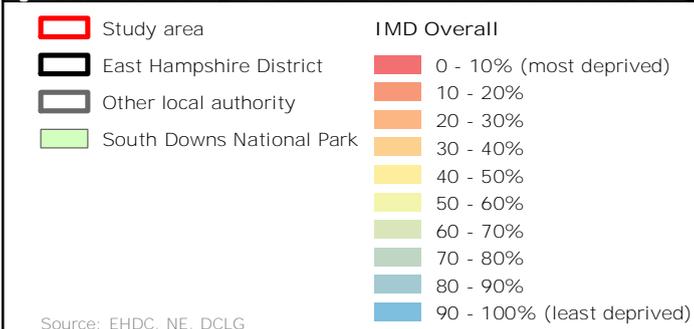
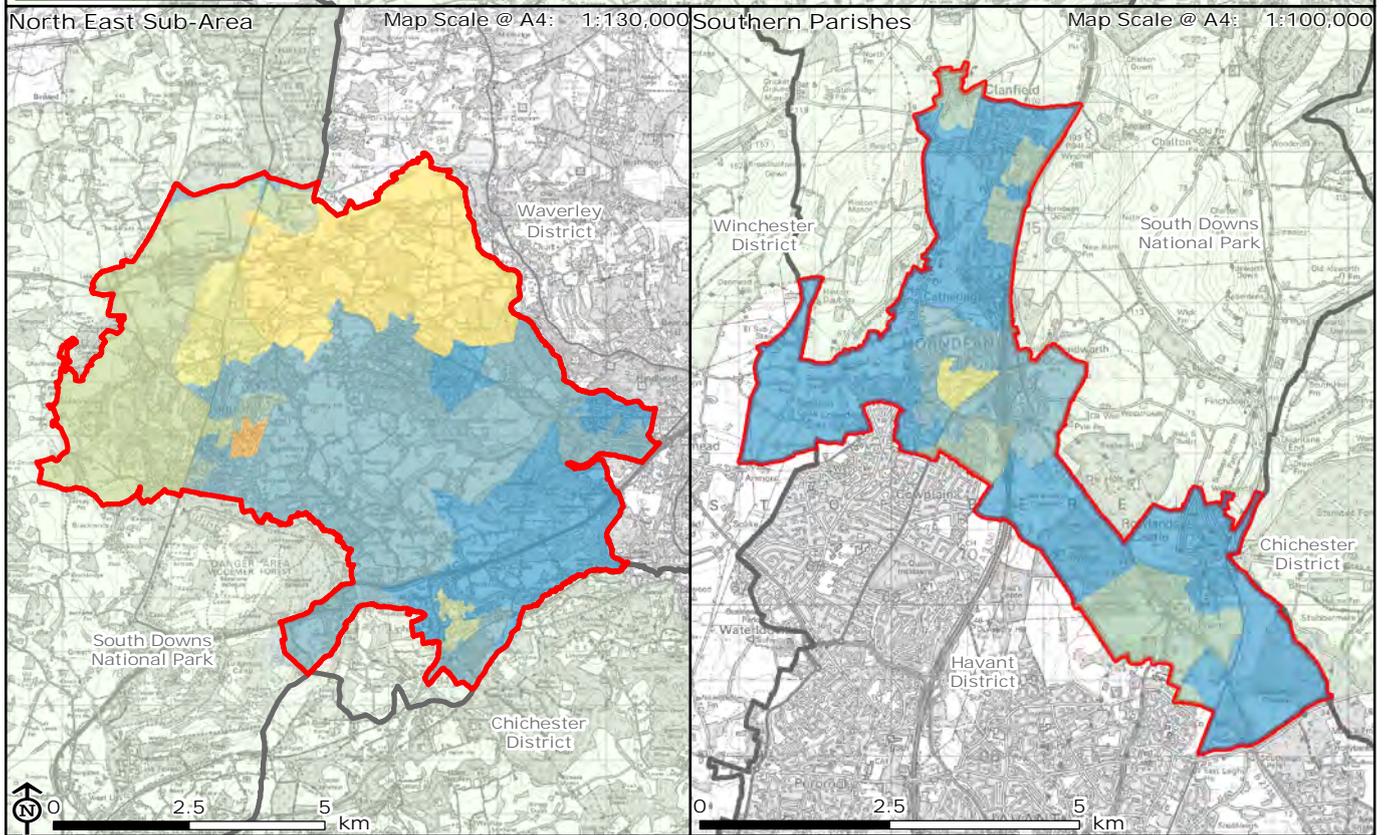
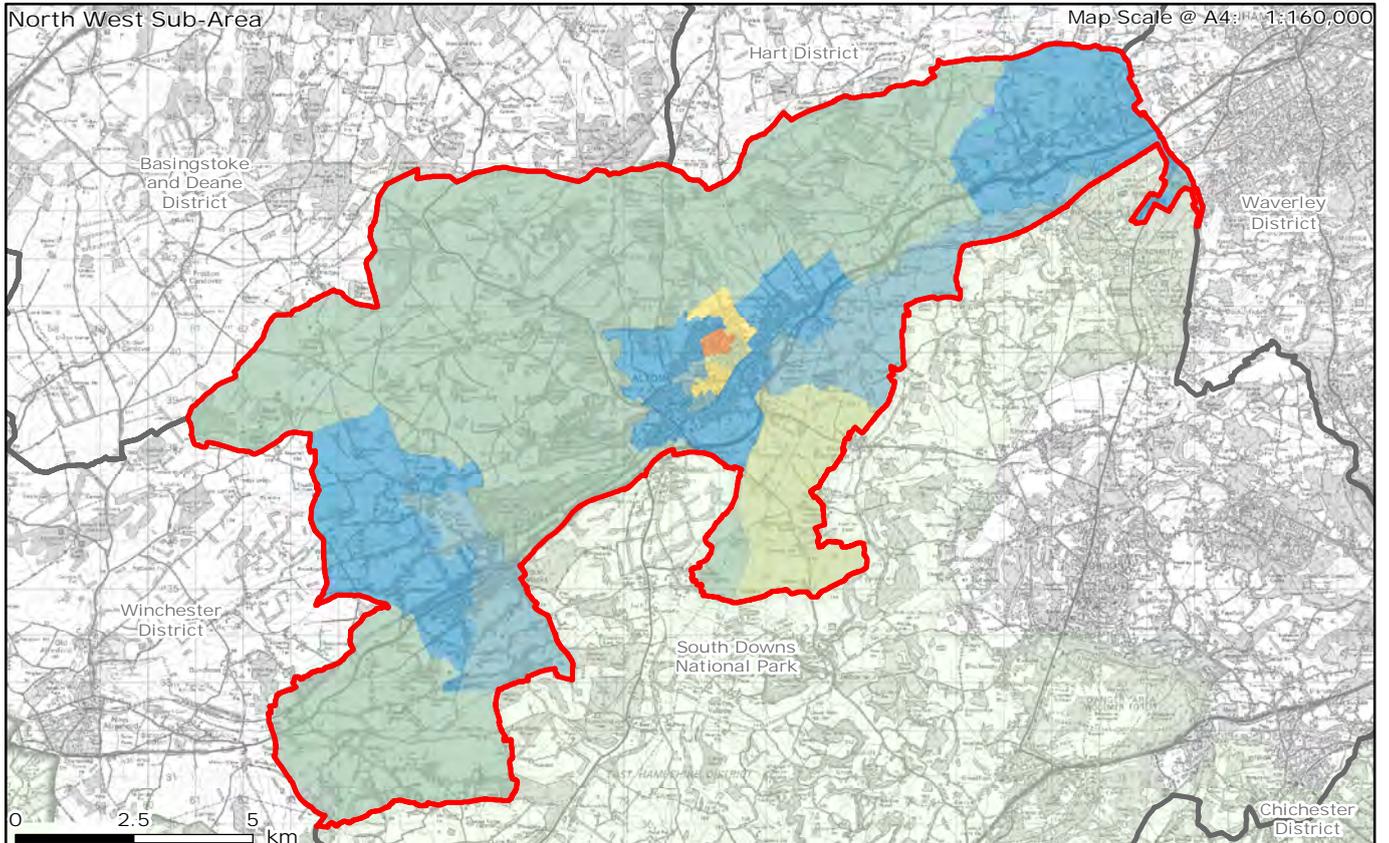


Study area	IMD: Living environment
East Hampshire District	0 - 10% (most deprived)
Other local authority	10 - 20%
South Downs National Park	20 - 30%
	30 - 40%
	40 - 50%
	50 - 60%
	60 - 70%
	70 - 80%
	80 - 90%
	90 - 100% (least deprived)



Updated Green Infrastructure Strategy for East Hampshire District Council

Figure 4.13: IMD Living Environment



Updated Green Infrastructure Strategy for East Hampshire District Council

Figure 4.14: IMD Overall

Local awareness and involvement

4.10 Listed below are the key issues and opportunities relating local awareness of the GI network in the District together with opportunities for community involvement.

Issues

- Traditional signage and interpretation boards are limited in their ability to promote GI. Technology is becoming an increasingly important part of how people engage with the environment.
- There is a need to engage with young people and older residents with GI to foster a sense of ownership and knowledge of the natural and physical environment.
- Some GI assets are unsuitable for certain parts of the population such as physically disabled and the elderly due to lack of facilities e.g. toilets or sealed level surfaces.
- Community engagement is important for the creation, maintenance and use of GI. However, volunteering is underrepresented by sections of the population, notably disabled people, younger people and those experience relatively high levels of deprivation.

Opportunities

- Enhance GI assets, including open spaces and public rights of way to make them more inclusive to older populations and those with physical disabilities. This could involve the introduction of additional visitor facilities or physical improvements to the public rights of way network.
- **East Hampshire's GI could be more effectively promoted through better signage, including signage at key community locations such as schools, shops and train stations.**
- **Adopt new technologies to better promote East Hampshire's GI assets.**
- Facilitate volunteering opportunities for all sections of the population to engage people in the creation and ongoing maintenance of GI.

5 Example strategic project

- 5.1 The Green Infrastructure Strategy will set out the emerging strategic projects which will be identified through a combination of evidence review¹⁴, email consultation with neighbouring local authorities, and internal and external stakeholder organisations.
- 5.2 The projects will be divided into two categories:
- **Site-specific projects:** particular geographic areas where there is an identified need for GI enhancement. These locations for these projects are approximate. Further work will be required to determine the exact location and extent of these projects.
 - **District-wide projects:** these are generic projects that involve interventions that are either not location based or can be applied to multiple locations across the Planning Authority Area.
- 5.3 The projects identified will be intended to be deliverable, contribute to multiple GI functions, and address needs identified through the baseline analysis.
- 5.4 The timing of their delivery will be determined by stakeholder engagement, resources, funding and their relevance to new development in the PAA.
- 5.5 An example of an emerging site-specific project is presented in the following pages. It should be noted this project is in draft.

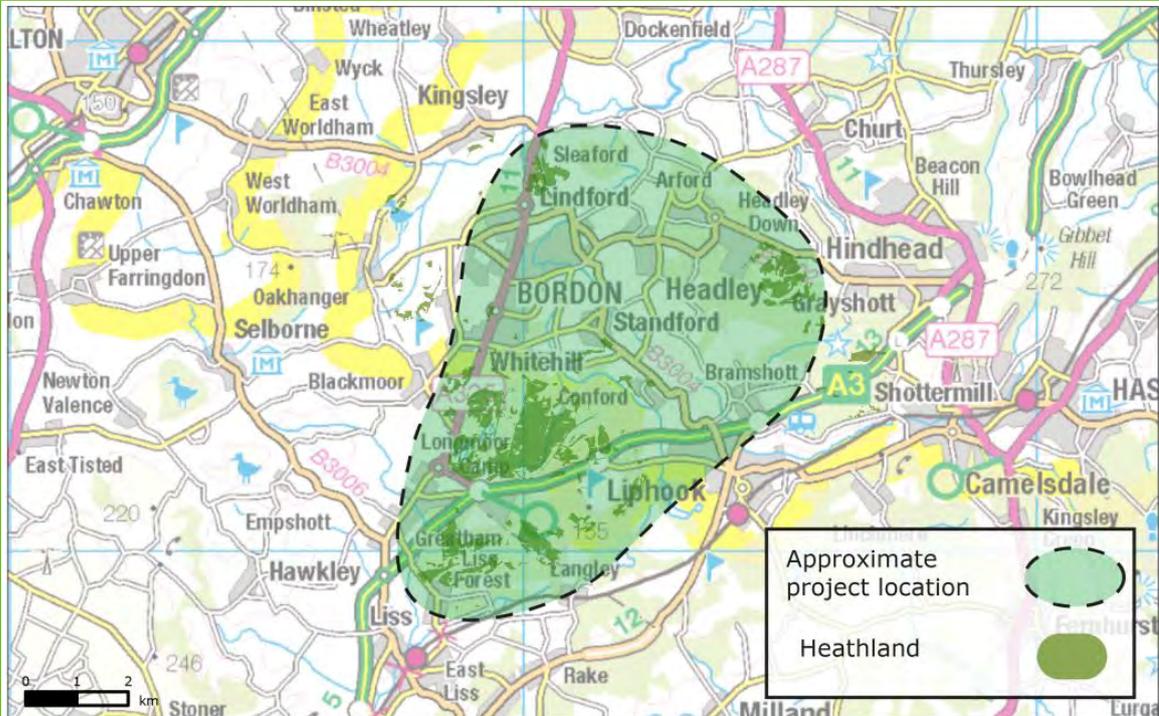
¹⁴ The evidence base documents reviewed include East Hampshire Open Space Assessment (2018), East Hampshire Strategic Flood Risk Assessment, East Hampshire Green Infrastructure Strategy (2013), Infrastructure Delivery Plan April 2015, Alton Neighbourhood Development Plan, Bentley Neighbourhood Development Plan, Medstead and Four Marks Neighbourhood Plan, Green Infrastructure Strategy for Basingstoke and Deane 2013 to 2029 (July 2013), Hart Green Infrastructure Strategy (2017), South Downs Green Infrastructure Framework (March 2016), East Hampshire Landscape Capacity Study (2018), Hampshire County Council Countryside Access Plan 2015 -2025, A Cycling Plan for East Hampshire (2004).

Connect and restore heathland habitats

Overview

Build on the success of the Heathlands Reunited Project to restore and connect the District's heathlands.

Approximate location



Potential interventions

- Audit existing heathland and identify suitable areas for heathland restoration and creation helping to establish links within the existing heathland network.
- Involve community in heathland restoration activities such as scrub removal and removal of invasive species. This should involve those who would significantly benefit e.g. young people, unemployed and those living with disabilities.
- Establish long-term management strategy for existing and new heathland sites, including exploring opportunities to roll out grazing schemes in conjunction with local farmers.
- Provide a series of educational events such as walking tours and school trips to educate people about heathland and its ecological value.

Contribution to GI themes

Landscape, Heritage and Sense of Place	✓
Biodiversity	✓
Woodlands	
Water Environment	
Access, Recreation and Transport	✓
Health, wellbeing and Inequality	✓

Connect and restore heathland habitats	
Local awareness and involvement	✓
<p>Lowland heathland forms an important historic landscape feature in the northeast of the District. East Hampshire's lowland heathland reduced dramatically in the twentieth century with up to 80% being lost. Its restoration would help to reinforce heathland as a central component of East Hampshire's historic landscape.</p> <p>Heathland supports a rich variety of wildlife, including 5,000 species of invertebrates. Restoring heathland alongside enhanced management will help to enhance promote ecological connectivity and improve the biodiversity value of the northeast of the District. Creation of new heathland sites will also help to relieve recreational pressure on existing heathland sites that form part of the Wealden Heaths SPA.</p> <p>Although sensitive to human disturbance, heathland is an important recreational resource with its open landscape and wildlife supporting walking and nature watching, with associated health and wellbeing benefits. This is particularly important given that parts of the northwest of the district have slightly higher levels of social deprivation relative to the rest of the District.</p> <p>Volunteer and educational events created within the project would help to engage local communities and promote social cohesion.</p> <p>The project area overlaps and ties in with the East Hants and Heathland Green Infrastructure Investment Area (GIIA) as identified in the South Downs Green Infrastructure Framework (2016).</p>	
Potential partners / stakeholders	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hampshire County Council • East Hampshire District Council • Hampshire and Isle of Wight Wildlife Trust • Ministry of Defence • Forestry Commission • Amphibian and Reptile Conservation Trust 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Natural England • Royal Society for the Protection of Birds • Natural England • Prospective developers • Local schools • Local Parish Councils
Delivery mechanisms	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Embed proposal within Local Plan • Delivery body/partnership to oversee project delivery • Biodiversity offsetting 	
Potential funding streams	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • S106 • CIL • Funding from biodiversity offsetting • Lottery funding - Heritage Lottery Fund (Our Heritage programme) 	
Potential challenges	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of volunteer support and time • Difficulty maintaining long-term funding and management 	

6 Next steps

- 6.1 As stated in Section 1, a Green Infrastructure Strategy will be produced to support the new Local Plan. The aim of this Interim Report, therefore, is to inform how the new strategy has been progressing.
- 6.2 With regards to next steps, the Council is continuing to work with the commissioned consultants, alongside key internal and external stakeholders, in producing an East Hampshire Green Infrastructure Strategy 2019. The Strategy will identify a number of GI projects which will be delivered either by the Council and/or its partners to support green infrastructure in the PAA. Details will be provided on potential delivery mechanisms, including details of potential funding sources, partners and any feasibility studies that may be required.