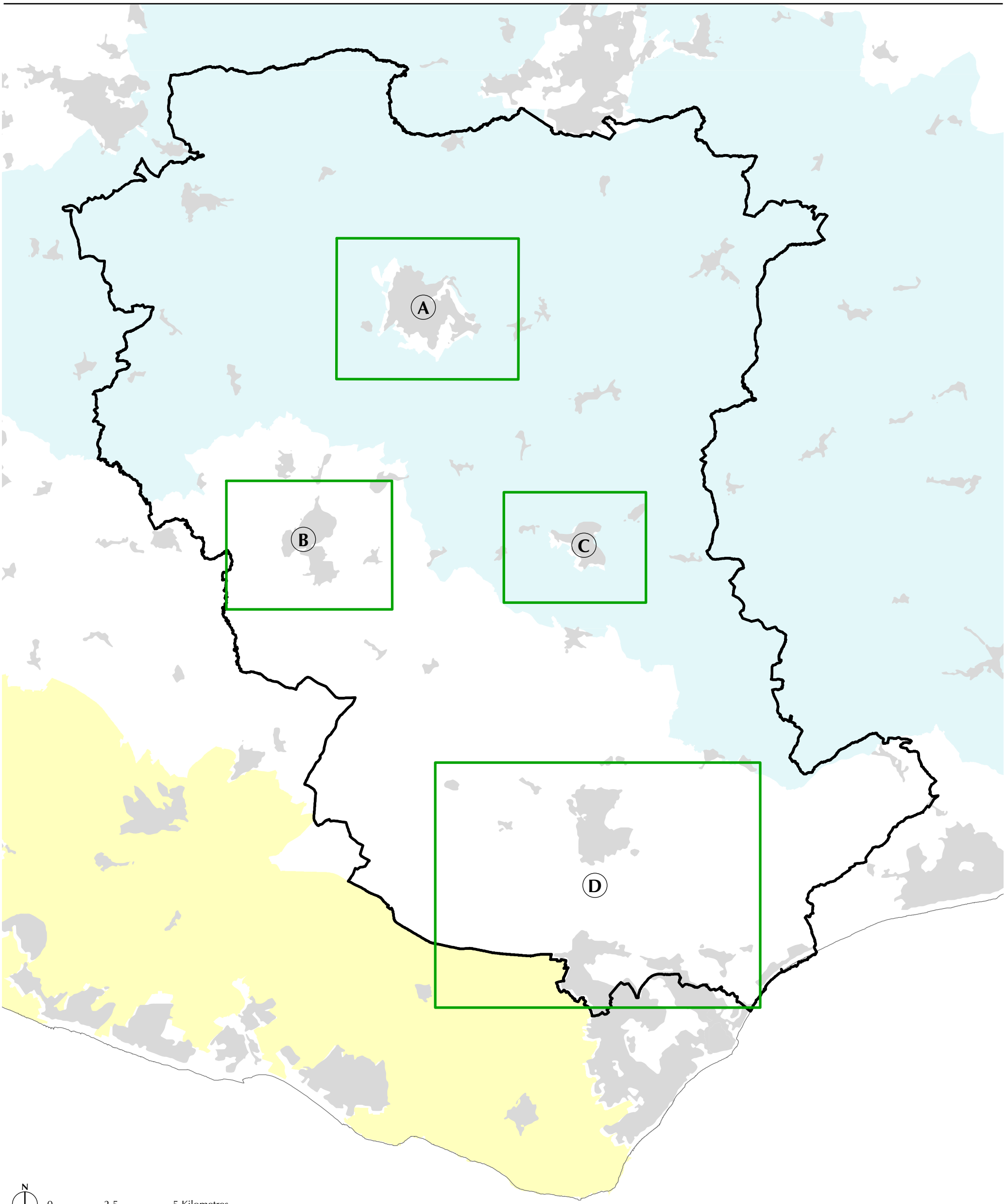
4.0 TOWN GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE ASSESSMENTS

4.1 General

4.1.1 This section sets out a more detailed assessment of GI assets, needs and opportunities for the towns of Crowborough, Uckfield, Heathfield and Hailsham & Polegate. The study areas for each town (see **Figure 4.1**) broadly reflect the settlement assessment areas defined by the Wealden Landscape and Settlement Character Assessment (2014), adjusted as necessary to take into account key GI assets and areas of potential growth around the towns.

4.1.2 This section should be read in conjunction with **Sections 2.0** and **3.0**, which provide an assessments of GI needs and opportunities for the study area as a whole and within sub-district scale 'GI Zones' respectively.



KEY

Wealden Local Plan Area

South Downs National Park

High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty

Settlement

Town GI Areas:
A. Crowborough
B. Uckfield
C. Heathfield
D. Hailsham & Polegate

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FIGURE 4.1
TOWN
GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE AREAS

April 2017

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4.2 Crowborough

Overview

4.2.1 As shown on **Figure 4.2a**, Crowborough is situated six miles to the south of Tunbridge Wells and approximately nine miles to the northwest of Uckfield, in the north of Wealden District. The town, which is surrounded by the High Weald AONB, occupies a prominent position on the northern forest ridge of the High Weald, approximately six miles to the east of the Ashdown Forest. A large nucleated town, Crowborough is dissected by the A26 main road corridor. The western edge of the town is served by a mainline railway which connects the town of Uckfield in the south, with the London mainline to the northeast. The majority of business activity within the town is contained on the Millbrook, Farningham Road and Lexden Lodge Business Areas and in the Park Road Area of the town centre, which also houses a variety of offices and other businesses. Elsewhere in the town, there are smaller areas of industrial and commercial activity at Park Road, Connors Yard and on the former railway goods yard off Western Road.

4.2.2 The town centre provides the commercial core of the settlement with a variety of shops and offices which have developed in linear form from London Road, north of The Cross, along the High Street, Broadway and Croft Road to the south, and in an east-west direction either side of The Cross. Crowborough also contains a large amount of residential development ranging from Victorian terraces, through post-war to modern housing estates. These housing areas or estates are set out along a network of roads and closes leading east-west off the main A26 road corridor. Crowborough has experienced significant growth over the last decade. On the western side of the town, Crowborough Warren has a distinctive character of detached properties set within extensive gardens, where tree cover, hedgerows and landscaping are the dominant visual elements that result in an arcadian quality. There are several small pockets of woodland and open space scattered within the urban fabric, in addition to Wolfe Recreation Ground to the east of the town, providing one of the largest areas.

Audit

Biodiversity

4.2.3 The following designated biodiversity and geodiversity sites are found around Crowborough (see **Figure 4.2b**):

- Ashdown Forest SAC/SPA/SSSI
- Brown Knoll Farm Meadow LWS
- Crowborough Common LWS

KEY



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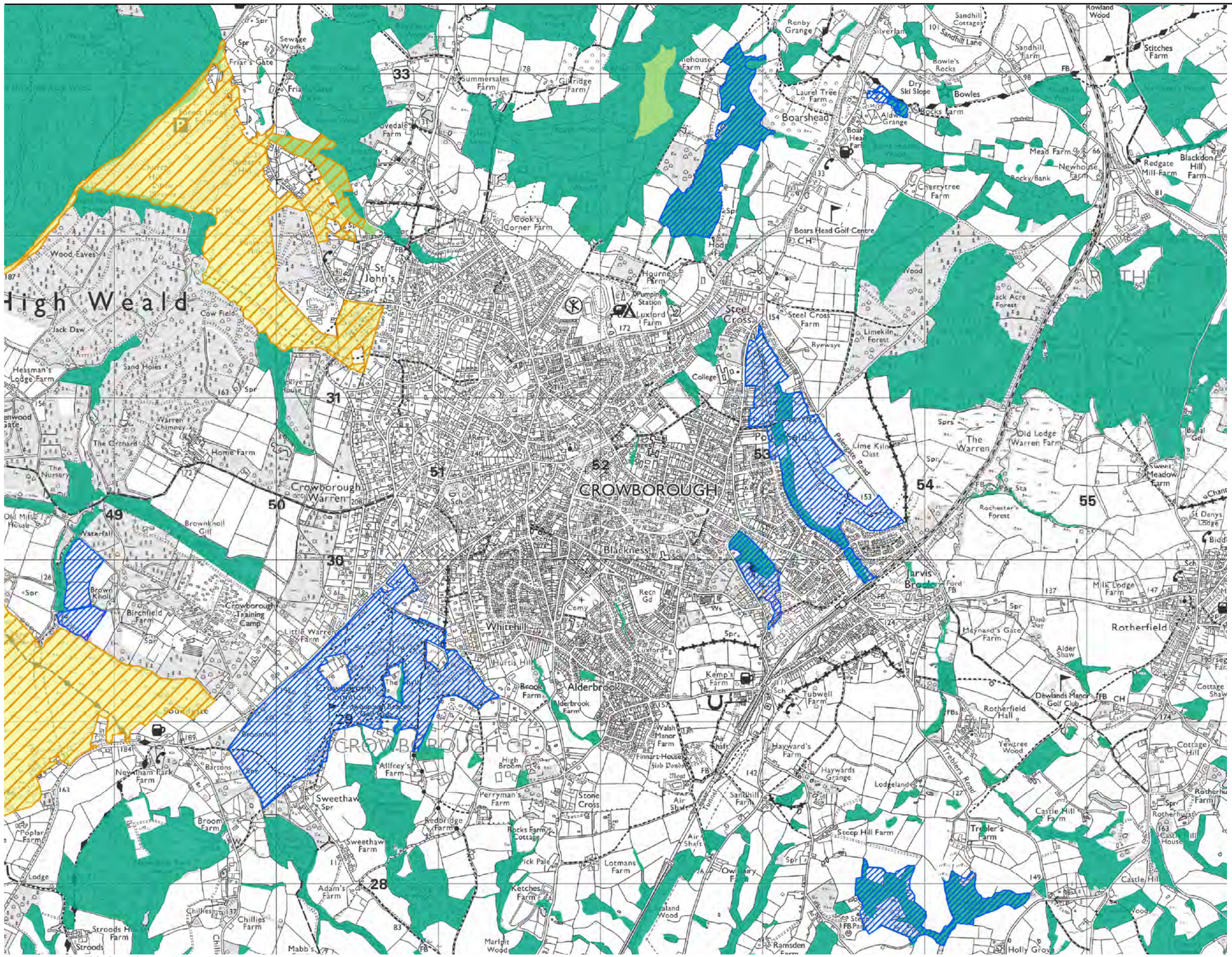
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FIGURE 4.2a
CROWBOROUGH:
CONTEXT PLAN

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FIGURE 4.2b
CROWBOROUGH:
DESIGNATED BIODIVERSITY & GEODIVERSITY SITES

April 2017

- Crowborough Ghyll LWS
- Lodge, Wet and Trebler's Wood LWS
- Boar's Head, Hodge's & Cage Wood LWS
- Boar's Head Rocks LWS
- Bream Wood SSSI
- Holden Wood LWS

4.2.4 The condition of the Ashdown Forest SAC/SPA/SSSI is 'unfavourable-recovering'[146].

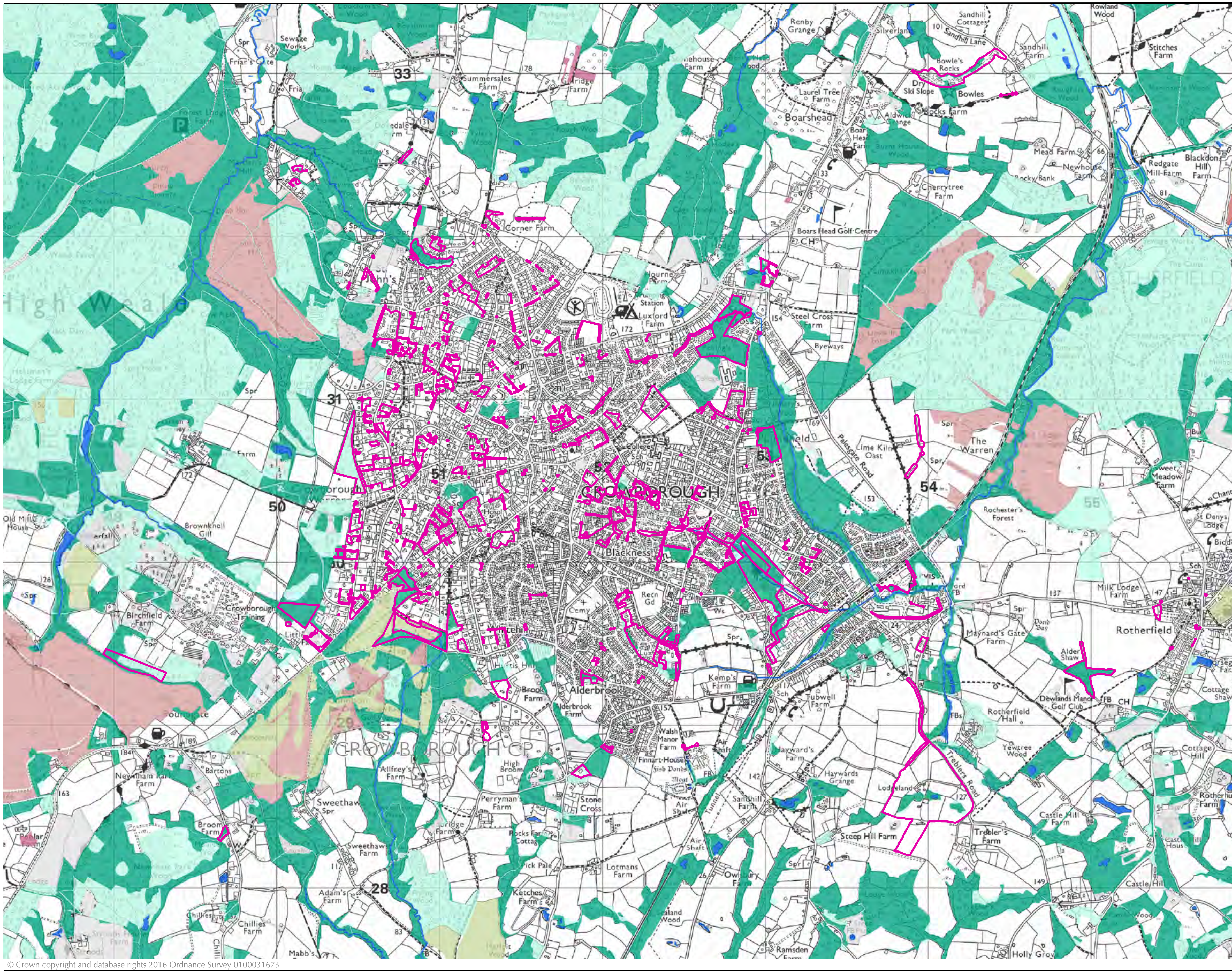
4.2.5 As shown on **Figure 4.2c**, wildlife habitats around Crowborough are dominated by deciduous, mixed and coniferous woodland interspersed with some notable areas of lowland heathland. Freshwater habitats include numerous small tributary streams and ponds. Habitats, particularly woodland are small and fragmented along the south-eastern edge of the town. As shown on **Figure 4.2d** there are a large number of individual trees and tree groups associated with amenity spaces and streets within the urban area, many of which are protected by Tree Preservation Orders (see **Figure 4.2c)**

Landscape & Historic Environment

4.2.6 The key landscape setting/townscape features and characteristics that contribute to the character of Crowborough and are sensitive to change are summarised below[147]:

- **Remnant Historic Landscapes:** A patchwork of small-scale historic fields surrounds the settlement, often abutting the settlement edge. These are interspersed with large areas of Ancient Woodland, particularly to the north and west of the town. To both the north and south of the town, the historic field pattern between woodlands is predominantly comprised of cohesive and aggregate assarts, and regular piecemeal enclosure.
- **Large areas of woodland** dominate the northern, western and eastern landscape setting of the town, providing a strong sense of enclosure.
- **Culturally Important Landmarks:** Rotherfield Hall, a culturally important historic landmark is situated to the southeast of the Jarvis Brook area of Crowborough.
- **Landscape Detractors:** Several landscape detractors, including buildings at Crowborough Training Camp to the south of Crowborough Warren; buildings associated with the campsite and pumping station at the northern edge of the settlement, close to Luxford Farm; and industrial and commercial buildings at Jarvis Brook industrial estate to the southeast of the town.

[146] https://designatedsites.naturalengland.org.uk/SiteSearch.aspx accessed April 2017
[147] Wealden Landscape & Settlement Character Assessment, CBA (2014)



KEY

Main BAP Priority Habitats:

- Coastal and Floodplain Grazing Marsh
- Coastal Saltmarsh
- Coastal Vegetated Shingle
- Deciduous Woodland
- Good Quality Semi-improved Grassland
- Lowland Calcareous Grassland
- Lowland Dry Acid Grassland
- Lowland Fens
- Lowland Heathland
- Lowland Meadows
- Maritime Cliff and Slope
- Mudflats
- Purple Moor Grass and Rush Pastures
- Reedbeds
- Saline Lagoons
- Traditional Orchard
- No Main Habitat but Additional Habitats Present

Mixed and Coniferous Woodland Habitats (National Forest Inventory)

Freshwater Habitats (Main Watercourses & Waterbodies)

Tree Preservation Orders

N

0 300 600 Metres

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FIGURE 4.2c
CROWBOROUGH:
WILDLIFE HABITATS

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KEY

- Urban Trees
- Woodland
- Shaws
- Ancient Woodland

NB. See Figure 4.2a for Tree Preservation Orders

N

0 300 600 Metres

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FIGURE 4.2d
CROWBOROUGH:
TREES & WOODLAND

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- **Urban Edges:** The town is predominantly lined by treed, sensitive soft edges and woodland, with a few pockets of exposed or prominent urban edges along the A26 corridor in the north and at the southern edge of Alderbrook housing area in the south of the town.
- **Watercourses/Waterbodies:** Several small watercourses and ponds permeate the landscape setting of the town.
- **Significant Views/Key Ridgelines:** There is a significant view of Crowborough in its elevated position, set within its landscape setting, looking westwards from the Rotherfield road.
- **Footpaths/Bridleways:** A network of footpaths and bridleways connects Crowborough to its landscape setting. Crowborough is situated in an elevated position and there are therefore numerous key ridgelines within the setting of the settlement.

4.2.7 The key characteristics of the Landscape Setting Areas around Crowborough[148] (see **Figure 4.2e**) are:

Landscape Setting Area	Distinctive Characteristics
1	• Large areas of Ancient Woodland, interspersed with small-scale, predominantly pastoral fields; • The caravan park at Luxford Farm is considered to be a landscape detractor, in close proximity to the settlement edge; • Strong landscape structure of mature hedgerows and trees.
2	• Dense Ancient Woodlands dominate the eastern part of the area, providing a strong sense of enclosure; • Numerous stream corridors are a key feature; • Open views to the settlement edge in the west.
3	• Strong sense of openness from parts of this area, particularly looking west along Rotherfield road, where a key view of Crowborough settlement edge can be gained; • A gently undulating landscape with a strong landscape structure.
4	• Small-scale landscape pattern of ancient fields, lined with mature hedgerows and hedgerow trees; • Narrow, tree-lined road corridors; • An interconnected network of footpaths, connecting Crowborough to its landscape setting.
5	• An undulating patchwork of small-scale, ancient fields and medium-scale Ancient Woodlands, which provide an intermittent sense of enclosure; • An interconnected network of rural, tree lined lanes and mature hedgerows.
6	• Large areas of woodland contribute to an enclosed feel within much of the area; • Human influence on the landscape is apparent at Crowborough Training Camp in the west; • A mixture of historic and ancient, predominantly pastoral fields.

4.2.8 In addition, key historic environment assets that also contribute to the character of the town include (see **Figure 4.2f**):

[148] Wealden Landscape & Settlement Character Assessment, CBA (2014)

KEY

Landscape Setting Areas (Wealden Landscape and Settlement Character Assessment, 2014):

1 Crowborough Landscape Setting Areas

N

0 300 600 Metres

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FIGURE 4.2e
CROWBOROUGH:
LANDSCAPE SETTING AREAS

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KEY

- Registered Historic Park and Garden
- Scheduled Monuments
- Conservation Areas
- Listed Buildings

N

0 300 600 Metres

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FIGURE 4.2f
CROWBOROUGH:
HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT

April 2017

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- 1 Registered Park & Garden: Rotherfield Hall
- 3 Scheduled Monuments including Crowborough Forge, Crowborough Warren Furnace and a Medieval moated site
- 2 Conservation Areas including Crowborough Conservation Area and Rotherfield Conservation Area

Energy & Food

4.2.9 There are no known areas of coppiced woodlands around Crowborough. However the woodlands present could, with appropriate and sensitive management represent a potential source of local fuel.

4.2.10 As shown on **Figure 2.4**, the quality of agricultural land around the town is almost entirely Grade 4, the lowest quality.

Water Resources

4.2.11 Crowborough Beacon, the highest point above sea-level within the High Weald at 225m, lies to the west of the town. Crowborough is situated at the head of the Upper Ouse, Upper Medway and Upper Rother catchment areas. Tributaries of the Rivers Medway and Uck run through the town.

4.2.12 **Table 4.1** shows the water quality within the catchment areas around Crowborough. Ecologically, water quality is much poorer, with most watercourses only reaching moderate quality at best. The chemical status of all watercourses within this catchment is good.

Table 4.1: Water Quality around Crowborough[149]

Catchment	Water Quality						
	Ecological Status or Potential					Chemical Status	
	Bad	Poor	Moderate	Good	High	Fail	Good
Upper Ouse Catchment Area Number of waterbodies: 2	3	8	14	1	0	0	26
Upper Medway Number of waterbodies: 12	1	3	7	1	0	0	12
Upper Rother Number of waterbodies: 6	0	3	2	1	0	0	6

[149] http://environment.data.gov.uk/catchment-planning/

Accessible Natural Greenspace & Access Links

4.2.13 Accessible natural greenspace sites in and around Crowborough are shown on **Figure 4.2g**. This shows that large areas of Open Access Land associated with commons and the Ashdown Forest; provide accessible greenspace along the western outskirts of Crowborough. On the eastern edge of the town a number of accessible sites exist including, Crowborough Country Park and the Ghyll Open Access Land. Broadly in the areas immediately north and south of Crowborough, there is no provision of accessible natural greenspace.

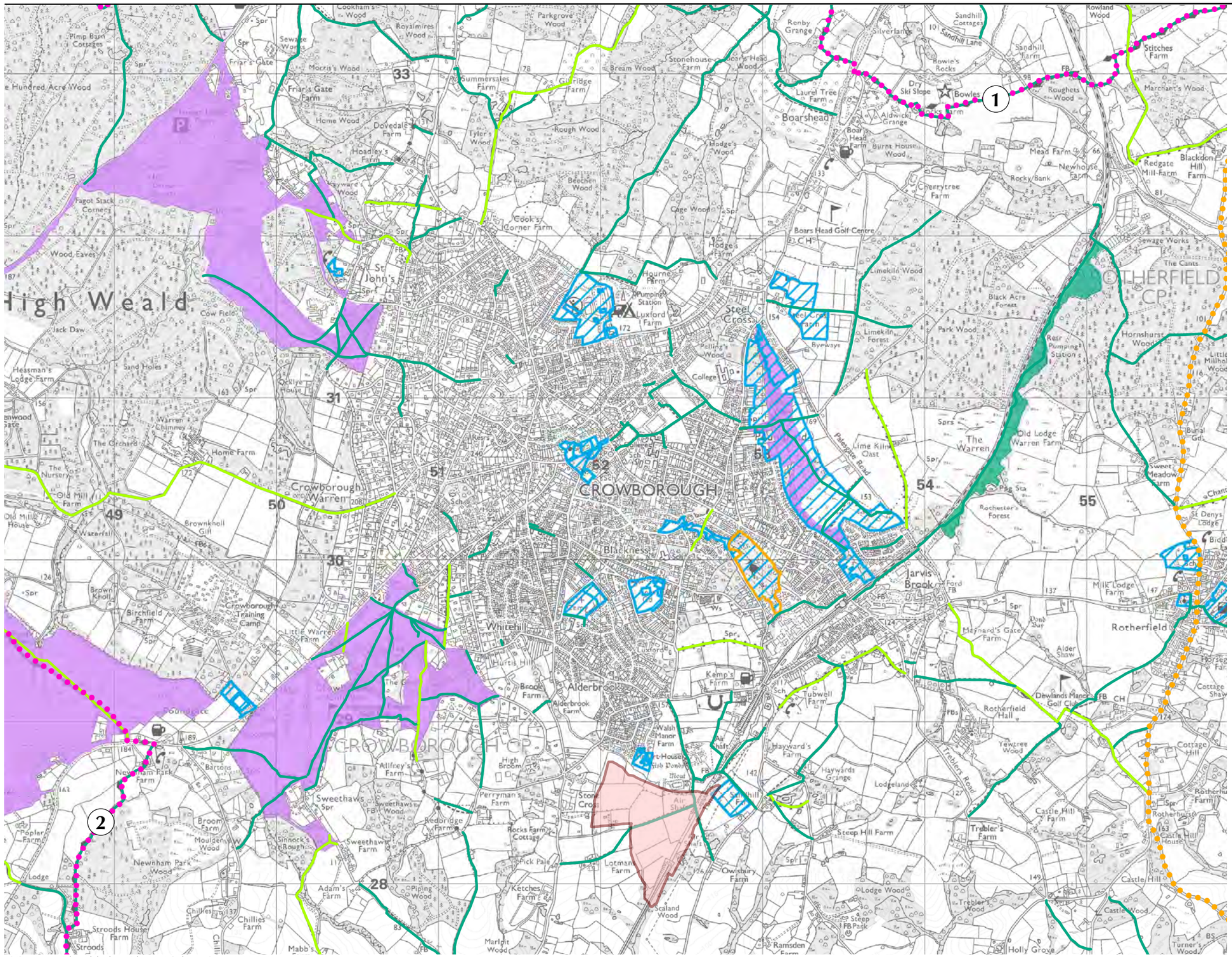
4.2.14 Within the town accessible greenspace is strongly focused on the eastern part of the town with no urban greenspace sites in the west. This part of the town also has limited neighbourhood scale access, as shown in **Figure 4.2h.** Open spaces in and around the town are shown on **Figure 4.2i** and comprise[150]:

- 2 No. allotments (such as Herne Road and Hadlow Down Road Allotments)
- 9 No. amenity greenspaces (such as Crowborough Silver Jubilee Ground and The Warren Playing Field)
- 6 No. churchyards and cemeteries (such as Herne Road Cemetery and St. Mary's Church, Crowborough)
- 6 No. parks and recreation grounds (such as Jarvis Brook Country Park/Playing Fields and Wolfe Recreation Ground)

4.2.15 As shown on **Figure 4.2g**, Crowborough is connected to the surrounding landscape by the following access links that need to be maintained and improved where appropriate:

- Public footpaths between The Ghyll Access Land and the wider countryside.
- Public footpaths between Crowborough and Old Lodge Warren Woodland Trust Site.
- Public footpaths between Crowborough and the countryside to the south of the town.
- Public bridleway access between Crowborough and the countryside through Crowborough Common
- Public footpaths between the Vanguard Way long distance promoted route and Crowborough.
- Cycleway from National Cycle Network Route 21 in to Crowborough.

[150] As identified and mapped for the Wealden Open Space, Sport and Recreation Study (Ethos for Wealden DC, forthcoming)



KEY

Access Links:

- Footpath
- Bridleway/Byway
- Sustrans National Cycle Route
- Promoted Route

1. Sussex Border Path
2. Vanguard Way

- National Trail

Accessible Natural Greenspace:

- Wealden Open Space, Sport and Recreation Study (2016)*
- CRoW Act 2000 Open Access Land
- Country Parks
- Local Nature Reserves and Sussex Wildlife Trust Reserves
- Accessible Woodland Trust Sites
- Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace Provision

*Includes: Accessible Natural Greenspace, Allotments, Amentity Greenspace, Churchyards and Cemeteries, Parks and Recreation Grounds

N

0 300 600 Metres

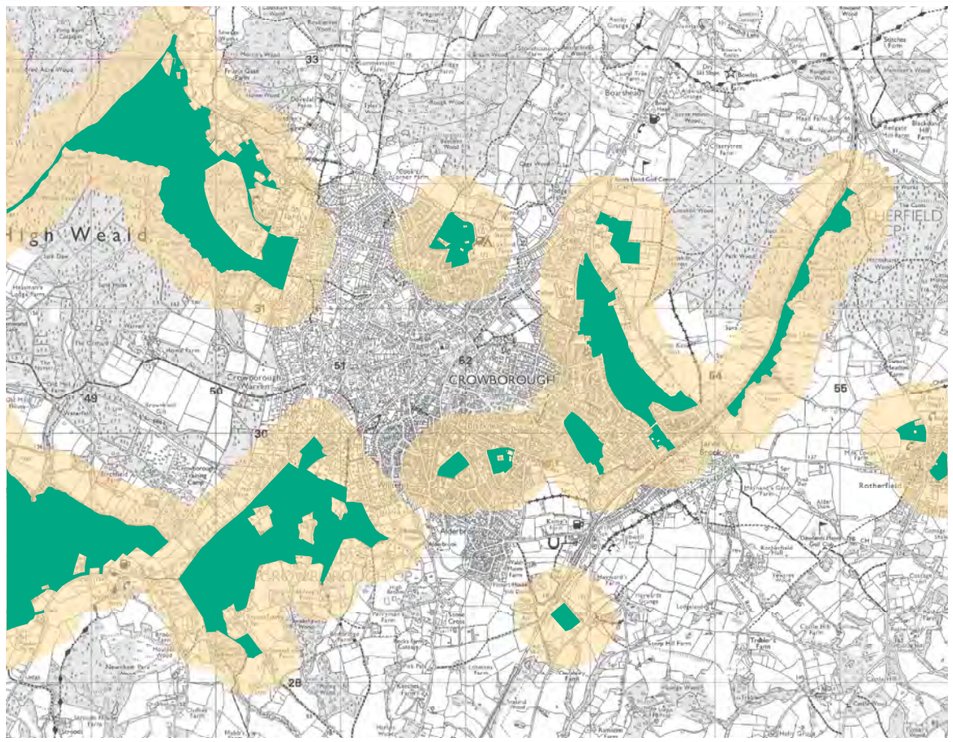
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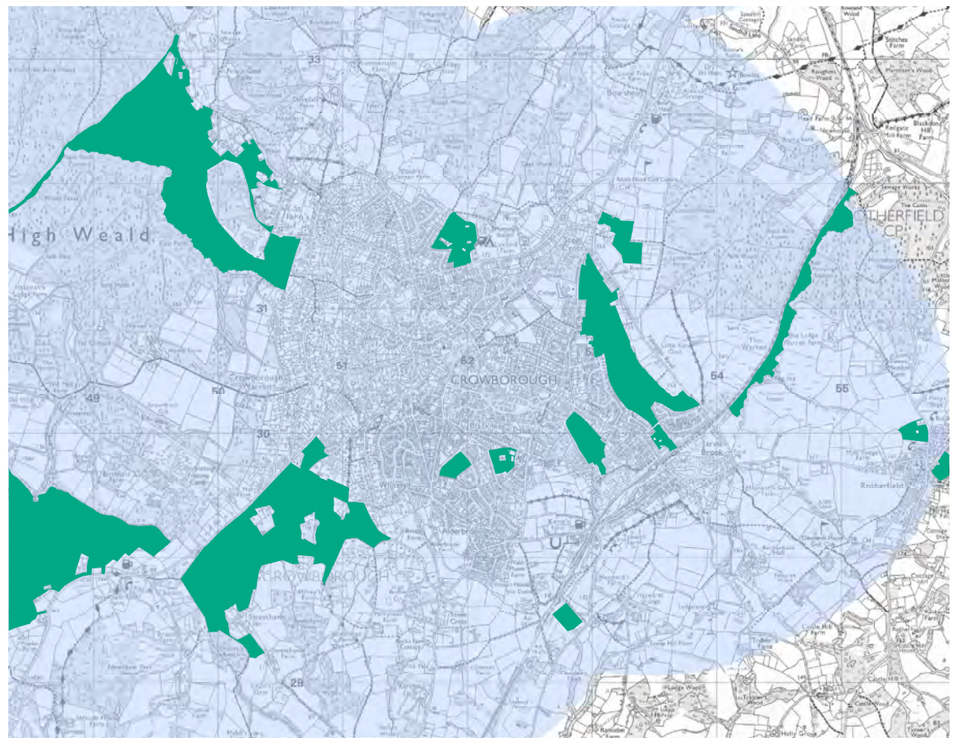
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FIGURE 4.2g
CROWBOROUGH:
ACCESS LINKS & ACCESSIBLE NATURAL GREENSPACE

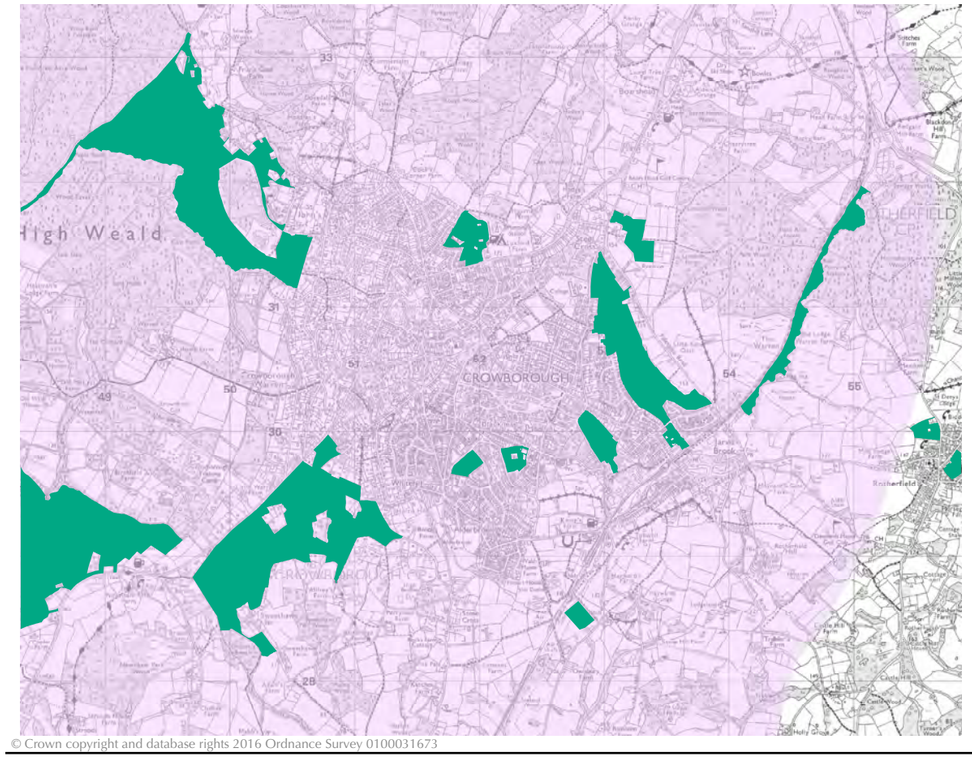
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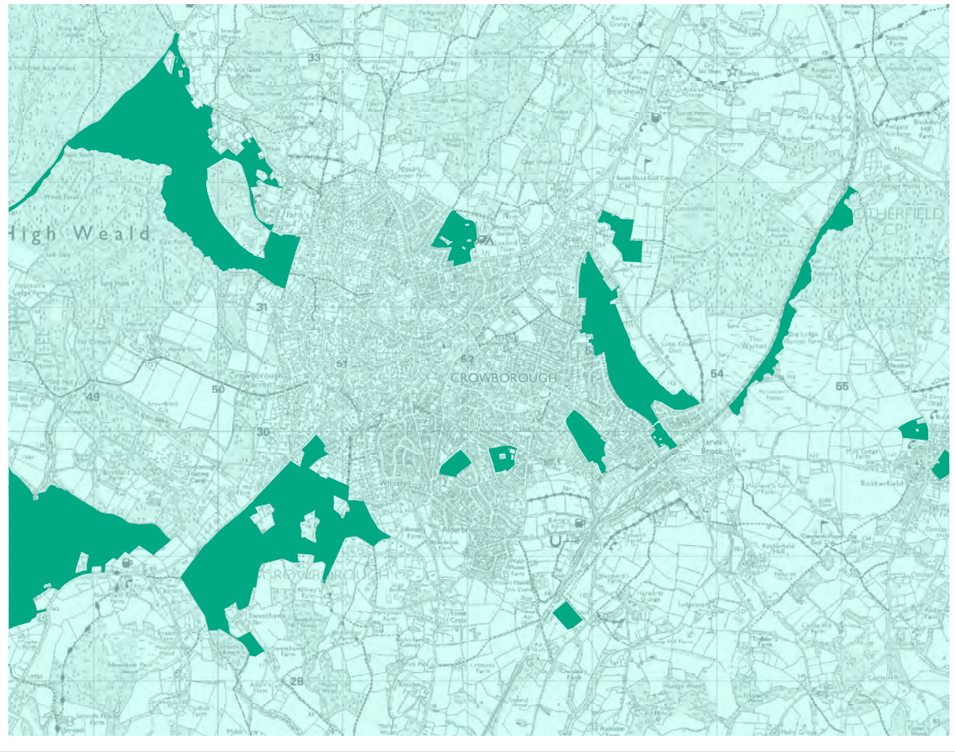




KEY

- Accessible Natural Greenspace >2ha
- 10km catchment - all accessible natural greenspace >500ha
- 5km catchment - all accessible natural greenspace >100ha
- 2km catchment - all accessible natural greenspace >20ha
- 300m catchment - all accessible natural greenspace >2ha





N

0 0.6 1.2 Kilometres

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FIGURE 4.2h
CROWBOROUGH:
ACCESSIBLE NATURAL GREENSPACE ANALYSIS

April 2017

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KEY

Open Space Typology:

- Accessible Natural Greenspace
- Allotments
- Amenity Greenspace
- Churchyards & Cemeteries
- Parks and Recreation Grounds

N

0 300 600 Metres

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FIGURE 4.2i
CROWBOROUGH:
OPEN SPACE TYPOLOGY

April 2017

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Needs and Opportunities

4.2.16 The GI assets that make a significant contribution to the GI network in and around Crowborough include a range of biodiversity, landscape and historic environment features; the farmland, woodland and allotments that provide local sources of energy and food; the 'blue infrastructure' provided by water resources that support a healthy environment; and the accessible natural greenspaces and access links that contribute to health and well-being. In summary, the key needs and opportunities for the provision of GI in and round the town are considered to be:

- Where appropriate, promote opportunities for retaining and enhancing existing wildlife habitats, and/or creating new habitats, related to residential development sites around Crowborough.
- There is scope restore and enhance features which contribute to landscape character around Crowborough through improved management or through development and associated mitigation. There may also be scope to improve the existing urban edges through the provision of new development and green infrastructure.
- Where appropriate, promote opportunities for landscape enhancements related to residential development sites around Crowborough.
- Opportunities exist to protect valued landscape features such as The Ghyll and to enhance/create green corridors in areas to the south of the town.
- There is potential to provide improved ecological connectivity of key characteristic habitats around the town, particularly in the south-east of Crowborough.
- Seek opportunities to address poorer urban air quality through the provision of additional street/car park trees, integrated into designs to perform multiple functions, such as; SuDS and cooling/shading and to act as green corridors for people and wildlife.
- Explore opportunities to promote gardening for wildlife and growing food within existing and new residential areas.
- Where appropriate seek opportunities to safeguard and enhance through appropriate management existing formal and informal public open spaces within the town.
- Opportunities exist to develop and promote improved access links from the town to key villages close by (such as Rotherfield) to improve sustainable access links and join up key greenspaces.
- Seek opportunities to create new small scale (2ha) accessible natural greenspace sites, in particular within the north and/or western half of the town in order to address deficiencies.
- Where appropriate to do so, promote and encourage the use of best practice innovative architectural and planning solutions that take inspiration from local distinctiveness and character.

- Where appropriate improve water quality and local flood risk management through the use of SuDS, green roofs and rain gardens for example within new housing developments.

4.3 Uckfield

Overview

4.3.1 As shown on **Figure 4.3a**, Uckfield is situated in the west of Wealden District, approximately eight miles to the southwest of Crowborough and eight miles to the west of Heathfield. It is one of the largest settlements in the District and serves as a local employment and shopping centre. Uckfield is situated in close proximity to the southern edge of the High Weald AONB.

4.3.2 Uckfield is a large linear town which has developed at the crossroads between two B roads running north-south, east-west. The town is bypassed by the A22 main road corridor which runs to the west of the settlement. Uckfield has experienced significant growth over the last decade, resulting in a pattern of several large-scale housing estates at the edges of the town.

4.3.3 The town centre provides the commercial core of the settlement with a variety of shops and offices which have developed in linear form along the High Street (the former A22). The historic core of Uckfield is situated at the northern end of the High Street, with a concentration of Listed Buildings resulting in a historic character. More recently the focus of shopping activity has shifted southwards at the bottom on the High Street, with a small shopping complex at Bell Walk and the large supermarket to the south of Luxford Field.

4.3.4 There are two main business/commercial centres within Uckfield, at Bellbrook and Ridgewood. These areas comprise modern business units and warehouses. There are several key areas of open space within the town, which provide a range of outdoor recreational facilities. These include Victoria Pleasure Ground, the New Road Recreation Ground at Ridgewood, Hempstead Lane, Luxford Field, New Barn Farm and at West Park.

Audit

Biodiversity

4.3.5 The following designated biodiversity and geodiversity sites are found around Uckfield (see **Figure 4.3b**):

- Piltdown Common LWS
- Shortbridge Stream Meadow LWS
- Butcher's Wood LWS
- Lake Wood LWS
- West Park LWS

KEY

N

0 300 600 Metres

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FIGURE 4.3a
UCKFIELD:
CONTEXT PLAN

April 2017

KEY

Designations:

- Special Protection Area/Special Area of Conservation/Ramsar
- Site of Special Scientific Interest
- National Nature Reserve
- Local Wildlife Sites
- Ancient Woodland
- Regionally Important Geological Sites

N

0 300 600 Metres

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WEALDEN DISTRICT COUNCIL

FIGURE 4.3b
UCKFIELD:
DESIGNATED BIODIVERSITY & GEODIVERSITY SITES

April 2017

- Budlett's Common Rocks LWS
- Uckfield Cemetary LWS
- Ridgewood Clay Pit LWS
- Harlands Farm Pond and Stream LWS
- Hempstead Wood LWS
- Buxted Park SSSI

4.3.6 The condition of the Buxted Park SSSI is unfavourable recovering[151].

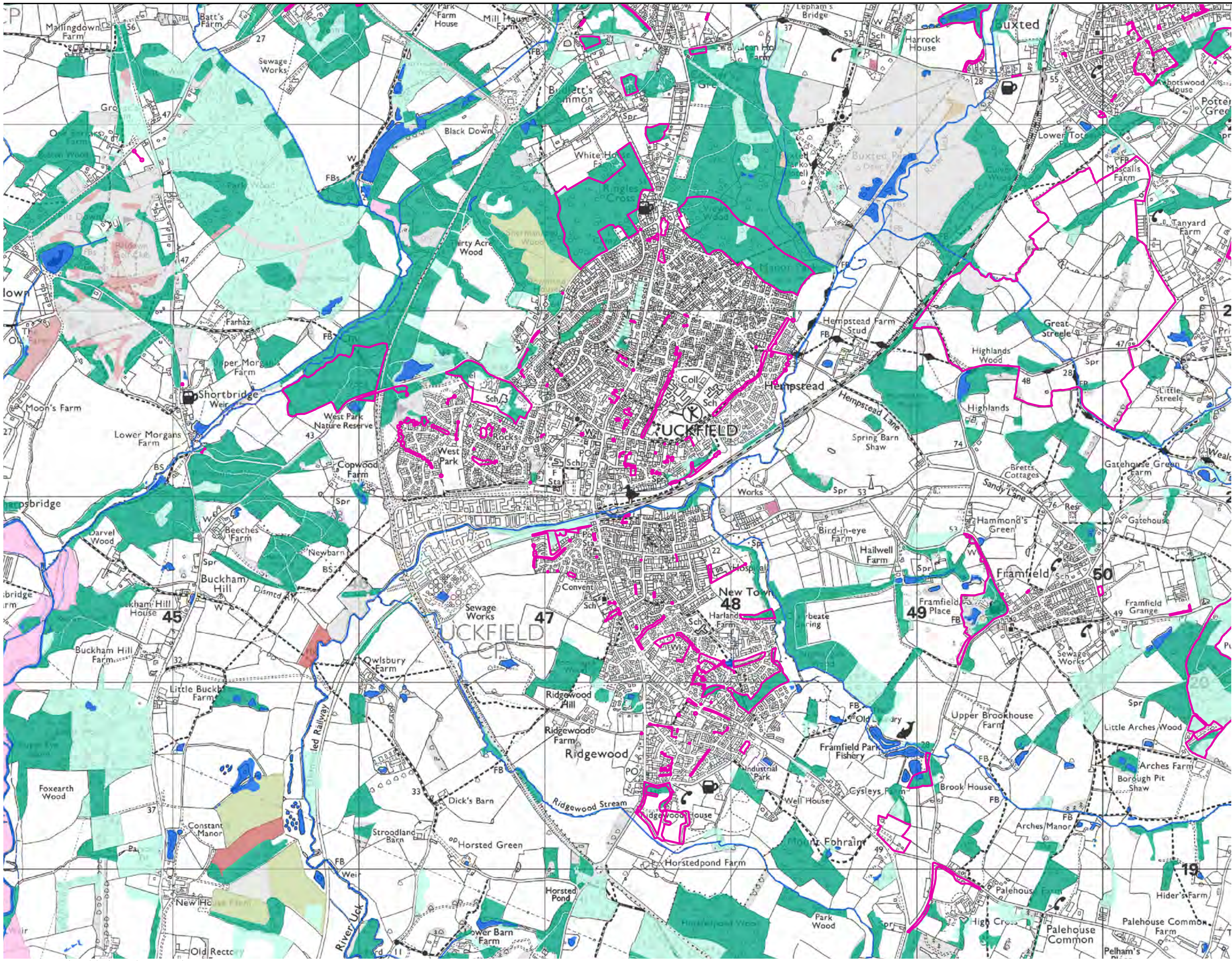
4.3.7 As shown on **Figure 4.3c**, wildlife habitats around Uckfield are dominated by deciduous woodland interspersed with some notable areas of semi-improved grassland. Freshwater habitats around Uckfield are plentiful and include the Ridgewood stream and numerous ponds. As shown on **Figure 4.3d** there are a large number of individual trees and tree groups associated with amenity spaces and streets within the urban area, many of which are protected by Tree Preservation Orders (see **Figure 4.3c)**

Landscape & Historic Environment

4.3.8 The key landscape setting/townscape features and characteristics that contribute to the character of Uckfield and are sensitive to change are summarised below[152]:

- **Remnant Historic Landscapes:** Pockets of historic landscape within the setting of the town, comprising small-scale fields with intact boundaries, particularly to the northwest, west and southeast of the town. The historic field pattern is a mosaic, predominantly comprised of regular and irregular piecemeal enclosure, and cohesive and aggregate assarts. Historic parkland landscape, associated with Buxted Park to the northeast of the settlement and relatively large areas of Ancient Woodland, further contribute to the historic landscape within the periphery of the town.
- **Culturally Important Landmarks:** Buxted Park Hall(hotel), a culturally important historic landmark is situated to the northeast of the settlement and other important historic landmarks include the church at Framfield and listed buildings within the historic core of the town centre.
- **Landscape Detractors:** Several landscape detractors are present within the setting of the town, including industrial and commercial buildings at Ridgewood and Bellbrook Industrial estates.

[151] https://designatedsites.naturalengland.org.uk/SiteSearch.aspx accessed April 2017
[152] Wealden Landscape & Settlement Character Assessment, CBA (2014)



KEY

Main BAP Priority Habitats:

- Coastal and Floodplain Grazing Marsh
- Coastal Saltmarsh
- Coastal Vegetated Shingle
- Deciduous Woodland
- Good Quality Semi-improved Grassland
- Lowland Calcareous Grassland
- Lowland Dry Acid Grassland
- Lowland Fens
- Lowland Heathland
- Lowland Meadows
- Maritime Cliff and Slope
- Mudflats
- Purple Moor Grass and Rush Pastures
- Reedbeds
- Saline Lagoons
- Traditional Orchard
- No Main Habitat but Additional Habitats Present

Mixed and Coniferous Woodland Habitats (National Forest Inventory)

Freshwater Habitats (Main Watercourses & Waterbodies)

Tree Preservation Orders

N

0 300 600 Metres

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FIGURE 4.3c
UCKFIELD:
WILDLIFE HABITATS

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KEY

- Urban Trees
- Woodland
- Shaws
- Ancient Woodland

NB. See Figure 4.3a for Tree Preservation Orders

N

0 300 600 Metres

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FIGURE 4.3d
UCKFIELD:
TREES & WOODLAND

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- **Urban Edges:** The town is predominantly lined by sensitive soft edges and woodland, with a few pockets of exposed or prominent urban edges within the Bellbrook Industrial Area and at the eastern edge of the town, associated with the Hospital.
- **Watercourses/Waterbodies:** The key watercourse running northeast- southwest through the town, is the River Uck, set within its meandering valley. Several smaller tributary streams feed the main river system, including the Chalybeate Spring. There are also numerous small ponds within the setting of the town.
- **Significant Views/Key Ridgelines:** Key views of the edges of the town can be gained looking north-eastwards from the A22 road corridor and northwards from the Framfield Road.
- **Footpaths/Bridleways:** A network of footpaths and bridleways connects Uckfield to its landscape setting.

4.3.9 The key characteristics of the Landscape Setting Areas around Uckfield[153] (see **Figure 4.3e**) are:

Landscape Setting Area	Distinctive Characteristics
1	• Gently meandering corridor of the River Uck, which is lined in places by small linear woodlands; • Buxted Park which is a key landscape feature, with its designed landscape elements and mature parkland trees
2	• A patchwork of woodlands, arable and pastoral fields which are often lined with mature hedgerows. • Intermittent sense of enclosure.
3	• Gently meandering Ridgewood Stream corridor, with several adjacent blocks of mature woodland • A strong landscape structure of hedgerows and trees.
4	• A patchwork of Ancient Woodland and pastoral fields, lined with mature hedgerows.
5	• Topography slopes from south to north, forming the northern valley side of the Ridgewood stream. • A patchwork of sloping, modern, arable and pastoral fields • A22 road corridor forms the southern edge of the area and introduces a source of noise and movement.
6	• The southern section of the Uck River corridor which gently meanders through a fieldscape which is interspersed with patches of woodland; • A22 road corridor forms the northern edge of the area and introduces a source of noise and movement.
7	• A strong sense of enclosure within this ancient landscape as a result of large areas of Ancient Woodland.
8	• A gently meandering tributary of the River Ouse which is lined with mature woodland, providing a strong sense of enclosure; • Park Wood, to the west is a key landscape feature, further contributing to the enclosed feel.

4.3.10 In addition, key historic environment assets that also contribute to the character of the town include (see **Figure 4.3f**):

[153] Wealden Landscape & Settlement Character Assessment, CBA (2014)

KEY

Landscape Setting Areas (Wealden Landscape and Settlement Character Assessment, 2014):

1 Uckfield Landscape Setting Areas

N

0 300 600 Metres

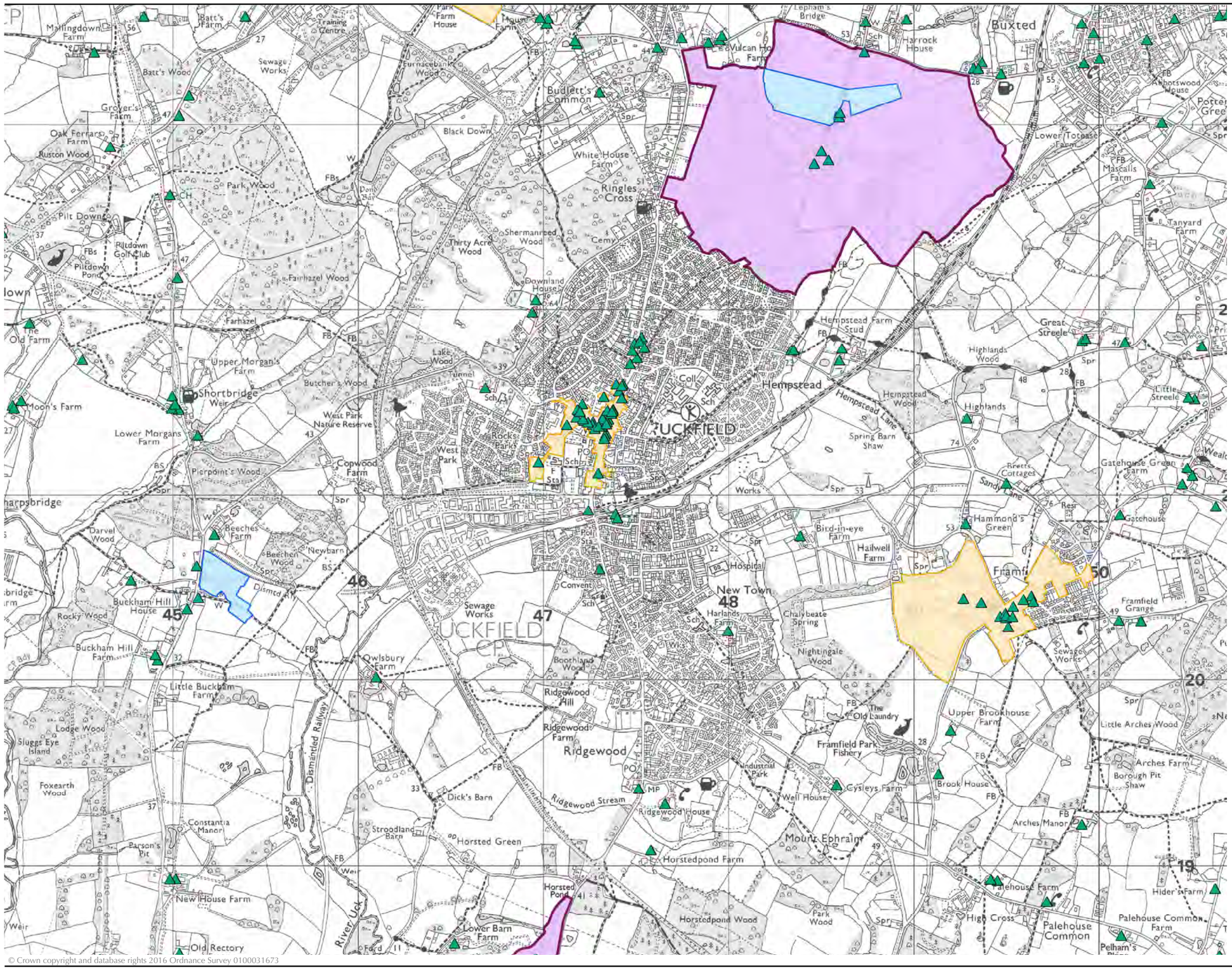
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FIGURE 4.3e
UCKFIELD:
LANDSCAPE SETTING AREAS

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KEY

- Registered Historic Park and Garden
- Scheduled Monuments
- Conservation Areas
- Listed Buildings

N

0 300 600 Metres

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FIGURE 4.3f
UCKFIELD:
HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT

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- 2 Registered Historic Parks and Gardens: Buxted Park (Grade II* Listed) and Horsted Place (Grade II Listed)
- 2 Conservation Areas including Framfield Conservation Area and Uckfield Conservation Area

Energy & Food

4.3.11 There are 2.9ha of coppiced woodlands around Uckfield that represent a potential source of local fuel.

4.3.12 As shown on **Figure 2.4**, the quality of agricultural land around the town is mainly poor quality (grade 4).

Water Resources

4.3.13 The River Uck flows through the town. Other smaller waterbodies which run through the town include Framfield Stream, Ridgewood Stream, Tickerage Stream, Shortbridge Stream, and Batt's Bridge Stream. The River Ouse is a major water body near the town.

4.3.14 **Table 4.2** shows the water quality within the upper Ouse catchment area, which includes Uckfield and the upper reaches of the River Uck. Ecologically water quality is much poorer, with most watercourses only reaching moderate quality at best. The chemical status of all watercourses within this catchment is good.

Table 4.2: Water Quality around Uckfield[154]

Catchment	Water Quality						
	Ecological Status or Potential					Chemical Status	
	Bad	Poor	Moderate	Good	High	Fail	Good
Upper Ouse Catchment Area Number of waterbodies: 2	3	8	14	1	0	0	26

Accessible Natural Greenspace & Access Links

4.3.15 Accessible natural greenspace sites in and around Uckfield are shown on **Figure 4.3g**. This shows that there are significant areas of accessible greenspace adjacent to the town's north-eastern edge, much of which is provided by Buxted Park, a SSSI and Historic Park and Garden.

[154] http://environment.data.gov.uk/catchment-planning/

To the west of Uckfield West Park Nature Reserve and Lake Wood Woodland Trust Reserve provides accessible greenspace. Much of the southern edge of the town is also well catered for in terms of accessible natural greenspace.

4.3.16 Within Uckfield accessible greenspace is fairly evenly distributed throughout the urban area. Many of these sites however are small, and don't contribute to the town's neighbourhood scale accessible greenspace standard, therefore much of the centre of Uckfield is remains deficient at this scale as shown on **Figure 4.3h.** Open spaces in and around the town are shown on **Figure 4.3i** and comprise[155]:

- 8 No. allotments (such as Bell Lane and Ridgewood East Allotments)
- 12 No. amenity greenspaces (such as Harlands Farm Recreation Ground and The Dene)
- 7 No. churchyards and cemeteries (such as Snatt Road Cemetery and Holy Cross Parish Church)
- 6 No. parks and recreation grounds (such as Victoria Pleasure Ground and West Park Recreation Ground)

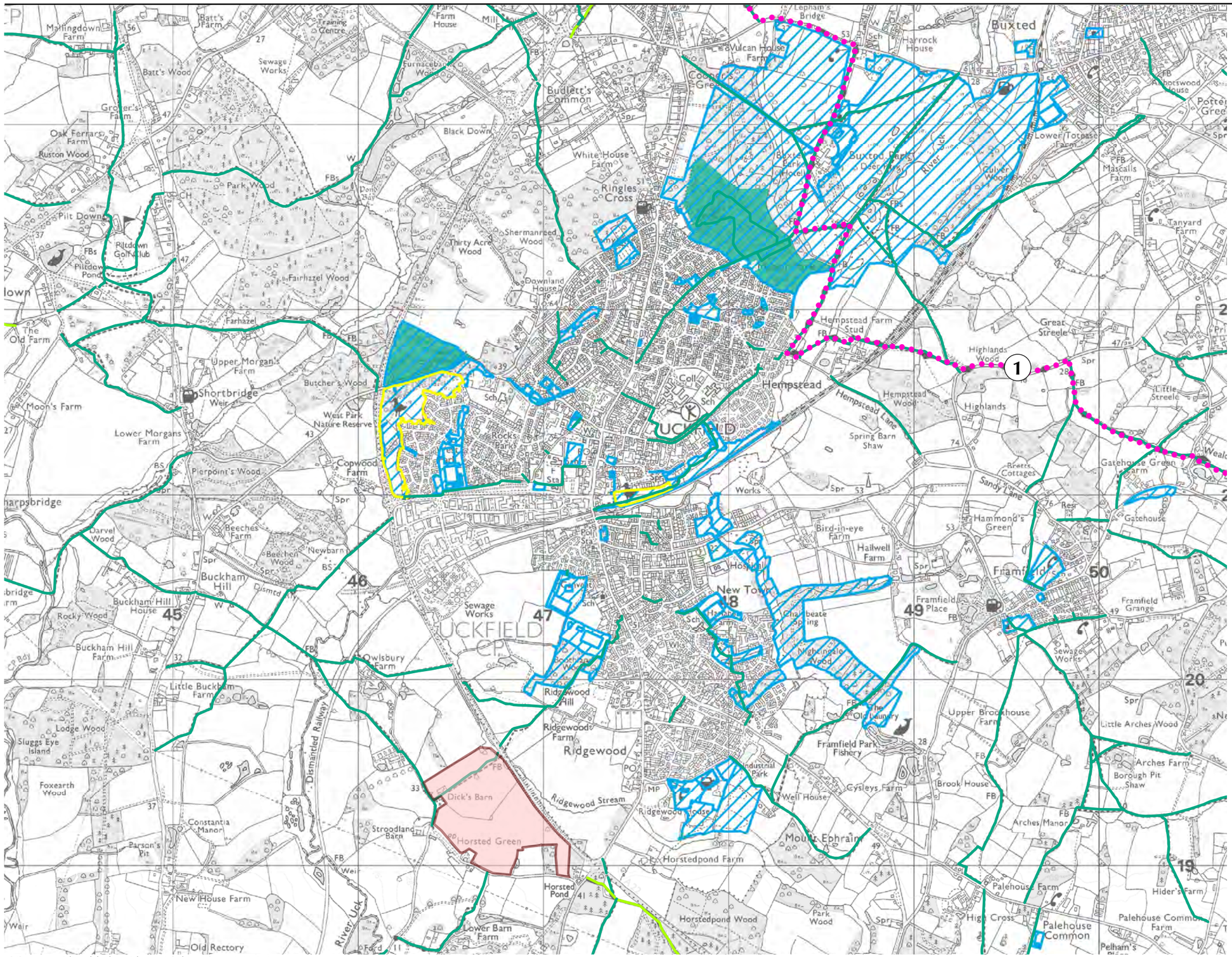
4.3.17 As shown on **Figure 4.3g**, Uckfield is connected to the surrounding landscape by the following access links that need to be maintained and improved where appropriate:

- Public footpaths between Uckfield and Woodland Trust Sites in the north of the town.
- Public footpaths between Uckfield and Buxted Park in the north of the town.
- Public footpaths between Uckfield, open spaces and the countryside in the south of the town.
- Public bridleway between the north and south of Uckfield.
- The Wealdway promoted route which passes through the north-eastern edge of the town.

Needs and Opportunities

4.3.18 The GI assets that make a significant contribution to the GI network in and around Uckfield include a range of biodiversity, landscape and historic environment features; the farmland, woodland and allotments that provide local sources of energy and food; the 'blue infrastructure' provided by water resources that support a healthy environment; and the accessible natural greenspaces and access links that contribute to health and well-being. In summary, the key needs and opportunities for the provision of GI in and round the town are considered to be:

[155] As identified and mapped for the Wealden Open Space, Sport and Recreation Study (Ethos for Wealden DC, forthcoming)



KEY

Access Links:

- Footpath
- Bridleway/Byway
- Sustrans National Cycle Route
- Promoted Route

1. Wealdway

- National Trail

Accessible Natural Greenspace:

- Wealden Open Space, Sport and Recreation Study (2016)*
- CRoW Act 2000 Open Access Land
- Country Parks
- Local Nature Reserves and Sussex Wildlife Trust Reserves
- Accessible Woodland Trust Sites

- Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace Provision

*Includes: Accessible Natural Greenspace, Allotments, Amentity Greenspace, Churchyards and Cemeteries, Parks and Recreation Grounds

N

0 300 600 Metres

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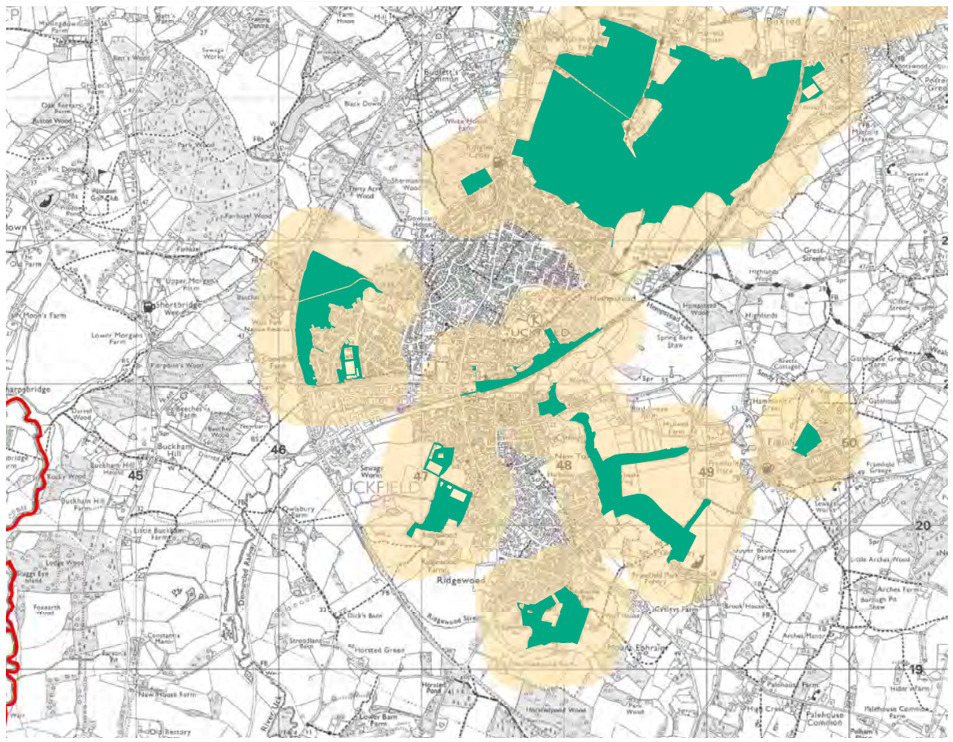
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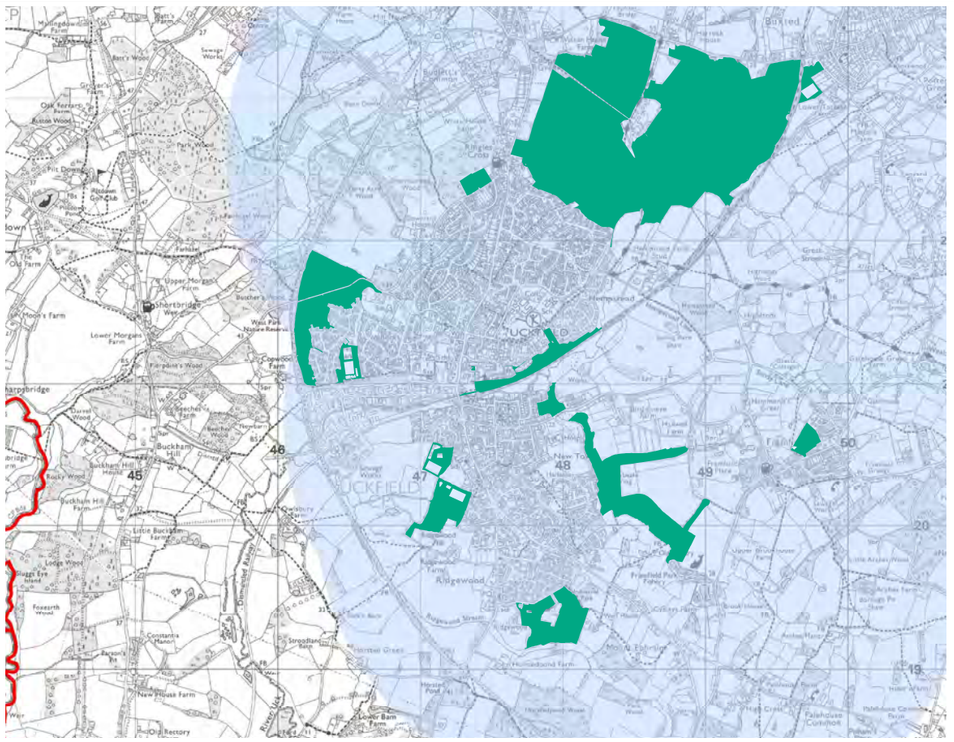
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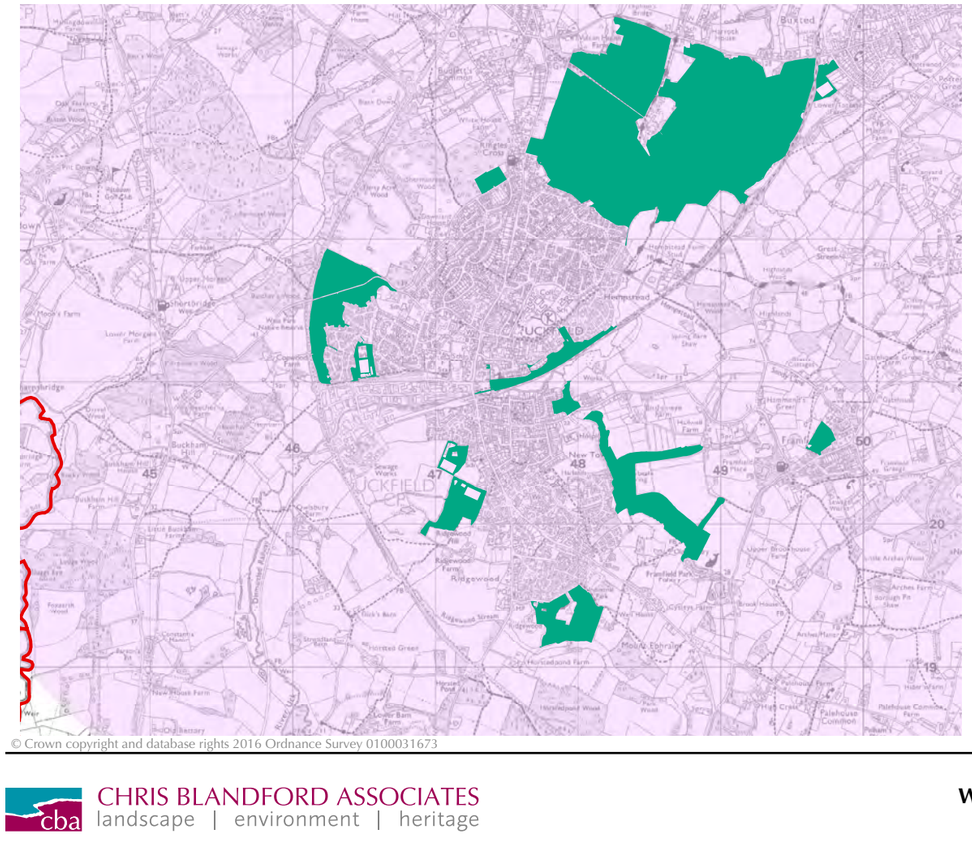
FIGURE 4.3g
UCKFIELD:
ACCESS LINKS & ACCESSIBLE NATURAL GREENSPACE

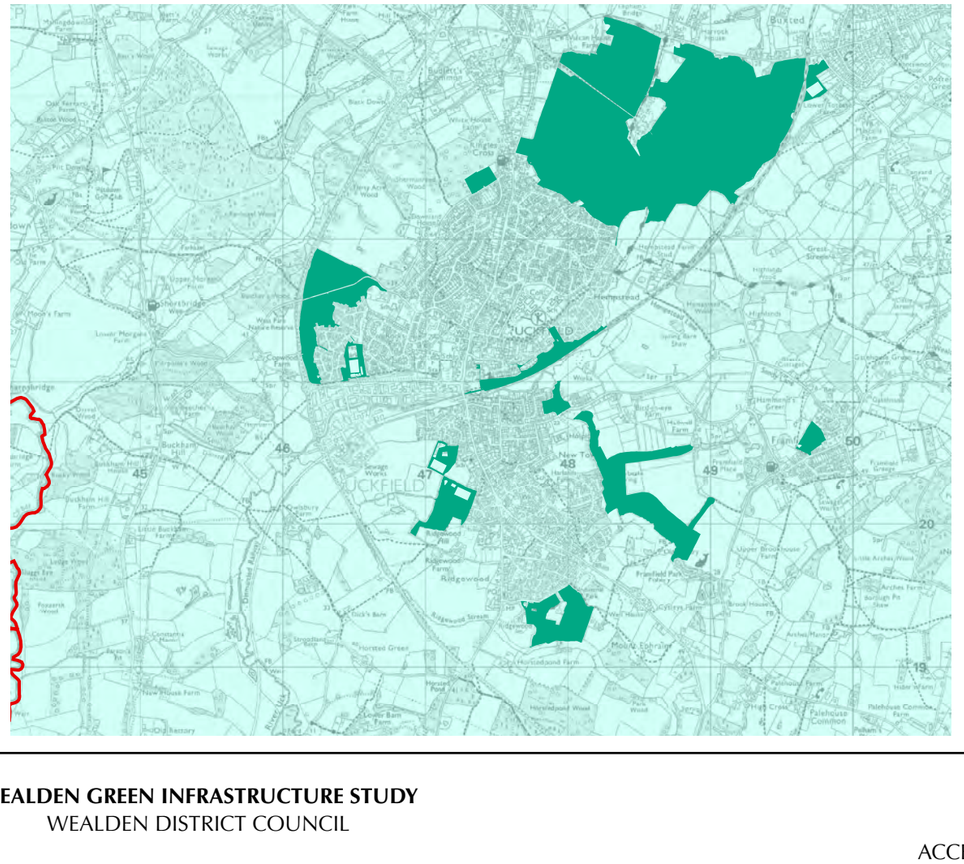
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KEY

- Wealden Local Plan Boundary
- Accessible Natural Greenspace >2ha
- 10km catchment - all accessible natural greenspace >500ha
- 5km catchment - all accessible natural greenspace >100ha
- 2km catchment - all accessible natural greenspace >20ha
- 300m catchment - all accessible natural greenspace >2ha

N

0 0.5 1 Kilometre

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FIGURE 4.3h
UCKFIELD:
ACCESSIBLE NATURAL GREENSPACE ANALYSIS

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KEY

Open Space Typology:

- Accessible Natural Greenspace
- Allotments
- Amenity Greenspace
- Churchyards & Cemeteries
- Parks and Recreation Grounds

N

0 300 600 Metres

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FIGURE 4.3i
UCKFIELD:
OPEN SPACE TYPOLOGY

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- Where appropriate, promote opportunities for retaining and enhancing existing wildlife habitats, and/or creating new habitats, related to residential development sites around Uckfield.
- There are opportunities in Uckfield for urban fringe development to provide and enhance green corridors and reinforce the countryside gap with surrounding villages. In addition, links to the countryside and existing GI could also be strengthened.
- Explore opportunities to retain and enhance the floodplain and improve or create multifunctional greenspaces along the Uck river corridor, to provide space for flood storage and attenuation. These spaces could for example provide connectivity for wildlife and people through Uckfield, ensuring people's connection with and understanding of the river is maintained.
- Explore opportunities to use the dismantled railway as a multifunctional strategic green corridor through the town, and to gain improved access into the countryside west of Uckfield.
- Seek opportunities to remove culverts where appropriate and resist new ones within and around Uckfield. Promote the natural functioning of water courses around the town.
- Where appropriate improve water quality and local flood risk management through the use of SuDS, green roofs and rain gardens for example within new housing developments.
- Explore opportunities to promote gardening for wildlife and growing food within existing and new residential areas.
- Where appropriate to do so, promote and encourage the use of best practice innovative architectural and planning solutions that take inspiration from local distinctiveness and character.
- Where appropriate safeguard and enhance through appropriate management existing formal and informal public open spaces within the town.

4.4 Heathfield

Overview

4.4.1 As shown on **Figure 4.4a**, Heathfield is situated within the central eastern part of Wealden District, approximately eight miles to the east of Uckfield and approximately nine miles to the north of Hailsham, in the north of Wealden District. The town occupies an elevated location on one of the principal east-west ridges crossing the High Weald. The settlement is surrounded by the High Weald AONB.

4.4.2 Heathfield is a predominantly residential, nucleated town which has grown around the A265 and B2203 road corridors, which are lined with several local shops and businesses. The town has witnessed considerable growth in housing throughout the 1980's and predominantly comprises a series of housing estates at the edges of the town, adjacent to older terraces within the town centre. There are two business areas within the town, at Ghyll Road and Browning Road. Small pockets of open spaces are scattered within the urban fabric, however, there is an absence of large playing fields within the town.

Audit

Biodiversity

4.4.3 The following designated biodiversity and geodiversity sites are found around Heathfield (see **Figure 4.4b**):

- Wildings & Scocus Wood Complex LWS
- Oaken & Furlong Woods LWS
- Newick Lane Meadow LWS
- Heathfield Park SSSI
- Sapperton Meadows SSSI
- St. Dunstan's Farm Meadows SSSI

4.4.4 The condition of the SSSIs in this zone is 'moderate to good'[156].

4.4.5 As shown on **Figure 4.4c**, wildlife habitats around Heathfield are dominated by deciduous, mixed and coniferous woodland interspersed with some notable areas of lowland meadows, characteristic of the High Weald AONB and unusually made up of significant groups of fields.

[156] https://designatedsites.naturalengland.org.uk/SiteSearch.aspx accessed April 2017



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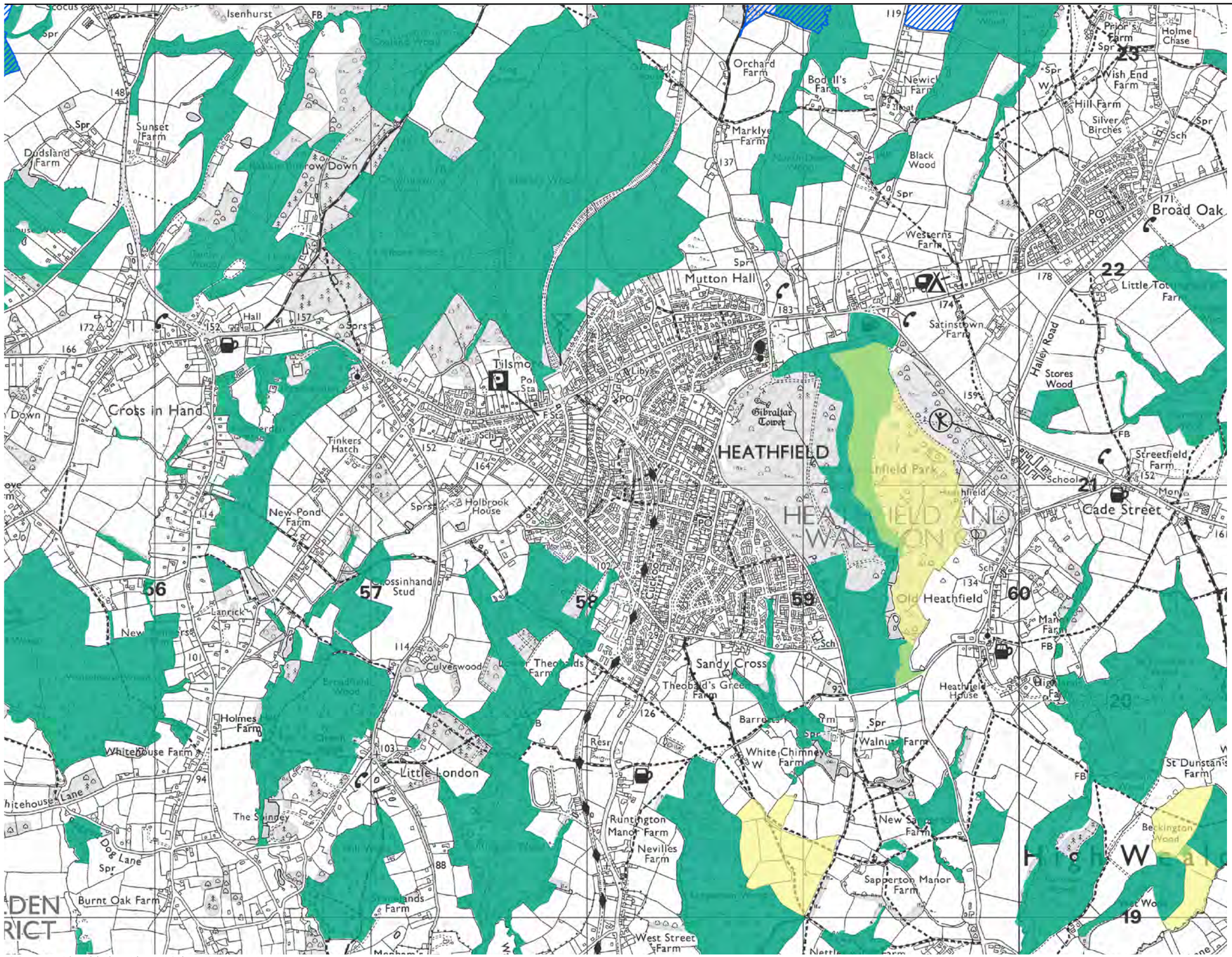
KEY

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FIGURE 4.4a
HEATHFIELD:
CONTEXT PLAN

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KEY

Designations:

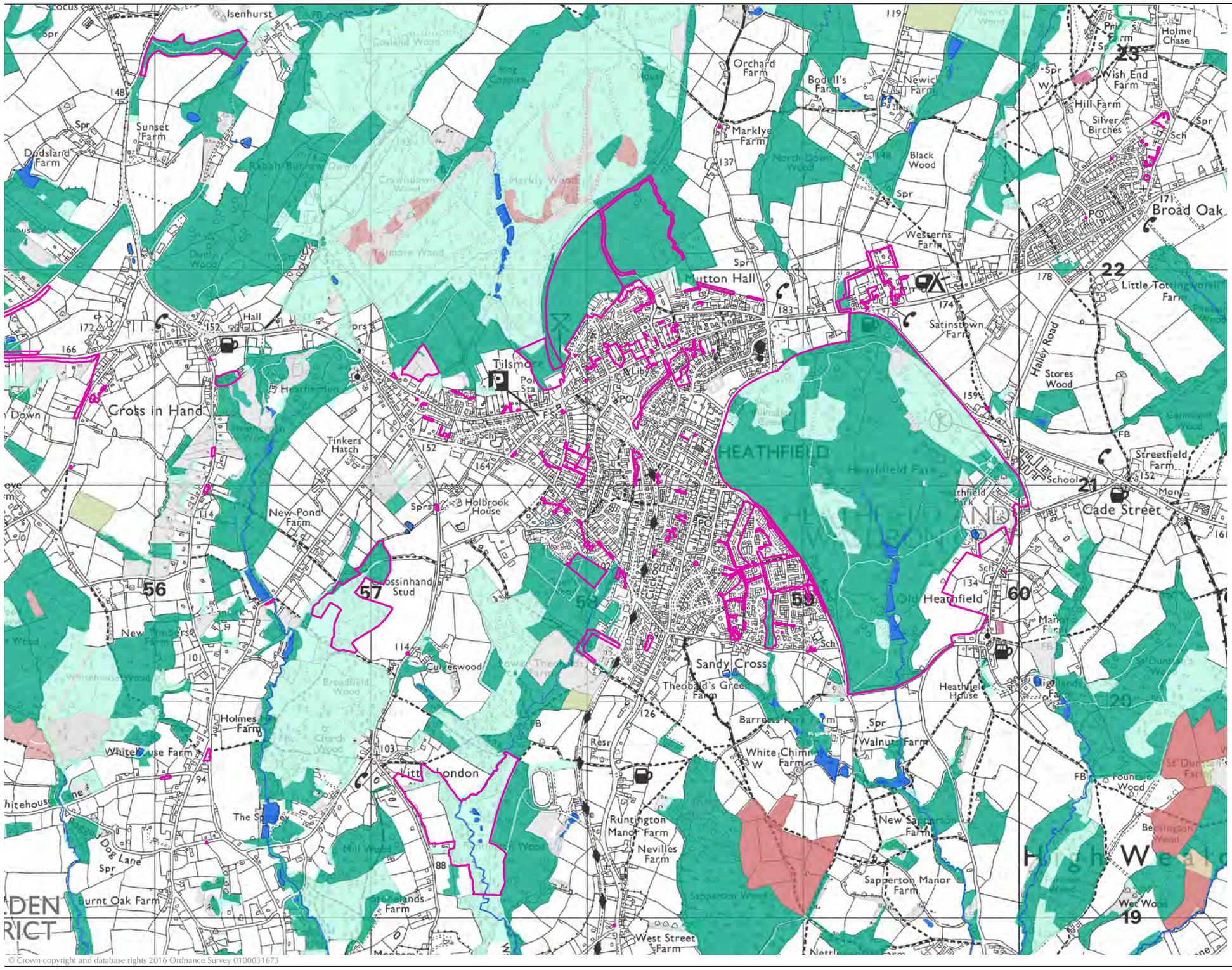
- Special Protection Area/Special Area of Conservation/Ramsar
- Site of Special Scientific Interest
- National Nature Reserve
- Local Wildlife Sites
- Ancient Woodland
- Regionally Important Geological Sites

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FIGURE 4.4b
HEATHFIELD:
DESIGNATED BIODIVERSITY & GEODIVERSITY SITES

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KEY

Main BAP Priority Habitats:

- Coastal and Floodplain Grazing Marsh
- Coastal Saltmarsh
- Coastal Vegetated Shingle
- Deciduous Woodland
- Good Quality Semi-improved Grassland
- Lowland Calcareous Grassland
- Lowland Dry Acid Grassland
- Lowland Fens
- Lowland Heathland
- Lowland Meadows
- Maritime Cliff and Slope
- Mudflats
- Purple Moor Grass and Rush Pastures
- Reedbeds
- Saline Lagoons
- Traditional Orchard
- No Main Habitat but Additional Habitats Present

Mixed and Coniferous Woodland Habitats (National Forest Inventory)

Freshwater Habitats (Main Watercourses & Waterbodies)

Tree Preservation Orders

N

0 300 600 Metres

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FIGURE 4.4c
HEATHFIELD:
WILDLIFE HABITATS

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Small and more fragmented/isolated fields of semi-improved grassland are also present in the landscape around Heathfield. Freshwater habitats include numerous small tributary streams and distinctive chains of hammer ponds, such as those within Heathfield Park - characteristic of the High Weald. As shown on **Figure 4.4d** there are a large number of individual trees and tree groups associated with amenity spaces and streets within the urban area, many of which are protected by Tree Preservation Orders (see **Figure 4.4c)**. Small traditional orchards lie close to the edge of Heathfield, particularly to the east.

Landscape & Historic Environment

4.4.6 The key landscape setting/townscape features and characteristics that contribute to the character of Heathfield and are sensitive to change are summarised below[157]:

- **Remnant Historic Landscapes:** An ancient landscape comprising a patchwork of small-scale fields, dominated by large tracts of Ancient Woodland. The small-scale field pattern comprises a scattering of regular piecemeal enclosure, with some cohesive assarts to the south, and some parliamentary enclosure to the west. The large historic parkland (Heathfield Park), to the east of the town, provides a significant tract of historic landscape within the town's setting. The historic core of the village of Old Heathfield (to the southeast of the town), which is designated as a Conservation Area, contributes a further historic dimension to the setting.
- **Culturally Important Landmarks:** There are several Culturally Important Landmarks within the setting of the town, including Heathfield Hall and the Gibraltar tower, within Heathfield Park; the church and several Listed Buildings in Old Heathfield and the church at Heatherden at the western edge of the town.
- **Landscape Detractors:** Several landscape detractors, industrial buildings along Ghyll Road, the caravan park to the north of the A265 road corridor and the communications mast within Rabbit Burrow Down woodland, to the northwest of Heathfield.
- **Urban Edges:** The town is predominantly lined by treed, sensitive soft edges and woodland, with one pocket of prominent, exposed urban edge at the southern edge of the town, along Sandy Cross Lane.
- **Watercourses/Waterbodies:** Several small watercourses, usually running in a north-south orientation off the ridge; and ponds permeate the landscape setting of the town. This includes the narrow stream corridor of Waldron Gill.
- **Significant Views/Key Ridgelines:** Several framed views can be gained from the edges of the town, to its landscape setting. A prominent ridgeline runs east west through the town, affording framed views.

[157] Wealden Landscape & Settlement Character Assessment, CBA (2014)



KEY

- Urban Trees
- Woodland
- Shaws
- Ancient Woodland

NB. See Figure 4.4a for Tree Preservation Orders

N

0 300 600 Metres

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FIGURE 4.4d
HEATHFIELD:
TREES & WOODLAND

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- **Footpaths/Bridleways:** A network of footpaths and bridleways connects Heathfield to its landscape setting. Connecting with the southern edge of the town, the Cuckoo trail provides a key recreational/tourist route.

4.4.7 The key characteristics of the Landscape Setting Areas around Heathfield[158] (see **Figure 4.4e**) are:

Landscape Setting Area	Distinctive Characteristics
1	• A small-scale patchwork of sloping, ancient pastoral fields and Ancient Woodland; • Key, panoramic long distance views northwards across the High Weald.
2	• The historic landscape of Heathfield Park with its mature Ancient Woodland and stream corridor at the centre of the area.
3	• An intricate patchwork of stream corridors, mature hedgerows, sunken lanes, Ancient Woodland, criss-crossed by a network of footpaths and bridleways.
4	• Numerous farmsteads and studs • Large areas of Ancient Woodland provide a strong sense of enclosure.
5	• North-south landscape pattern, including features such as stream corridors, Ancient Woodland, linear settlements and footpaths.
6	• A strong sense of enclosure as a result of large patches of Ancient Woodland and stream corridors.

4.4.8 In addition, key historic environment assets that also contribute to the character of the town include (see **Figure 4.4f**):

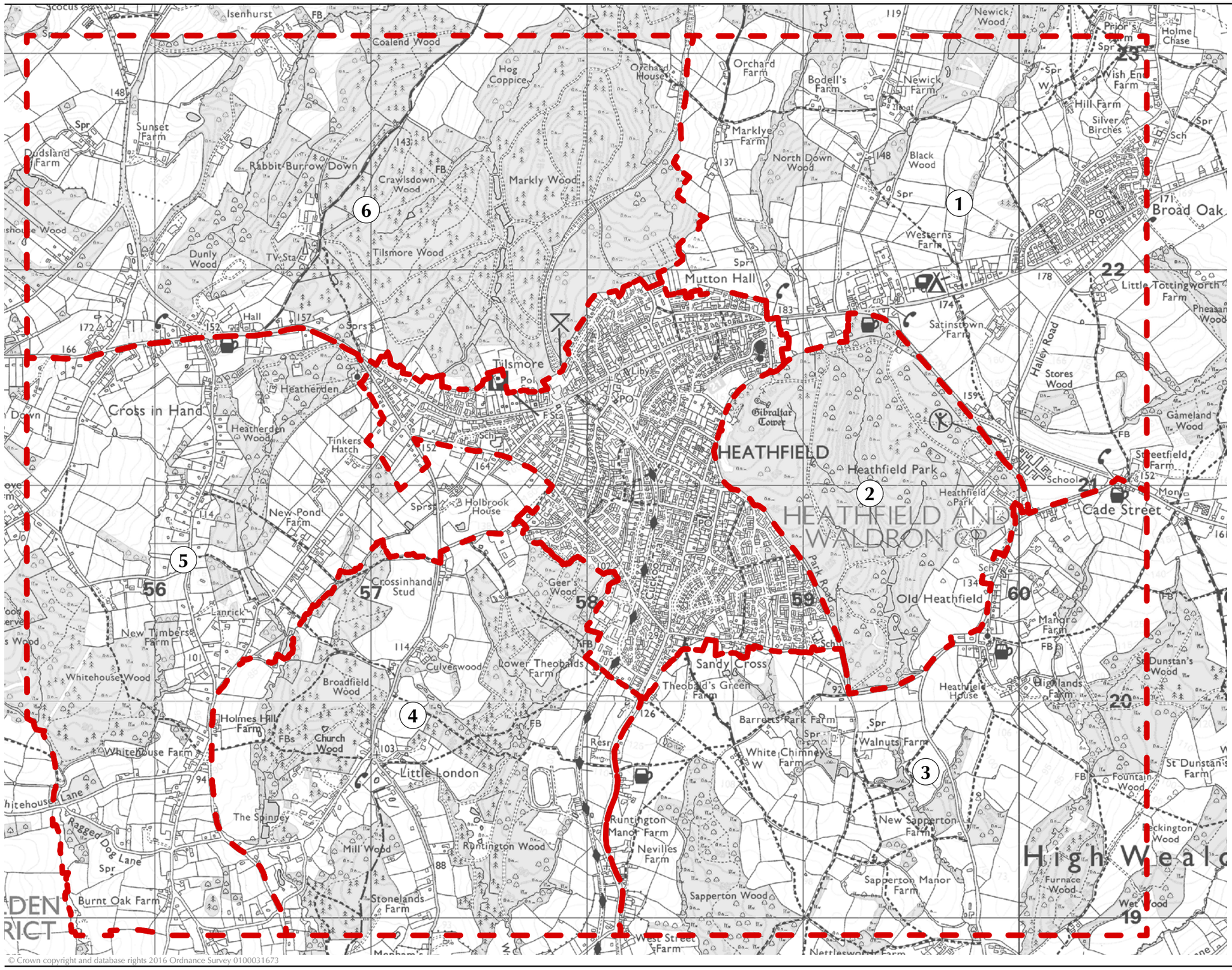
- 1 Registered Historic Park and Garden: Grade II Listed Heathfield Park.
- 1 Conservation Area including Old Heathfield and Cade Street Conservation Area.

Energy & Food

4.4.9 There are no known areas of coppiced woodlands around Heathfield. However the woodlands present could, with appropriate and sensitive management represent a potential source of local fuel.

4.4.10 As shown on **Figure 2.4**, the quality of agricultural land around the town is almost entirely Grade 4 (poor).

[158] Wealden Landscape & Settlement Character Assessment, CBA (2014)



KEY

Landscape Setting Areas (Wealden Landscape and Settlement Character Assessment, 2014):

1 Heathfield Landscape Setting Areas

N

0 300 600 Metres

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FIGURE 4.4e
HEATHFIELD:
LANDSCAPE SETTING AREAS

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KEY

- Registered Historic Park and Garden
- Scheduled Monuments
- Conservation Areas
- Listed Buildings

N

0 300 600 Metres

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FIGURE 4.4f
HEATHFIELD:
HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT

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Water Resources

4.4.11 Waldron Gill, the River Dudwell and tributaries of the River Cuckmere flow through the town. The River Rother is a major watercourse to the north of the town.

4.4.12 **Table 4.3** shows the condition of watercourses within or close to Heathfield. In terms of chemical status the vast majority of watercourses are in 'good' condition. Ecologically most watercourses within or close to Heathfield are in 'poor to moderate' condition.

Table 4.3: Water Quality around Heathfield[159]

Catchment	Water Quality						
	Ecological Status or Potential					Chemical Status	
	Bad	Poor	Moderate	Good	High	Fail	Good
Upper Rother Number of waterbodies: 6	0	3	2	1	0	0	6
Upper Cuckmere Number of waterbodies: 7	0	2	4	1	0	1	6

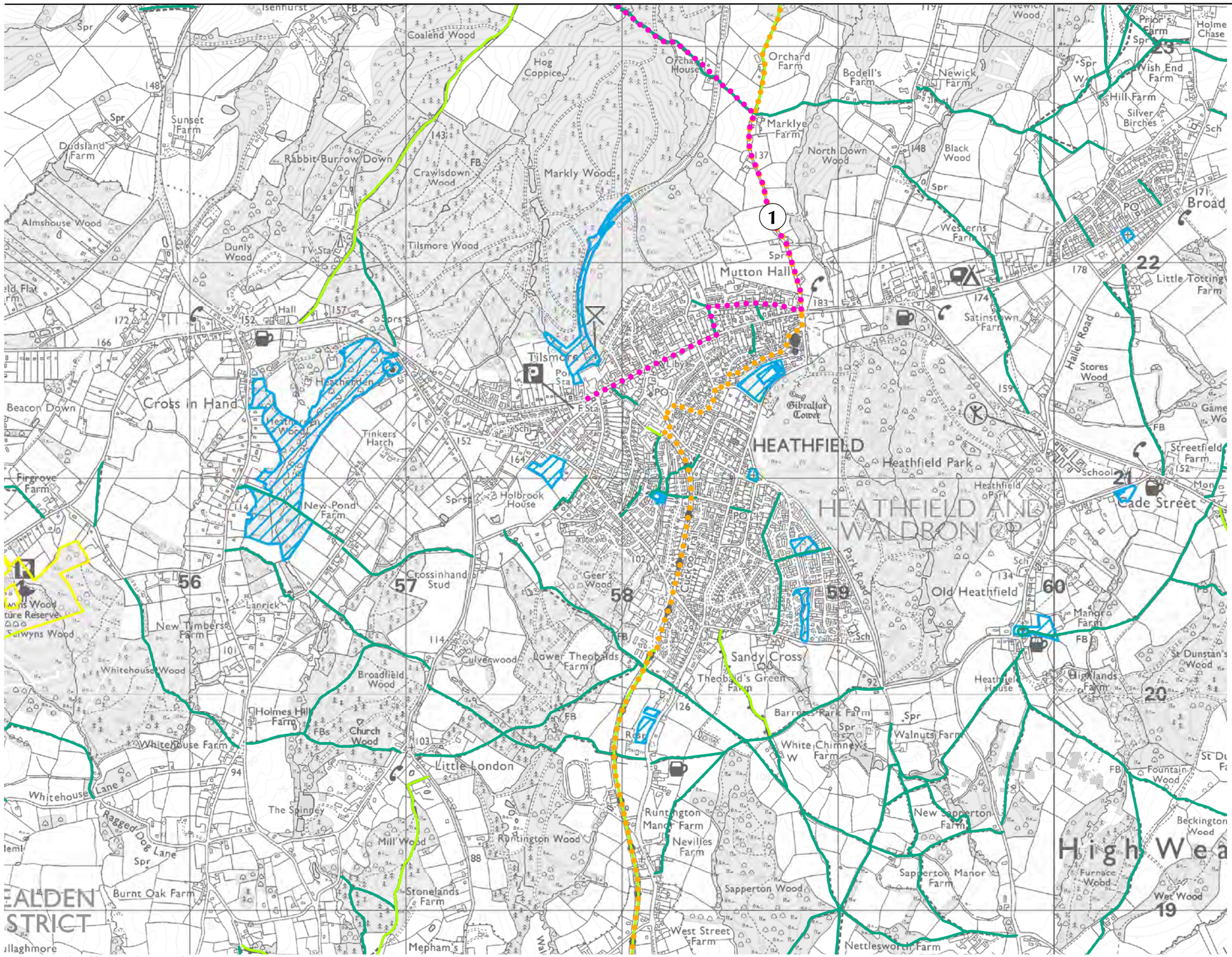
Accessible Natural Greenspace & Access Links

4.4.13 Accessible natural greenspace sites in and around Heathfield are shown on **Figure 4.4g**. This shows that there are limited accessible greenspace sites within easy reach of the settlement. Two sites to the north and north-west of Heathfield provide key accessible greenspace within close proximity. Whilst not a publically accessible natural greenspace, Heathfield Park (a SSSI and Registered Historic Park and Garden) makes an important contribution to the town's GI network by providing biodiversity, landscape and historic environment benefits.

4.4.14 Within Heathfield accessible greenspace is fairly evenly distributed throughout the urban area. The Cuckoo Trail, a National Cycle Route and multi-user trail runs through the centre of the town providing a key link for people and wildlife. Many of the sites within Heathfield however are small, and therefore they do not contribute to the town's neighbourhood scale of provision for accessible natural greenspace as shown on **Figure 4.4h.** Communities within Heathfield have limited access to larger accessible natural greenspace at the county and sub-regional scales. Open spaces in and around the town are shown on **Figure 4.4i** and comprise[160]:

- 1 No. allotments (Theobalds Allotments)

[159] http://environment.data.gov.uk/catchment-planning /
[160] As identified and mapped for the Wealden Open Space, Sport and Recreation Study (Ethos for Wealden DC, forthcoming)



KEY

Access Links:

- Footpath
- Bridleway/Byway
- Sustrans National Cycle Route
- Promoted Route
- 1. Sussex Diamond Way
- National Trail

Accessible Natural Greenspace:

- Wealden Open Space, Sport and Recreation Study (2016)*
- CRoW Act 2000 Open Access Land
- Country Parks
- Local Nature Reserves and Sussex Wildlife Trust Reserves
- Accessible Woodland Trust Sites

*Includes: Accessible Natural Greenspace, Allotments, Amentity Greenspace, Churchyards and Cemeteries, Parks and Recreation Grounds

N

0 300 600 Metres

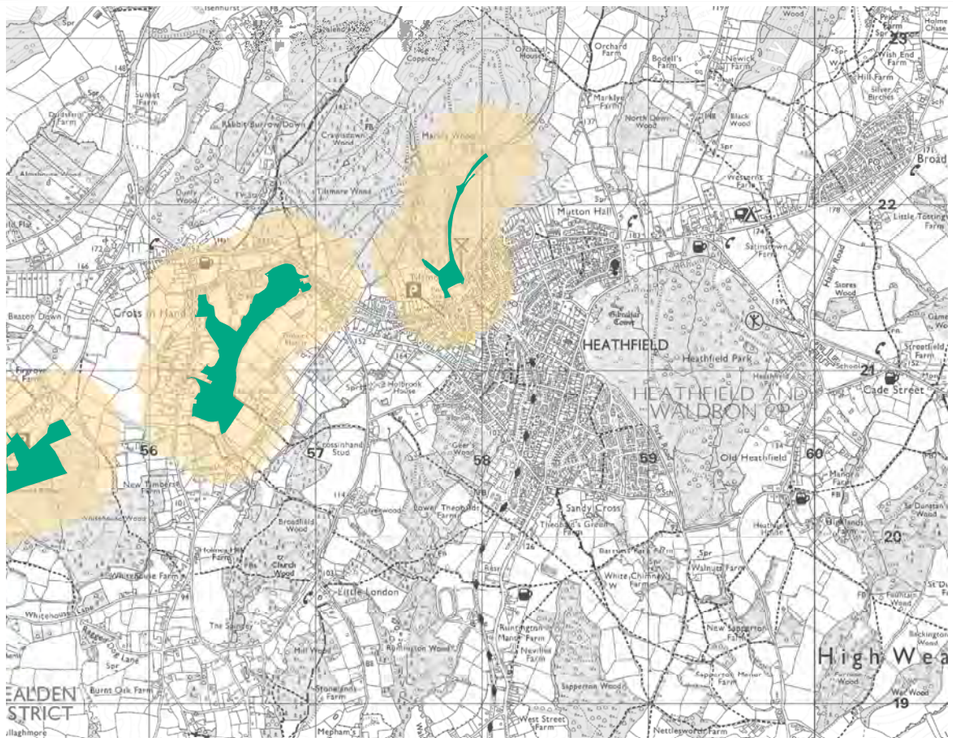
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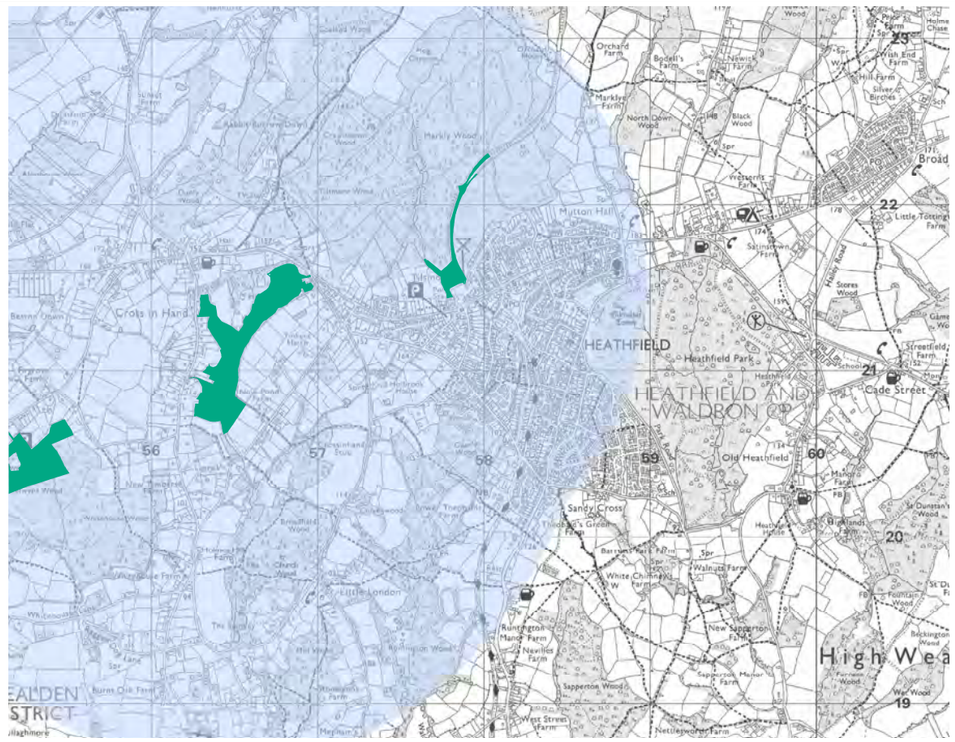
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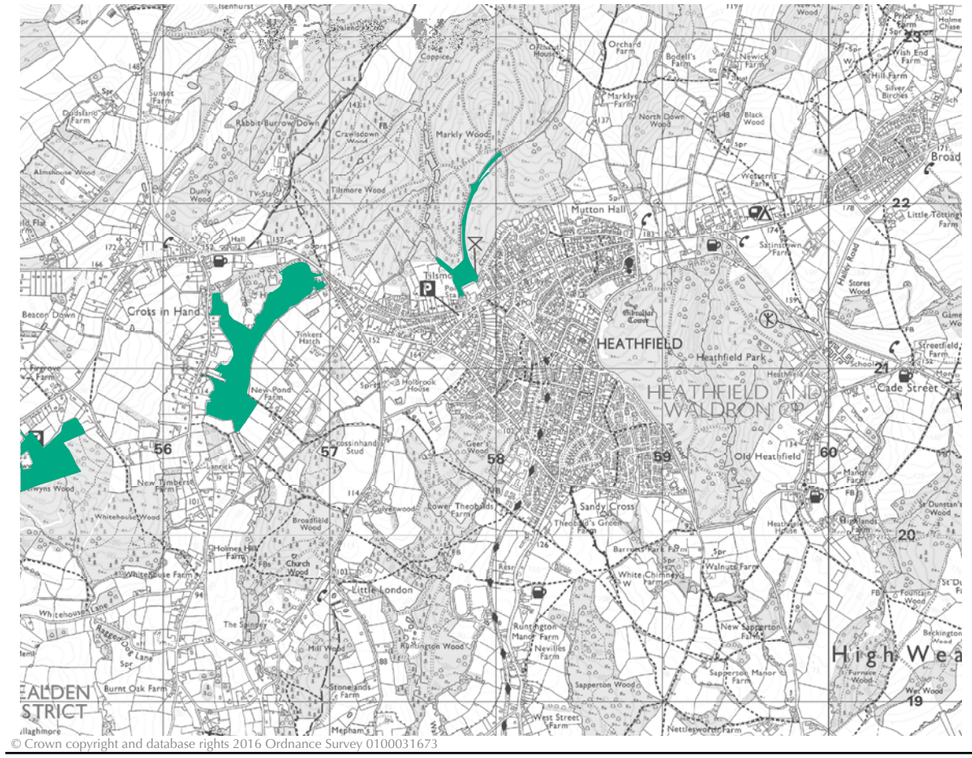
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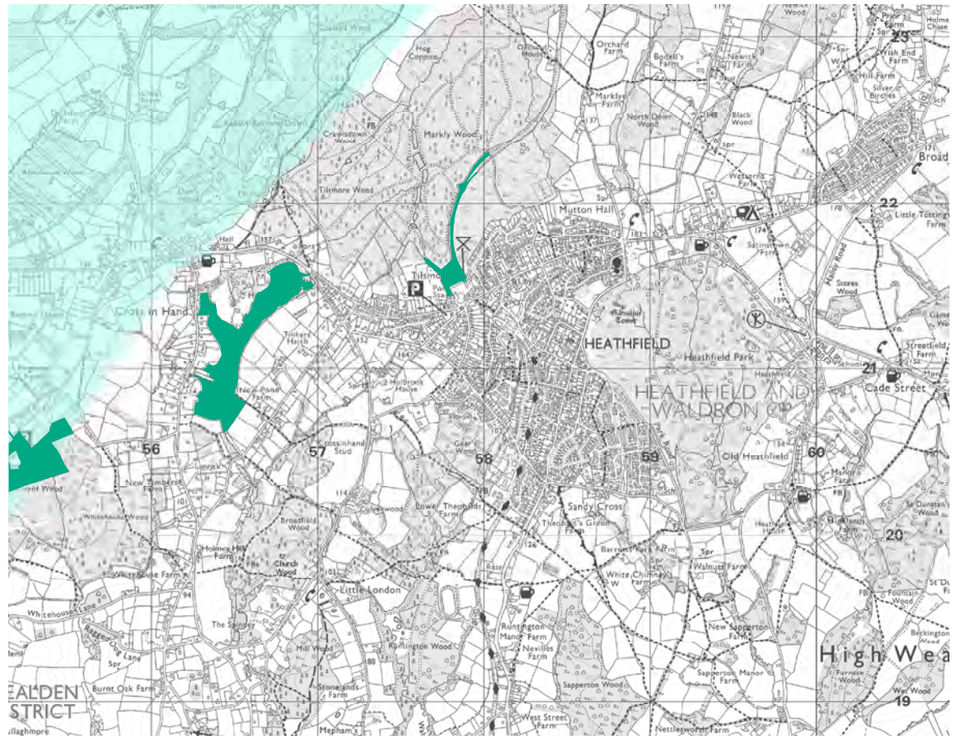
FIGURE 4.4g
HEATHFIELD:
ACCESS LINKS & ACCESSIBLE NATURAL GREENSPACE

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KEY

- Accessible Natural Greenspace >2ha
- 10km catchment - all accessible natural greenspace >500ha
- 5km catchment - all accessible natural greenspace >100ha
- 2km catchment - all accessible natural greenspace >20ha
- 300m catchment - all accessible natural greenspace >2ha

N

0 0.5 1 Kilometre

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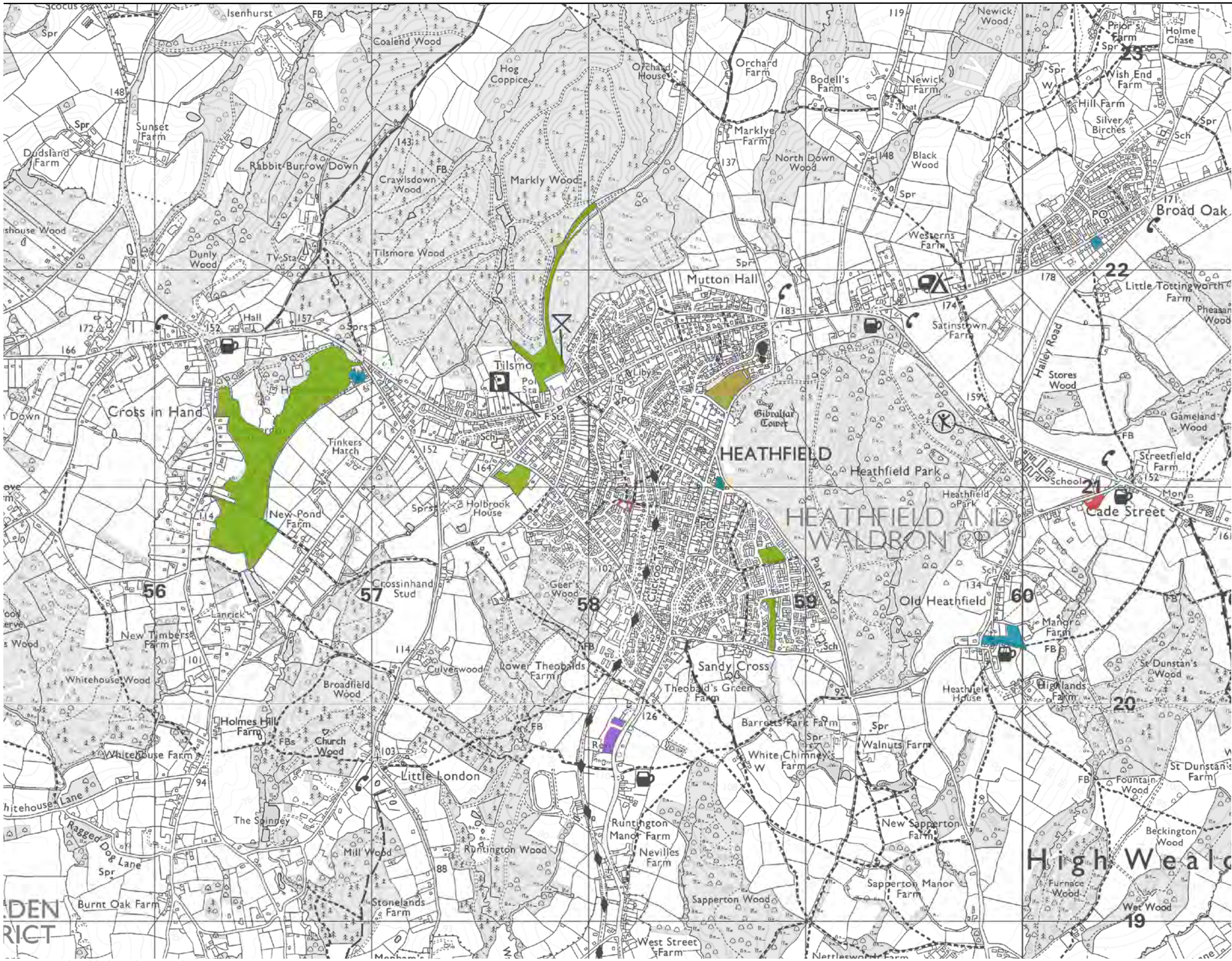
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FIGURE 4.4h
HEATHFIELD:
ACCESSIBLE NATURAL GREENSPACE ANALYSIS

April 2017

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KEY

Open Space Typology:

- Accessible Natural Greenspace
- Allotments
- Amenity Greenspace
- Churchyards & Cemeteries
- Parks and Recreation Grounds

N

0 300 600 Metres

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FIGURE 4.4i
HEATHFIELD:
OPEN SPACE TYPOLOGY

April 2017

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- 2 No. amenity greenspaces (such as Cade Street Recreation Ground and Leeves Way)
- 4 No. churchyards and cemeteries (such as St Georges Church, Broad Oak, and St. Richard's Church, Heathfield)
- 2 No. parks and recreation grounds (such as Heathfield Recreation Ground)

4.4.15 As shown on **Figure 4.4g**, Heathfield is connected to the surrounding landscape by the following access links that need to be maintained and improved where appropriate:

- Public footpaths between Heathfield and the key small settlements such as Little London.
- Public bridleways to and from the Cuckoo Trail (NCN 21) into the wider countryside around Heathfield.
- Public footpaths from the Sussex Diamond Way through Heathfield towards the south.
- National Cycle Network Route 21 (the Cuckoo Trail) through the centre of Heathfield.

Needs and Opportunities

4.4.16 The GI assets that make a significant contribution to the GI network in and around Heathfield include a range of biodiversity, landscape and historic environment features; the farmland, woodland and allotments that provide local sources of energy and food; the 'blue infrastructure' provided by water resources that support a healthy environment; and the accessible natural greenspaces and access links that contribute to health and well-being. In summary, the key needs and opportunities for the provision of GI in and round the town are considered to be:

- Where appropriate, promote opportunities for retaining and enhancing existing wildlife habitats, and/or creating new habitats, related to residential development sites in the BOA around Heathfield (see the Wealden Local Plan Sites Landscape and Ecological Assessment Studies [161] for details).
- Suburban areas to the south of Heathfield town centre lack a strong local identity and character, and there may also be scope to improve the existing urban edges through the provision of appropriate landscape treatment in association with GI delivered through new development to enhance and conserve the surrounding AONB landscape.
- Where appropriate, promote opportunities for landscape enhancements related to residential development sites around Heathfield (see the Wealden Local Plan Sites Landscape and Ecological Assessment[162] for details).

[161] Wealden Local Plan Sites Landscape and Ecological Assessment (CBA for Wealden DC, 2017)
[162] Wealden Local Plan Sites Landscape and Ecological Assessment (CBA for Wealden DC, 2017)

- Seek opportunities to formally safeguard the trees along the Cuckoo Trail to protect it as a multifunctional green corridor through the centre of Heathfield and as a valuable resource for people and wildlife.
- Explore opportunities to enhance access for horse riders by providing improved links between the countryside and the Cuckoo Trail, particularly to the south of Heathfield.
- Where appropriate seek the creation of new accessible greenspace (of at least 2ha), close to where people live to address deficiencies.
- Where appropriate address degraded or poor condition landscapes around the fringes of Heathfield through restoration and enhancement of characteristic landscape features, for example through removing non-native species from woodlands for the benefit of biodiversity and to maintain landscape character.
- Where appropriate to do so, promote and encourage the use of best practice innovative architectural and planning solutions that take inspiration from local distinctiveness and character.
- Where appropriate improve water quality and local flood risk management through the use of SuDS, green roofs and rain gardens for example within new housing developments.
- Explore opportunities to promote gardening for wildlife and growing food within existing and new residential areas.

4.5 Hailsham & Polegate

Overview

4.5.1 As shown on **Figure 4.5a**, Hailsham is situated approximately three miles to the north of Polegate, in the central southern part of Wealden District. It is the largest settlement in the southern half of the District and is situated between the middle reaches of the River Cuckmere to the west and the Pevensey Levels to the east. The extensive Wilmington Wood abuts the south-western edge of the town.

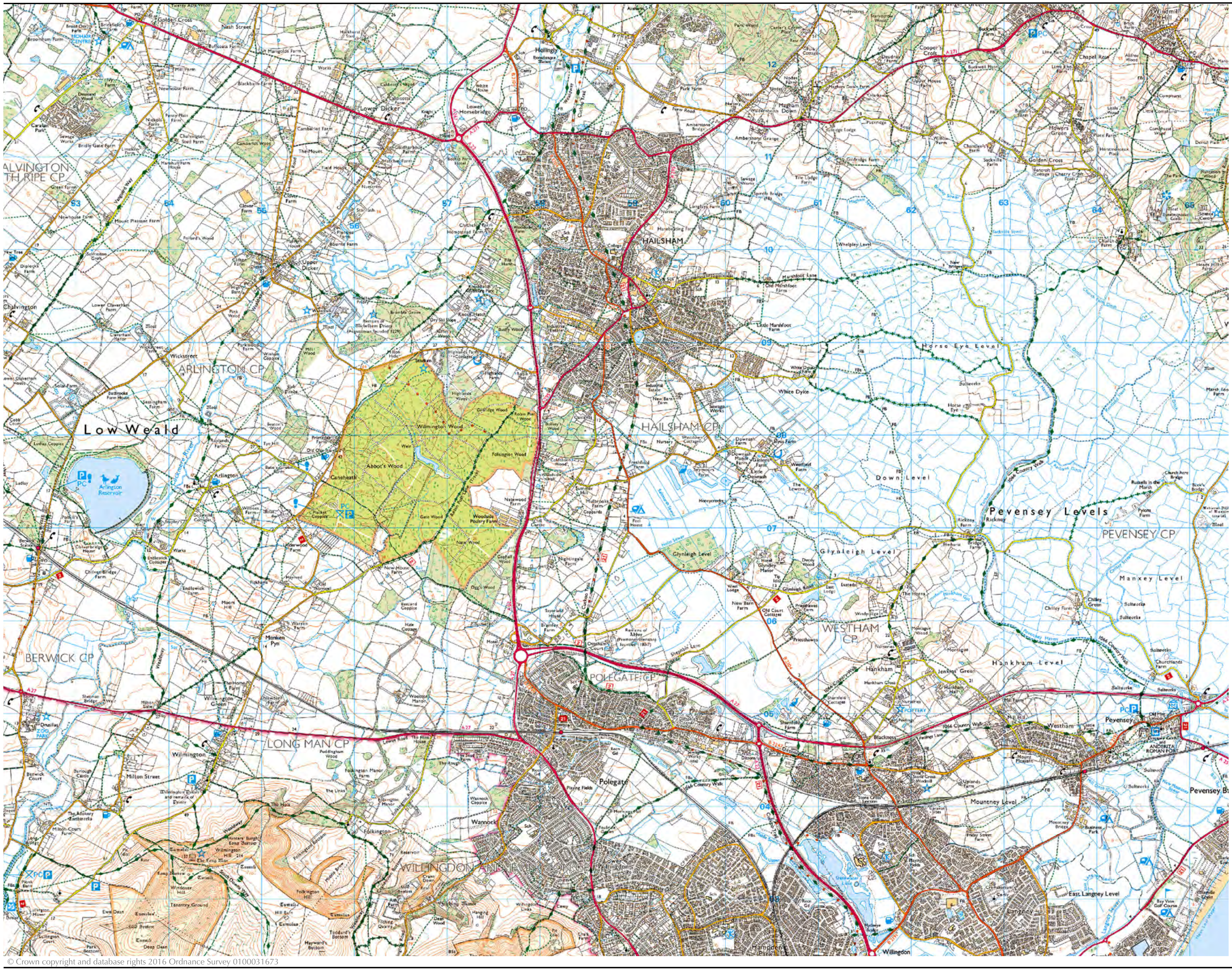
4.5.2 Hailsham is a large nucleated settlement, which has grown around several north-south orientated road corridors. It has been an established market town since 1252 and still retains its historic core around the market square and St Mary's Church. The town has experienced considerable growth during this century, with significant residential estate development occurring in the Post-War years. More recently, house building has taken place on the western and southern edges of the town.

4.5.3 Shops are concentrated within the town centre and also at The Quintins and St Mary's Walk. A variety of shops, offices and other businesses provide facilities for the town. The majority of the town's business activity is contained within two business areas at Diplocks Way and Station Road. A number of smaller, light industrial units are also located at Old Swan Lane and Leap Cross Business Centre on London Road. There are few large areas of recreational open space or playing fields within the town.

4.5.4 As shown on **Figure 4.5a**, Polegate is situated at the south-eastern edge of Wealden District, to the north of Willingdon/Eastbourne and south of Hailsham. The south-western edges of the settlement abut the northern edge of the South Downs National Park. The town is situated on an east-west ridge.

4.5.5 Polegate is a medium-sized linear town, which has developed along the Lewes to Hastings railway line and the A27 main road corridor. The A22 road corridor also passes north to south through the town. The town comprises a series of post-war housing estates, with a High Street shopping area running through the centre of the town. In the east of the town, Chaucer Industrial Estate provides a key employment base. There is some formal recreational use of the large tract of open, relatively low-lying fields between Polegate and Willingdon at the eastern edge of the town; however this area is predominantly agricultural.

KEY



N

0 0.5 1 Kilometre

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FIGURE 4.5a
HAILSHAM & POLEGATE:
CONTEXT PLAN

April 2017

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Audit

Biodiversity

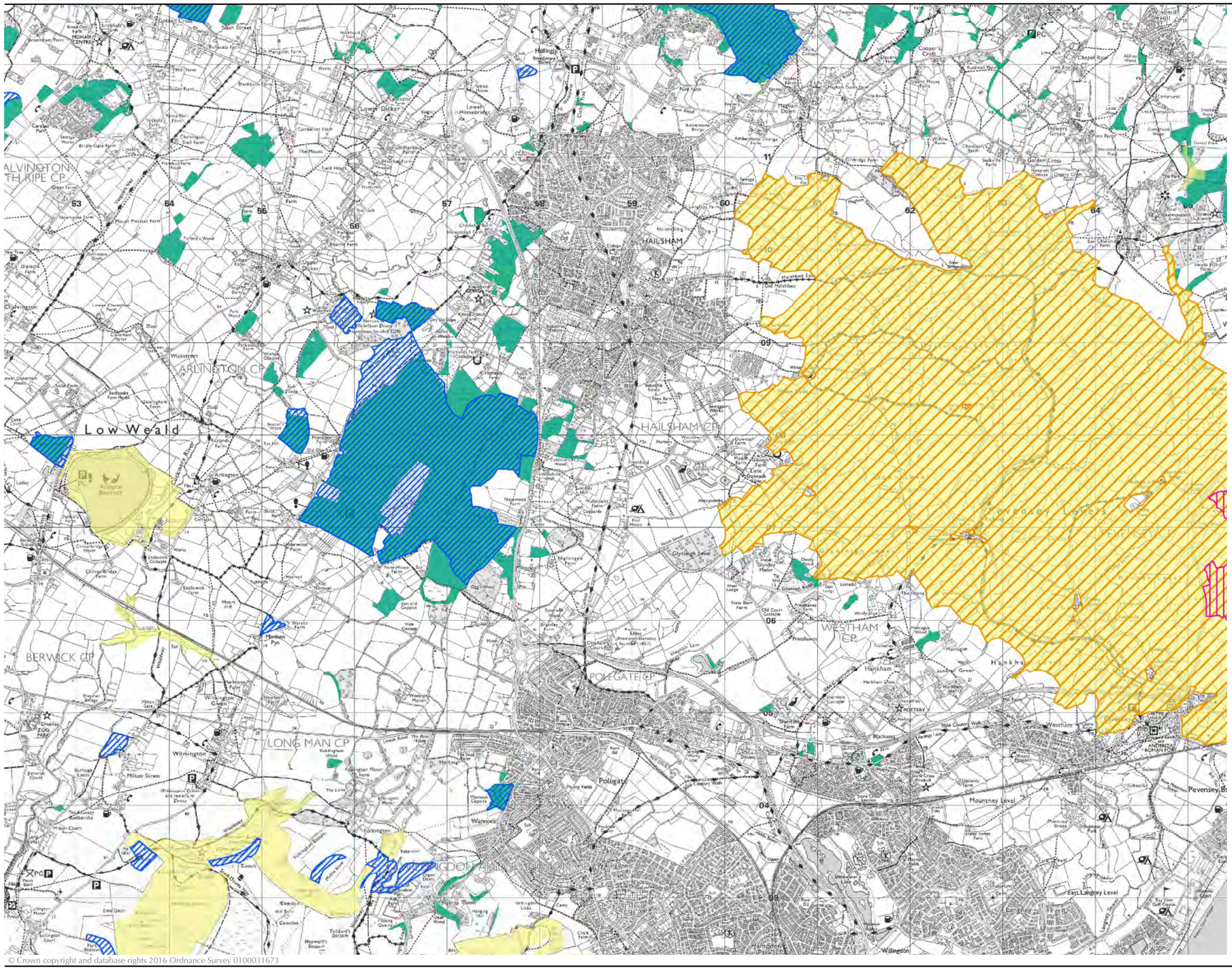
4.5.6 The following designated biodiversity and geodiversity sites are found around Hailsham & Polegate (see **Figure 4.5b**):

- Hellingly Cemetery LWS
- Jarvis Wood, Nobody's Wood & Park Wood Complex LWS
- Michelham Priory LWS
- Beatons Wood LWS
- Abbots & Wilmington Wood & Milton Hide LWS
- Bramble Grove LWS
- Diplocks Wood LWS
- Cranedown & Middle Brow LWS
- Pevensey Levels SAC, Ramsar site, NNR and SSSI
- Wilmington Downs SSSI
- Folkington Reservoir SSSI

4.5.7 The condition of the Pevensey Levels SAC, Ramsar site, NNR and SSSI is 'poor' but improving[163]. The condition of the Wilmington Downs SSSI is 100% in a favourable or unfavourable but recovering condition[164]. The condition of the Folkington Reservoir SSSI is 100% in a favourable or unfavourable but recovering condition [165].

4.5.8 As shown on **Figure 4.5c**, wildlife habitats around Hailsham & Polegate are dominated by deciduous and mixed and coniferous woodland to the west and significant areas of floodplain grazing marsh to the east. Freshwater habitats include numerous ponds in Hailsham and small tributary streams/ditches in and around Polegate. Ponds, lakes and watercourses (streams and ditches) are common close to both Hailsham and Polegate. As shown on **Figure 4.5d** there are a large number of individual trees and tree groups associated with amenity spaces and streets within the urban area, many of which are protected by Tree Preservation Orders (see **Figure 4.5c)**, particularly located along the western part of Hailsham and around the edges of Polegate.

[163] https://designatedsites.naturalengland.org.uk/SiteSearch.aspx accessed April 2017
[164] https://designatedsites.naturalengland.org.uk/SiteSearch.aspx accessed April 2017
[165] https://designatedsites.naturalengland.org.uk/SiteSearch.aspx accessed April 2017



KEY

Designations:

- Special Protection Area/Special Area of Conservation/Ramsar
- Site of Special Scientific Interest
- National Nature Reserve
- Local Wildlife Sites
- Ancient Woodland
- Regionally Important Geological Sites

N

0 0.5 1 Kilometre

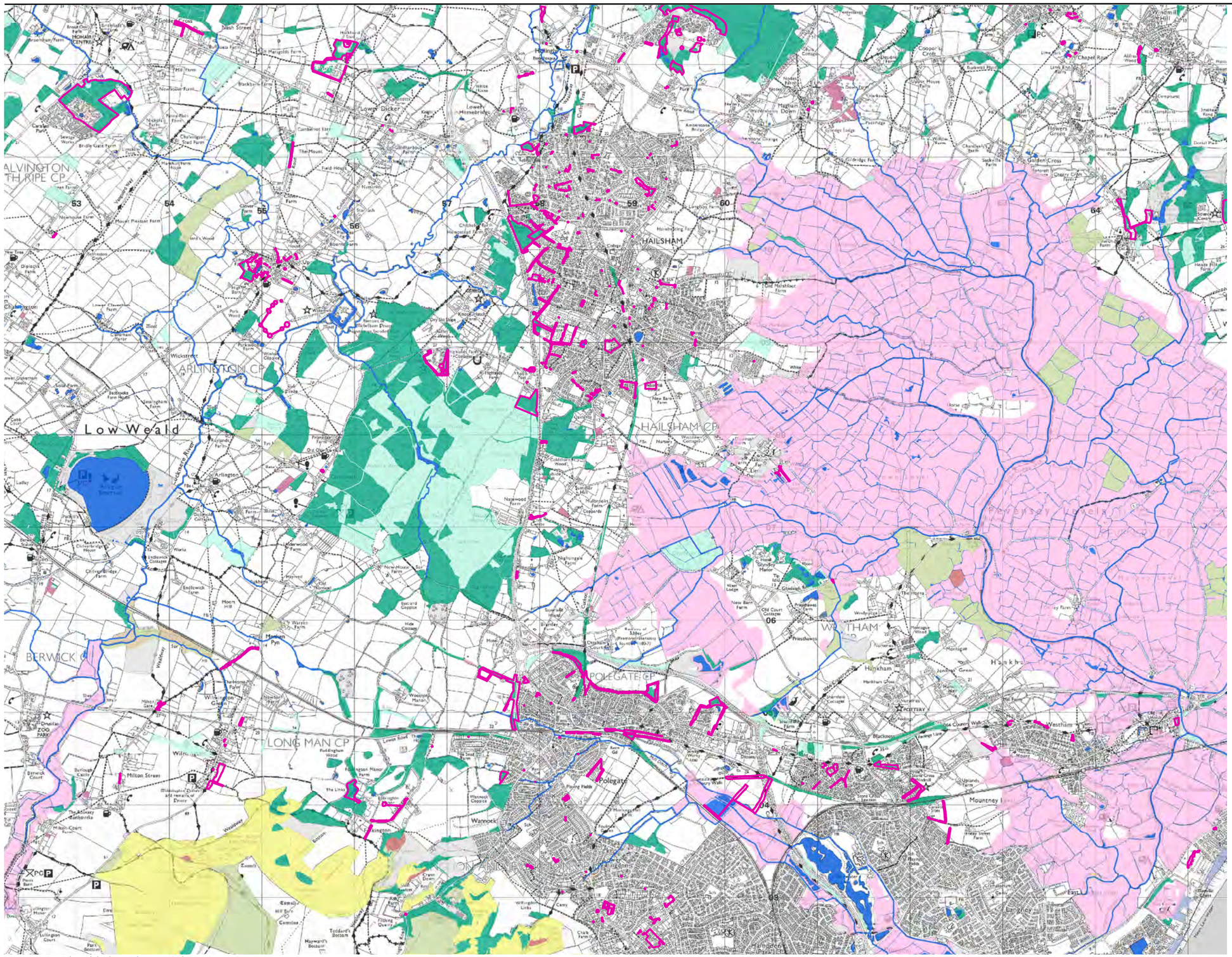
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FIGURE 4.5b
HAILSHAM & POLEGATE:
DESIGNATED BIODIVERSITY & GEODIVERSITY SITES

April 2017



KEY

Main BAP Priority Habitats:

- Coastal and Floodplain Grazing Marsh
- Coastal Saltmarsh
- Coastal Vegetated Shingle
- Deciduous Woodland
- Good Quality Semi-improved Grassland
- Lowland Calcareous Grassland
- Lowland Dry Acid Grassland
- Lowland Fens
- Lowland Heathland
- Lowland Meadows
- Maritime Cliff and Slope
- Mudflats
- Purple Moor Grass and Rush Pastures
- Reedbeds
- Saline Lagoons
- Traditional Orchard
- No Main Habitat but Additional Habitats Present

Mixed and Coniferous Woodland Habitats (National Forest Inventory)

Freshwater Habitats (Main Watercourses & Waterbodies)

Tree Preservation Orders

N

0 0.5 1 Kilometre

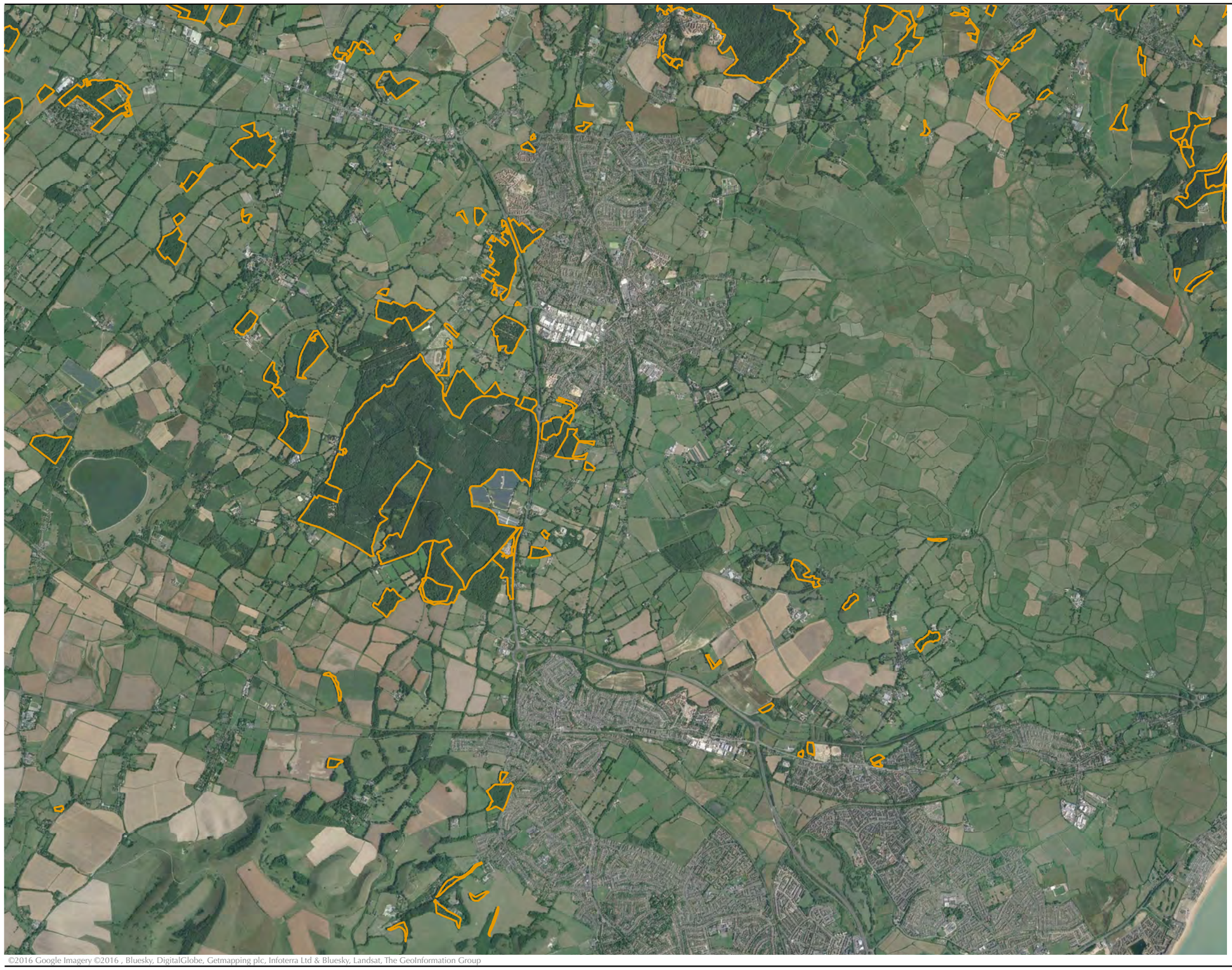
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FIGURE 4.5c
HAILSHAM & POLEGATE:
WILDLIFE HABITATS

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KEY

- Urban Trees
- Woodland
- Shaws
- Ancient Woodland

NB. See Figure 4.5a for Tree Preservation Orders

N

0 0.5 1 Kilometre

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FIGURE 4.5d
HAILSHAM & POLEGATE:
TREES & WOODLAND

April 2017

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4.5.9 The key landscape setting/townscape features and characteristics that contribute to the character of Hailsham and are sensitive to change are summarised below[166]:

- **Remnant Historic Landscapes:** A patchwork of small-scale historic fields surrounds the settlement, often abutting the settlement edge. These are interspersed with large areas of Ancient Woodland, at the south-western edge of the town. The un-wooded ancient landscapes to the west of the settlement are cohesive and aggregate assarts. To the north are scattered areas of regular and irregular piecemeal enclosure, and to the east, regular piecemeal enclosure and consolidated strip fields. Further to the east and south east (within the levels landscape), is a landscape of brooks innings and saltmarsh innings.
- **Culturally Important Landmarks:** Horselunges Manor complex, to the north of the settlement is a key Culturally Important Landmark, as is Michelham Priory, at some distance from the western edge of Hailsham.
- **Landscape detractors** include large industrial and commercial buildings to the south of the town, sewage works to the east of the town and a Chalet Park also at the eastern edge of the town.
- **Urban Edges:** The town is predominantly lined by treed, sensitive edges and woodland, with a few pockets of exposed or prominent urban edges along the northern edges of the town, often associated with new or partially complete new development sites.
- **Watercourses/Waterbodies:** The valley of the River Cuckmere is a key landscape feature, running to the north and west of the town. Several smaller tributaries (and associated ponds) feed this main river system. To the east of the settlement, the vast expanse of Pevensey Levels, with its associated drainage ditches is a key feature.
- **Significant Views/Key Ridgelines:** Key views southwards from the town are dominated by the backdrop of Wilmington Wood.
- **Footpaths/Bridleways:** A network of footpaths and bridleways connects Hailsham to its landscape setting, including the Cuckoo Trail.

[166] Wealden Landscape & Settlement Character Assessment, CBA (2014)

4.5.10 The key characteristics of the Landscape Setting Areas around Hailsham & Polegate[167] (see **Figure 4.5e**) are:

Hailsham

Landscape Setting Area	Distinctive Characteristics
1	• A small-scale patchwork of arable and pastoral, ancient fields which are interspersed with small patches of woodland (much of which is ancient). • A strong landscape structure, resulting from the network of mature hedgerows and trees (often lining road corridors).
2	• A small-scale patchwork of arable and pastoral fields which are often lined with mature hedgerows; • Open views eastwards across the Open Levels contribute to recognisable sense of place. • West-east orientated stream corridors that feed the Levels to the east.
3	• A small scale patchwork of predominantly pastoral fields, with stronger historic continuity in terms of field pattern in the north than in the south. • Open views eastwards across the Open Levels contribute to recognisable sense of place.
4	• A caravan park in the east, which is considered to be a landscape detractor. • West-east stream corridor, which is lined in places by mature trees and vegetation. • Open views southwards across the Open Levels contribute to recognisable sense of place.
5	• Several isolated farmsteads and houses; • A patchwork of predominantly pastoral fields with an ancient field pattern; • Open views southwards across the Open Levels contribute to recognisable sense of place.
6	• Small to medium-scale pockets of ancient and more recent, predominantly pastoral fields. • Several narrow rural road corridors.
7	• Strong sense of enclosure as a result of the several large areas of woodland • Numerous stream corridors run through the woodland.
8	• A small-scale, ancient landscape of arable and pastoral fields which are lined with a mature network of hedgerows. In the northwest of the area, ancient strip fields are a feature. • The Knockhatch adventure farm and several other farmsteads are dotted across the landscape.
9	• Gently meandering corridor of the River Cuckmere, which is lined with a patchwork of predominantly pastoral, ancient fields; • A22 road corridor crosses the northern part of the area, introducing a source of noise and movement.

[167] Wealden Landscape & Settlement Character Assessment, CBA (2014)

KEY

Landscape Setting Areas (Wealden Landscape and Settlement Character Assessment, 2014):

1 Hailsham Landscape Setting Areas

1 Polegate Landscape Setting Areas

N

0 0.5 1 Kilometre

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FIGURE 4.5e
HAILSHAM & POLEGATE:
LANDSCAPE SETTING AREAS

April 2017

Polegate

Landscape Setting Area	Distinctive Characteristics
1	• A small-scale patchwork of ancient fields of drained alluvial grazing marsh, lined with reed-fringed ditches; • A strong sense of openness throughout. • Urban fringe land uses (including roadside services and a hotel) associated with the A27 main road corridor which reduces overall sense of remoteness and tranquillity.
2	• Large-scale, drained fields of alluvial grazing marsh; • Reed-fringed drainage ditches; • A series of minor, rural road corridors.
3	• Playing fields and recreation grounds at the settlement edges in the west, with mature trees; • Predominantly pastoral fields, lined with occasional hedgerows.
4	• An intricate landscape pattern of spurs and slopes which form the eastern edge of the South Downs (National Park) and facilitate open views across the settlement and adjacent landscapes; • This area also includes a series of ridges at the top of the slopes. • Patches of Ancient Woodland provide an intermittent sense of enclosure.
5	• A small-scale, ancient patchwork of drained grazing marshes, with reed-fringed ditches at field boundaries.

4.5.11 The key landscape setting/townscape features and characteristics that contribute to the character of Polegate and are sensitive to change are summarised below:

- **Remnant Historic Landscapes:** Pockets of small-scale historic fields, comprising cohesive assart and regular piecemeal enclosure to the northwest, and brooks innings with some regular piecemeal enclosure and consolidated strip fields to the southeast of the town; and the ancient landscape complex of a Premonstratensian Abbey (founded in 1180) to the east of Ottenham Court and north of Polegate. Also of historic interest is an area of prehistoric earthworks on the ridge to the southwest of the town.
- **Culturally Important Landmarks:** Two Culturally Important Landmarks within the setting of the town – the remains of a Premonstratensian Abbey to the north of the town, and Filching Manor at some distance to the south of Polegate and Willingdon; and several landmark churches within the urban fabric.
- **Landscape Detractors:** Several landscape detractors, including industrial buildings to the south of the B2247 at the eastern edge of Polegate and the Motel and services at the large roundabout junction between the A22 and A27 main road corridors at the north-western edge of the town.
- **Urban Edges:** The town is predominantly lined by sensitive, soft, treed/hedged edges, however there are pockets of prominent, harsher urban edges at the eastern edge of the Industrial Area (as above) and along Hyperion Avenue and Sunstar Lane at the western edge of the town.

- **Significant Views/Key Ridgelines:** At the northern and eastern edges of the town, open views north, south and east across a landscape setting of open levels are characteristic. Vice versa, there are several key views to the settlement edge from the Levels. Views southwards from several parts of the settlement are dominated by the steep rising scarp slopes of the South Downs ridge to the southwest of the town. Polegate can also be viewed within the foreground of views from the edges of the South Downs scarp slopes, resulting in high inter-visibility between the town and the South Downs National Park. A ridgeline runs east west through the town.
- **Footpaths/Bridleways:** A network of footpaths and bridleways connects Polegate to its landscape setting. The 1066 Country Walk runs to the south of the town, connecting the settlement within the Levels and settlements to the east and the South Downs to the west. The Cuckoo Trail also joins the northern edge of the town, connecting Polegate with Hailsham and Heathfield to the north.

4.5.12 In addition, key historic environment assets that also contribute to the character of the town include (see **Figure 4.5f**):

- 1 Registered Historic Park and Garden: Grade II Listed Wootton Manor
- 3 Conservation Areas including: Hellingly, Halisham, and Church Street, Willingdon

Energy & Food

4.5.13 There are no known coppiced woodlands around Hailsham & Polegate that represent a potential source of local fuel.

4.5.14 As shown on **Figure 2.4**, the quality of agricultural land around the town is mainly Grade 3 (good to moderate).

Water Resources

4.5.15 The Cuckmere River flows around the northern edge of Hailsham and the Pevensey Haven is a major water body to the east of the towns. Smaller water bodies which run through the towns include Puckeridge Stream, Hurst Haven, Drockmill Hill Gut, Wannock Mill Stream, Shinewater Lake, New Stream Ditch and Mill Ditch. Whelpley Sewer, Horse Eye Sewer, Holm Sewer, Glynleigh Sewer, Saltmarsh Sewer, Willingdon Sewer, Willingdon and West Langney Sewer also run through the towns.

KEY

- Registered Historic Park and Garden
- Scheduled Monuments
- Conservation Areas
- Listed Buildings

N

0 0.5 1 Kilometre

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FIGURE 4.5f
HAILSHAM & POLEGATE:
HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT

April 2017

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4.5.16 **Table 4.4** below shows the quality of watercourses within or close to Hailsham and Polegate. The majority of watercourses are in good condition for their chemical status. Ecologically most watercourses are in moderate to poor condition.

Table 4.4: Water Quality around Hailsham and Polegate[168]

Catchment	Water Quality						
	Ecological Status or Potential					Chemical Status	
	Bad	Poor	Moderate	Good	High	Fail	Good
Upper Cuckmere Number of waterbodies: 7	0	2	4	1	0	1	6

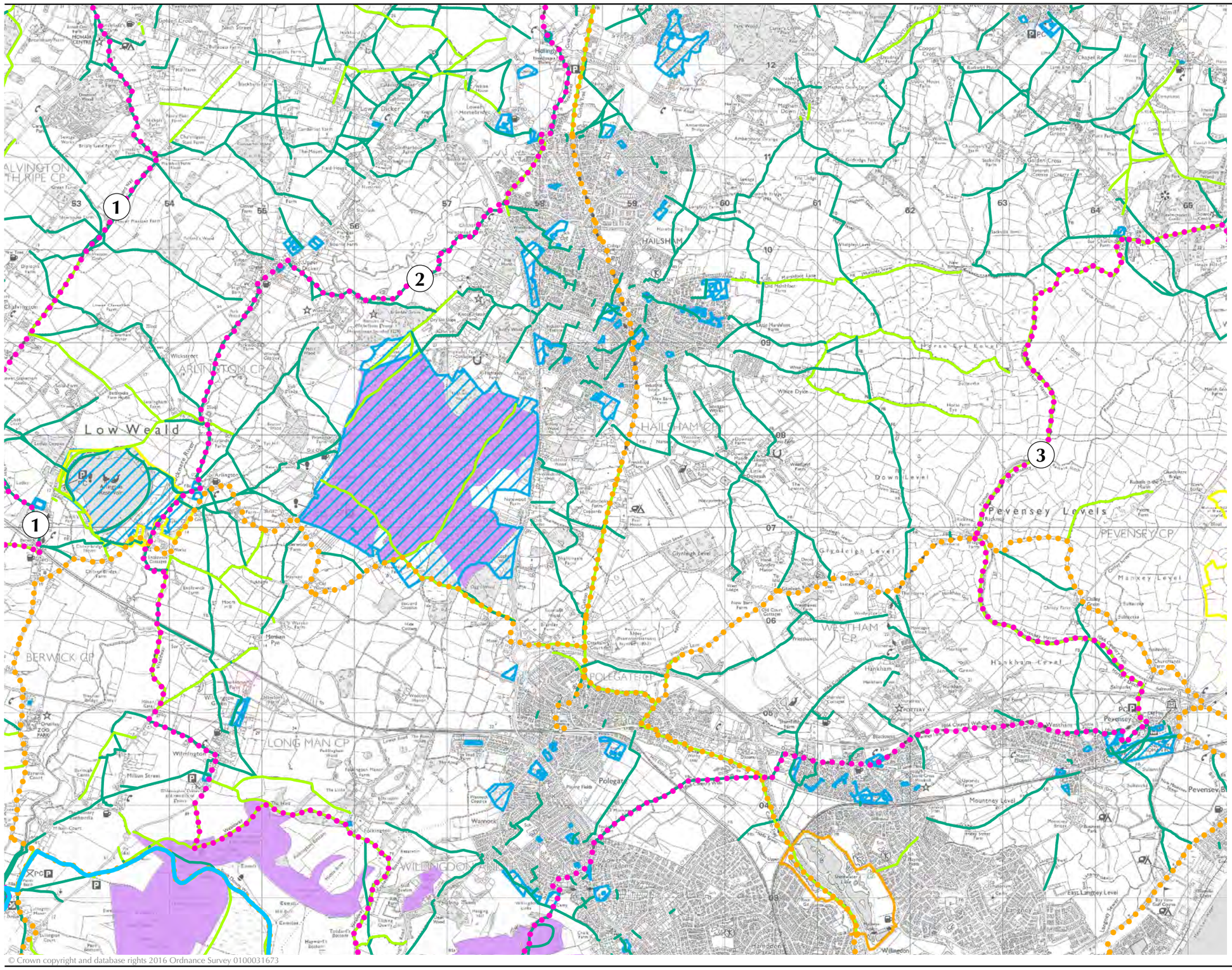
Accessible Natural Greenspace & Access Links

4.5.17 Accessible natural greenspace sites in and around Hailsham & Polegate are shown on **Figure 4.5g**. This shows that significant accessible natural greenspace sites are located to the west of Hailsham and Polegate. These include Open Access Land, such as Wilmington Woods at the south-eastern edge of Hailsham and north-west of Polegate. Accessible Natural Greenspace is limited in other directions around Hailsham and Polegate.

4.5.18 Within Hailsham, accessible greenspace is concentrated in the southern part of the urban area. Further north accessible natural greenspace is much more limited. As shown on **Figure 4.5h**, the northern part of the town is deficient in neighbourhood scale accessible natural greenspace. Within Polegate accessible natural greenspace is fairly evenly spread throughout the town, but many of these sites are small. As a result much of Polegate remains deficient in provision at the neighbourhood-scale. Open spaces in and around the towns are shown on **Figure 4.5i** and comprise[169]:

- 8 No. allotments (such as Marshfoot Lane Allotments and Westham Allotments)
- 27 No. amenity greenspaces (such as Land adjacent to Grovelands Primary School and Meadow Road AGS)
- 21 No. churchyards and cemeteries (such as Hailsham Cemetery and St John's Church, Polegate)
- 18 No. parks and recreation grounds (such as Western Road Recreation Ground, Hailsham and Polegate Pleasure Ground)

[168] http://environment.data.gov.uk/catchment-planning/
[169] As identified and mapped for the Wealden Open Space, Sport and Recreation Study (Ethos for Wealden DC, forthcoming)



KEY

Access Links:

- Footpath
- Bridleway/Byway
- Sustrans National Cycle Route
- Promoted Route

1. Vanguard Way
2. Wealdway
3. 1066 Country Walk

- National Trail

Accessible Natural Greenspace:

- Wealden Open Space, Sport and Recreation Study (2016)*
- CRoW Act 2000 Open Access Land
- Country Parks
- Local Nature Reserves and Sussex Wildlife Trust Reserves
- Accessible Woodland Trust Sites

*Includes: Accessible Natural Greenspace, Allotments, Amentity Greenspace, Churchyards and Cemeteries, Parks and Recreation Grounds

N

0 0.5 1 Kilometre

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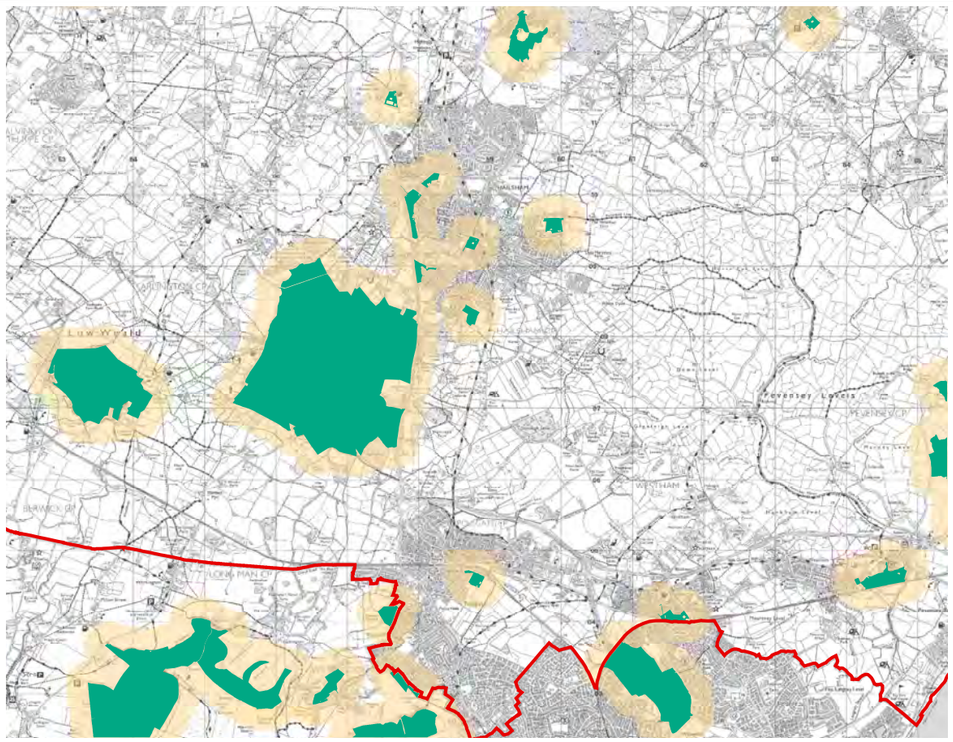
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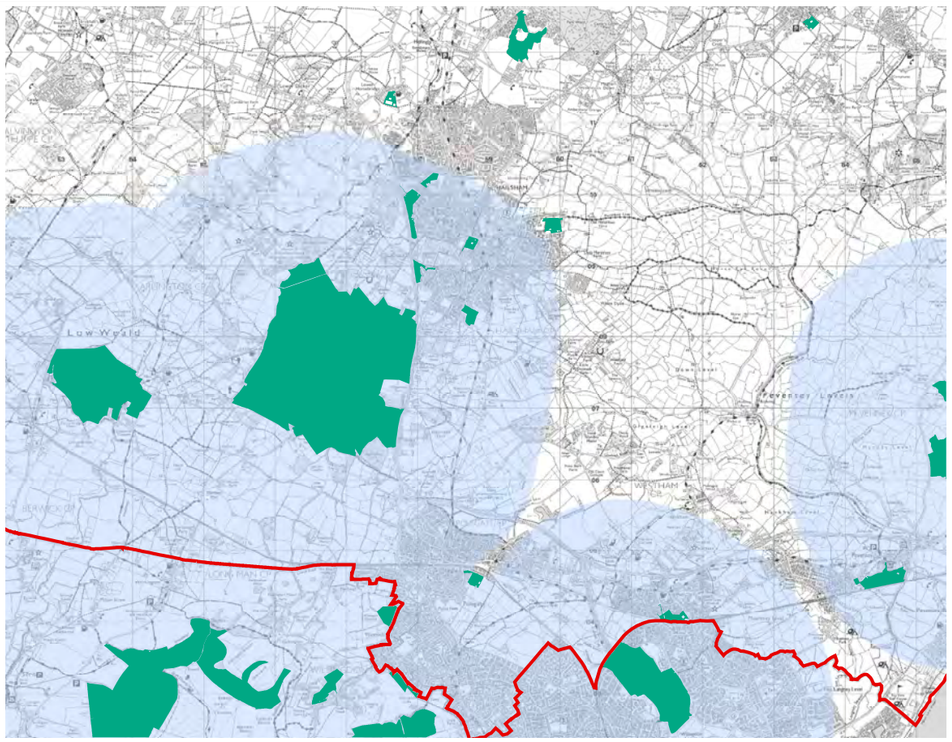
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FIGURE 4.5g
HAILSHAM & POLEGATE:
ACCESS LINKS & ACCESSIBLE NATURAL GREENSPACE

April 2017

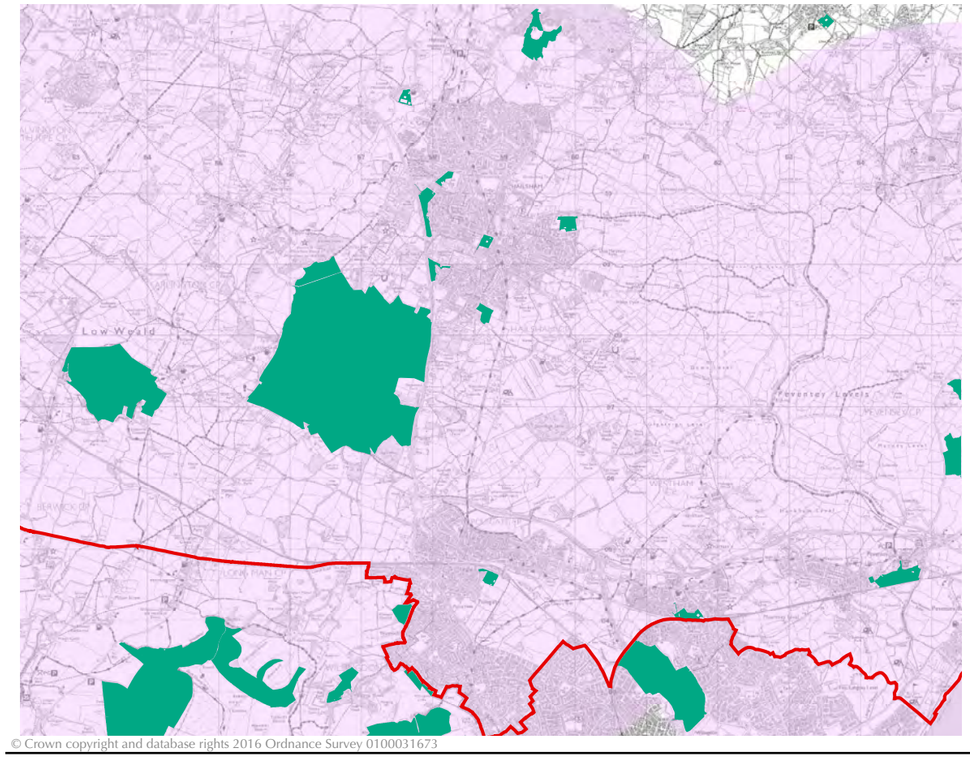
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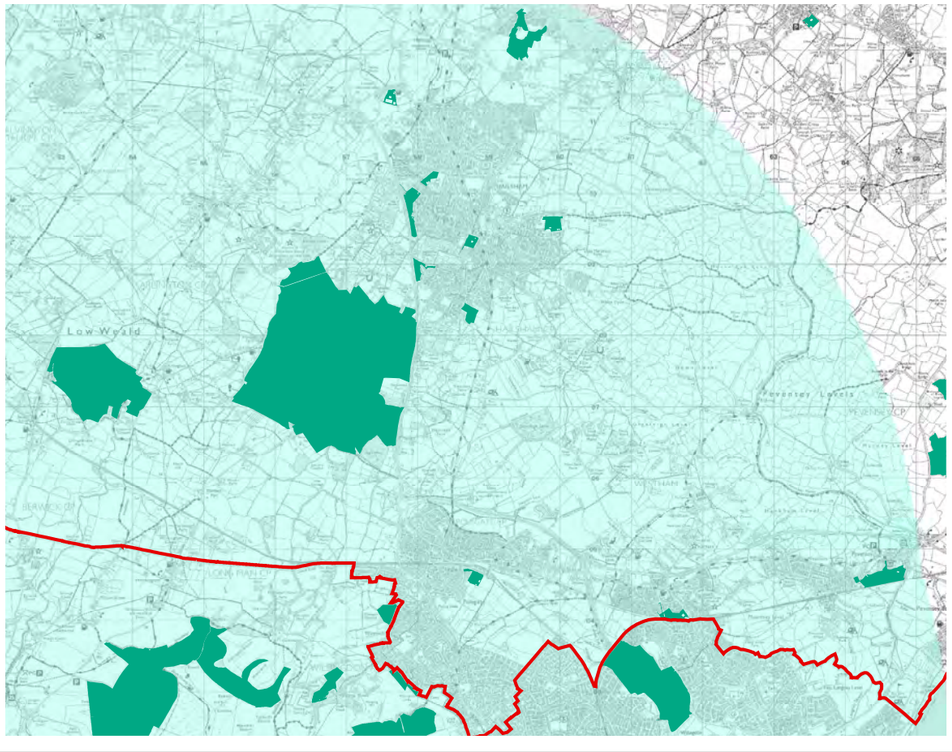




KEY

- Wealden Local Plan Boundary
- Accessible Natural Greenspace >2ha
- 10km catchment - all accessible natural greenspace >500ha
- 5km catchment - all accessible natural greenspace >100ha
- 2km catchment - all accessible natural greenspace >20ha
- 300m catchment - all accessible natural greenspace >2ha





N

0 1 2 Kilometres

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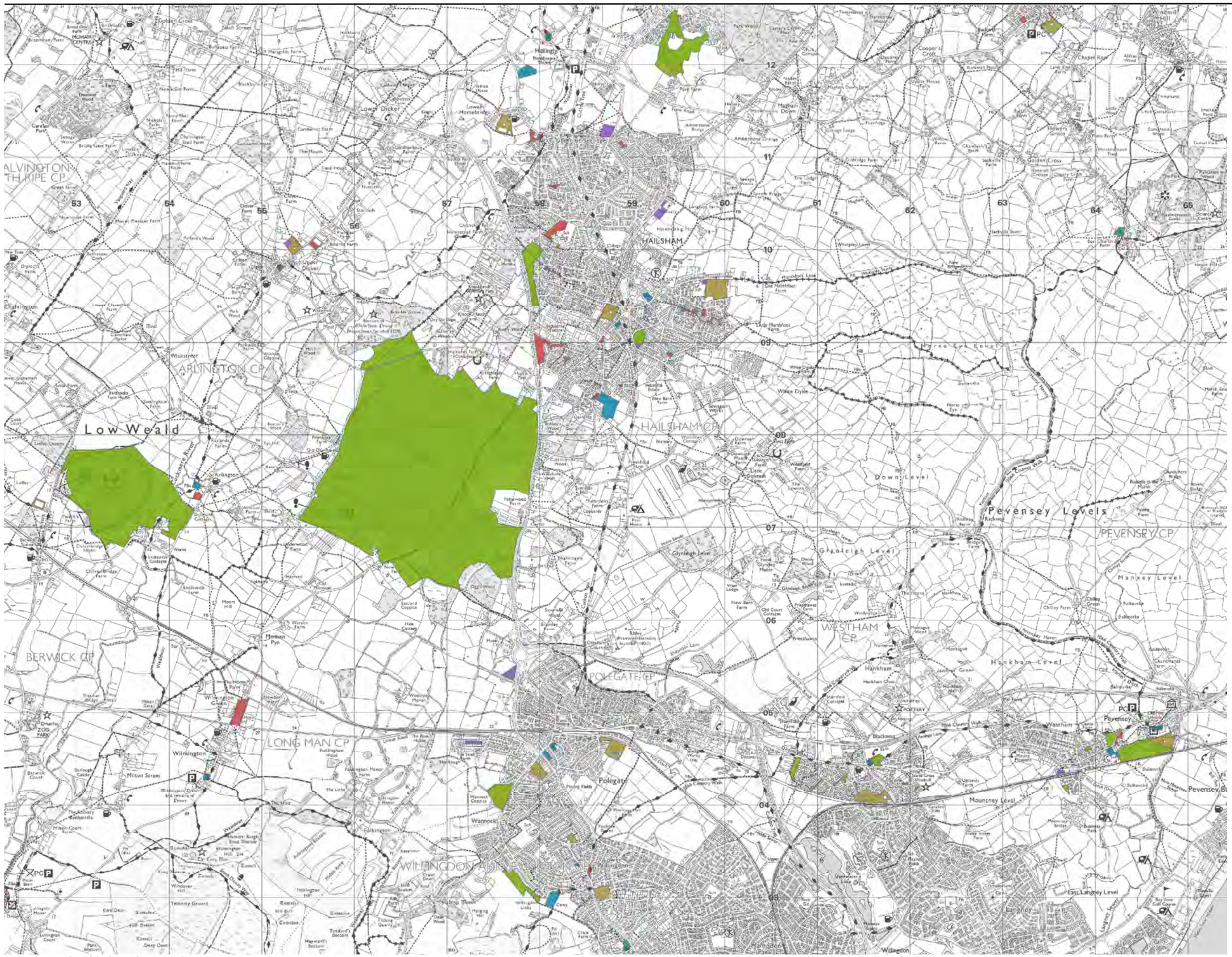
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FIGURE 4.5h
HAILSHAM & POLEGATE:
ACCESSIBLE NATURAL GREENSPACE ANALYSIS

April 2017

11123101_Town Figures_20-04-17.indd



KEY

Open Space Typology:

- Accessible Natural Greenspace
- Allotments
- Amenity Greenspace
- Churchyards & Cemeteries
- Parks and Recreation Grounds

N

0 0.5 1 Kilometre

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FIGURE 4.5i
HAILSHAM & POLEGATE:
OPEN SPACE TYPOLOGY

April 2017

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4.5.19 As shown on **Figure 4.5g**, the Hailsham & Polegate area is connected to the surrounding landscape by the following access links that need to be maintained and improved where appropriate:

- Public footpaths between Polegate and key sites such as Shinewater Park and Wilmington Woods.
- Public footpaths between Hailsham and key sites such as Arlington Reservoir and Wilmington Woods.
- Public bridleway between the wider countryside and the Cuckoo Trail.
- The Wealdway long distance promoted route which passes along the northern edge of Hailsham.
- The 1066 Country Walk long distance promoted route which passes through Pevensey Levels and into Polegate.
- National Cycle Network Route 2 running along the coast– this route once complete will run from Dover to St. Austell along the south coast.
- National Cycle Network Route 21 (the Wealdway) – this route runs from Greenwich to Eastbourne.

Needs and Opportunities

4.5.20 The GI assets that make a significant contribution to the GI network in and around Hailsham & Polegate include a range of biodiversity, landscape and historic environment features; the farmland, woodland and allotments that provide local sources of energy and food; the 'blue infrastructure' provided by water resources that support a healthy environment; and the accessible natural greenspaces and access links that contribute to health and well-being. In summary, the key needs and opportunities for the provision of GI in and round the towns are considered to be:

- Where appropriate, promote opportunities for retaining and enhancing existing wildlife habitats, and/or creating new habitats, related to residential development sites around Hailsham & Polegate (see the Wealden Local Plan Sites Landscape and Ecological Assessment Studies[170] for details).
- Opportunities exist to improve the existing urban edges of Hailsham through the provision of new development and GI associated with growth of the town to enhance the surrounding landscape.

[170] Wealden Local Plan Sites Ecological and Landscape Assessment Studies (CBA and TLP for Wealden DC, 2017)

- Where appropriate, promote opportunities for landscape enhancements related to residential development sites around Hailsham & Polegate (see the Wealden Local Plan Sites Landscape and Ecological Assessment Studies[171] for details).
- Opportunities exist within Hailsham to create improved links between development and GI provision, to restore and improve degraded landscapes by increasing woodland areas, protecting landscape features and creating multifunctional green networks focussed on existing tree belts and hedgerows connected to the Cuckoo Trail green corridor.
- Some of Polegate's rural landscape has been degraded by urban fringe pressures including urban fringe uses and commercial development. The relatively recent road development at Cophall roundabout to the west of the town has also resulted in the loss of landscape structure.
- Opportunities exist to strengthen Polegate's landscape structure and mitigate the visual impact of the A27 through the provision of open space and the creation of multifunctional green networks.
- Seek opportunities to provide better access links between development and green spaces around Polegate through the provision of access routes, and to enhance the landscape in respect of the setting of the South Downs National Park.
- Where appropriate address the need to improve pedestrian access within Hailsham town. Consider how these improvements might be an opportunity to deliver additional multiple benefits in the town such as through incorporating tree planting to improve access for wildlife, drainage, and address poor air quality, whilst improving the experience of walking through green corridors within the town.
- Where appropriate to do so, promote and encourage the use of best practice innovative architectural and planning solutions that take inspiration from local distinctiveness and character.
- Where appropriate, seek to improve water quality and manage local flood risk through promoting the use of SuDS, green roofs and rain gardens for example, particularly within new housing developments.
- Explore opportunities to promote gardening for wildlife and growing food within existing and new residential areas.
- Where appropriate, seek opportunities to safeguard and enhance existing wildlife sites in and around Hailsham and Polegate and through sensitive management improve their overall condition.

[171] Wealden Local Plan Sites Ecological and Landscape Assessment Studies (CBA and TLP for Wealden DC, 2017)