



STEYNING NEIGHBOURHOOD DEVELOPMENT PLAN

Guiding development within the parish over the years

2019 – 2031

Message from the Chair of Steyning Parish Council

Steyning's "Green" Community Plan for sustainable development has a range of environmental planning policies which address the growing evidence of global warming and a climate emergency.

With this Plan our community will receive a larger share of the Community Infrastructure Levy, a tax levied by Horsham District Council (HDC) on new developments in the parish. This money will be spent on local infrastructure which benefits our residents.

HDC are undertaking a local plan review and that process has clashed with the preparation of this neighbourhood plan. HDC has set a deadline by which this plan must be submitted to them, or we face having no neighbourhood plan for another few years. Given the lack of time to properly consider all local issues (including infrastructure and new housing) the Parish Council made the difficult decision to progress a reduced plan without these elements.

Once HDC's new Local Plan is advanced we will have an opportunity to review this plan and revisit the important issues this plan does not consider. I can assure all residents that the Parish Council will be seeking to proactively influence the preparation of the new HDC Local Plan in the meantime.

The Parish Council hopes that this Plan will receive widespread support during the consultation phase and at referendum. A great deal of work has been undertaken by volunteers from the community to make this possible and the Parish Council wishes to thank them for this.

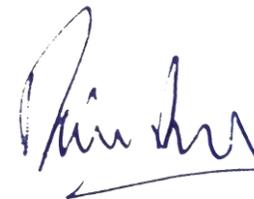
Cllr. Rodney Goldsmith

Message from the Chair of the Steyning Neighbourhood Plan Steering Committee

In January 2018 an enthusiastic group of people from Steyning were interviewed to become members of the new Neighbourhood Plan Steering Committee. For us there was a sharp learning curve. Since then, the Steering Committee has worked diligently to try and ensure the plan reflects the will of the community as a whole.

I would like to personally thank everyone who has contributed, through our surveys, by meeting with us or making contact to express their thoughts. I would especially like to thank the people in the Steering Committee, the additional volunteers who have contributed with passion and considerable knowledge and the council for their support. All these residents have given up considerable amounts of their own time to work on this project for the good of the community.

Some neighbourhood plans comprehensively cover all aspects of their community; others focused on specific areas. Unfortunately, time has been against us and has forced us to proceed with a condensed plan. However, this plan provides the baseline for our community to thrive in coming years and I hope the community will fully support it.



Richard Bell

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1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1. This plan has been prepared for the community of Steyning by a Steering Committee working with Steyning Parish Council. This plan sets out locally specific policies to guide developments from 2019-2031.

HOW THIS DOCUMENT SHOULD BE USED

- 1.2. Once this document has been agreed at referendum and ‘made’, a neighbourhood plan has the same legal status as the Local Plan prepared by the relevant Local Planning Authority (either South Downs National Park Authority or Horsham District Council). At this point it becomes part of the statutory ‘development plan’ and is used in the determination of planning applications.
- 1.3. Applications for planning permission must be determined in accordance with the development plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise (see section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004).
- 1.4. This neighbourhood plan should be used by residents, local authorities and developers and other stakeholders to understand how the local community wishes development in the Plan Area to occur.
- 1.5. For applications that require planning permission, whether proposing a scheme or assessing the acceptability of a scheme, the policies contained within Sections 4-7 are material considerations when decisions on planning applications are made.

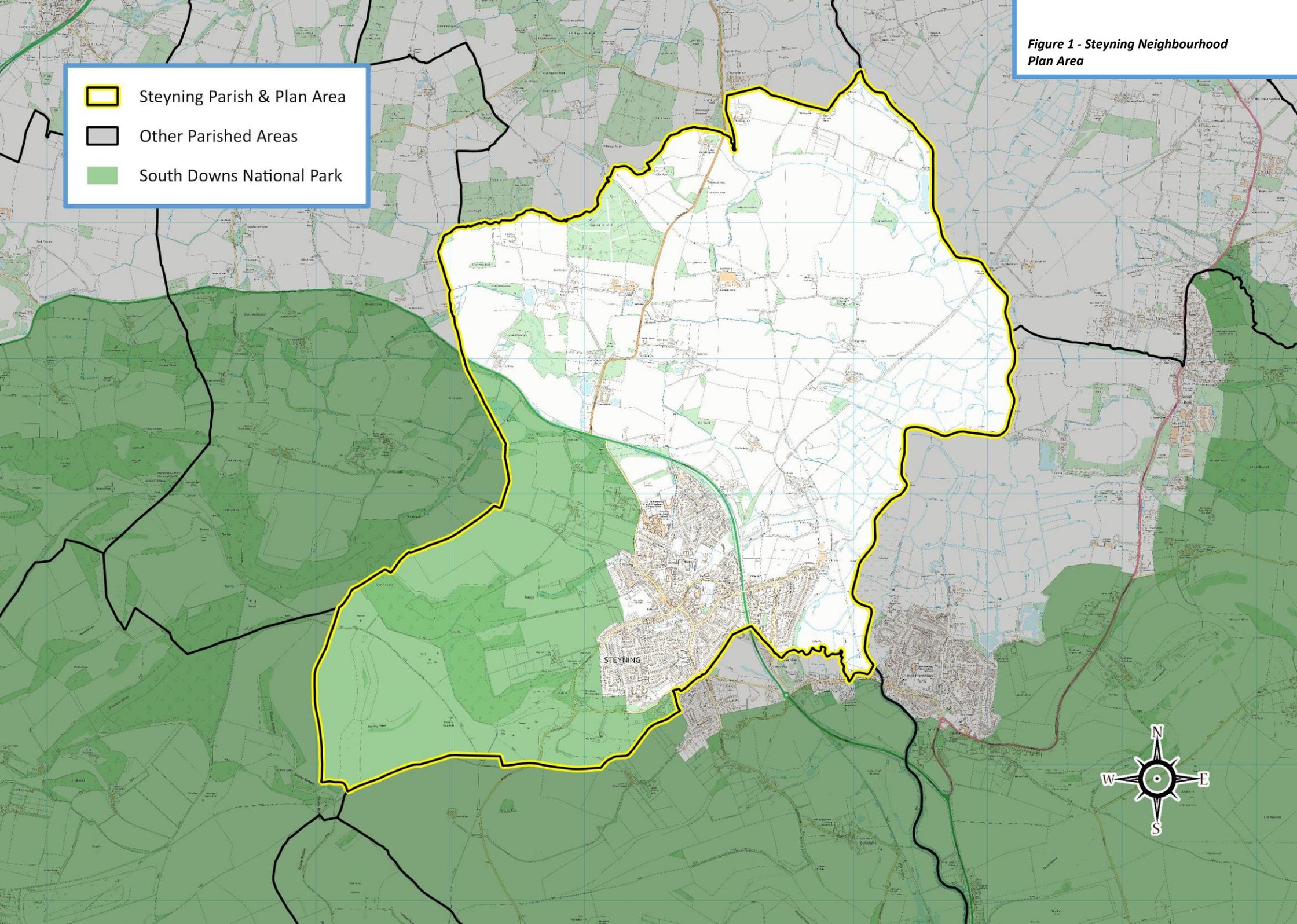
- 1.6. This plan should be read as a whole and all policies in this document and other parts of the development plan should be viewed together and not in isolation in the preparation and consideration of planning applications. All development plan policies will be taken into account in determining planning applications, along with other material considerations in a proportionate manner. The policies in this document do not list or cross-reference to all other policies that may be relevant.

THE NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN AREA

- 1.7. Steyning Parish was part of the neighbourhood planning cluster formerly known as SWAB (Steyning, Wiston, Ashurst & Bramber). This group was preparing a combined plan for the four parishes but it formally de-clustered on 12 October 2017 under Regulation 12 of the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012 (as amended).
- 1.8. Steyning Parish Council subsequently progressed a plan for their own parish and the parish was designated as a Neighbourhood Plan Area by the South Downs National Park Authority on 23 March 2018 and Horsham District Council on 21 May 2018
- 1.9. A map showing the designated plan area can be seen in Figure 1 on the next page.

Figure 1 - Steyning Neighbourhood Plan Area

-  Steyning Parish & Plan Area
-  Other Parished Areas
-  South Downs National Park



THE LEGAL & PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT

- 1.10. The legal basis for the preparation of neighbourhood plans is provided by the Localism Act 2011, Neighbourhood Planning Regulations 2012, Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 and the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.
- 1.11. These pieces of legislation have enabled local communities to prepare neighbourhood plans but also provide a number of conditions and tests to which the plan must adhere, to enable it to come into force. The basic conditions that must be met are:
1. The policies relate to the development and use of land.
 2. The plan must have been prepared by a qualifying body and relate to an area that has been properly designated for such plan preparation.
 3. The plan specifies the period to which it has effect, does not include provision about excluded development and only relates to one Plan Area.
 4. The plan has regard to national policies and advice contained in guidance issued by the Secretary of State.
 5. It contributes to the achievement of sustainable development.
 6. It is in general conformity with the strategic policies contained in the existing development plan for the area.
 7. It does not breach and is otherwise compatible with EU obligations.
- 1.12. It is important to recognise that the points highlighted in bold above mean the neighbourhood plan should not be in conflict with existing planning policy and guidance set out at the national level and should

seek to accord with district level planning policy. The neighbourhood area is partly in Horsham District and partly in the South Downs National Park Authority's administrative area. The key documents in this regard are the National Planning Policy Framework 2021 (NPPF), the Horsham District Planning Framework 2015 (HDPF) and the South Downs Local Plan 2019 (SDLP).

Horsham District Planning Framework

- 1.13. This document was adopted in November 2015 and *'is the overarching planning document for Horsham district outside the South Downs National Park'*. The HDPF plan period is from 2018 - 2031.
- 1.14. However, Horsham District Council are currently preparing a new Local Plan for the district. It is acknowledged that there may be a need to review this neighbourhood plan once the new Local Plan is adopted to avoid the policies within this neighbourhood plan having reduced weight in the determination of planning applications.
- 1.15. In this context the Parish Council will assess the implications of the adopted Horsham Local Plan on the policies in the Neighbourhood Plan. Where it is necessary to do so, a full or partial review of the neighbourhood plan will commence within six months of the adoption of the emerging Horsham District Local Plan.

South Downs Local Plan

- 1.16. The South Downs Local Plan was adopted in July 2019 covers the entire National Park and has been informed by a range of factors relating to the special qualities of the National Park, including landscape character, biodiversity and cultural heritage.
- 1.17. The Local Plan sets out how the National Park Authority will manage development over the period 2014 to 2033. It also includes reference to supporting development proposals set out in Whole Estate Plans. The Wiston Estate has such a plan and covers a large area of Steyning Parish. As such this is also a relevant document.

The West Sussex Waste Local Plan 2014 (WLP) and the West Sussex Joint Minerals Local Plan 2018 (JMLP)

- 1.18. Parts of the Parish contain areas of mineral resource safeguarded under Policy M9 of the JMLP.

2. ABOUT STEYNING PARISH

- 2.1. Steyning is a small rural town and parish in the Horsham District of West Sussex. It is located at the north end of the River Adur gap in the South Downs, four miles north of Shoreham-by-Sea. However, the parish covers a much larger area than the town and this plan relates to the whole parish.
- 2.2. This section provides a brief overview of the parish up until the current day.

HISTORIC OVERVIEW

- 2.3. The parish has a long and interesting history. In Saxon and Norman times it was a port on the tidal Adur river estuary. The settlement developed around the then wooden church of St. Cuthman's.
- 2.4. In Edward the Confessor's time Steyning was granted to the Norman Abbey of Fecamp, the monks of Fecamp oversaw the construction of St Andrew's Church starting in the late 11th century.
- 2.5. By Norman times Steyning was one of the most important towns in southern England. The port was used for exporting wool, salt and wood. The infrastructure of lanes and byways were developing to support trade in this area.
- 2.6. In the 13th century Steyning was sufficiently important to be given a grant to hold two fairs a year and a market twice a week. In 1278 it was granted Borough status, returning two members to Parliament. However, in the same century, severe storms swept the Sussex coast,

and this led to the silting up of the Adur estuary. By 1350 Steyning had ceased to be a port, and this, coupled with population decline caused by the Black Death, resulted in the settlement experiencing approximately a century of stagnation.

- 2.7. There are many timber-framed buildings, built in the 15th and 16th Centuries, which survive today and still influence the present-day layout of the town.

17th and 18th Century

- 2.8. The history of the school is fascinating and began in 1614 when William Holland, a wealthy merchant from Steyning and former Mayor of Chichester left funds in his will for the foundation and maintenance of a Free Grammar School. He purchased Brotherhood Hall in his late seventies and then on 25th January 1614 he purchased all the lands connected with the school (Church Street site) from Sir Edward Bellingham of Newtimber, Sussex, for £760. Two weeks before his death he made a will in which he left sufficient property to found and maintain a Grammar School.
- 2.9. In the later 18th century the town developed because of its position on one of the stagecoach routes from London to the South Coast. At this time there were thriving fairs and markets. Many of the buildings along the High Street were constructed in response to this trade.

19th Century

- 2.10. Direct routes from London to the coast meant that the coaching trade virtually ceased; Steyning as a Rotten Borough lost its right to Parliamentary representation under the Reform Act of 1832. However,

a new tanyard in the 1820's and the opening of the railway in 1861 together with four breweries and their allied industries, the agriculture related trade and industry with numerous livestock markets, rural trades and supply and maintenance of farm machinery, sustained a thriving economy.

- 2.11. The Grammar school had been in a period of decline until, in 1839, a North Country man called George Airey transformed the fortunes of the school, by bringing a nucleus of promising students from other areas and the younger sons of titled gentry and civil servants.
- 2.12. Many buildings in Steyning have survived from earlier times and some were able to support the construction of neo-Georgian and Queen Ann facades in keeping with the new fashion. Trade changed the look of the High Street and now we can still see the mixture of architectural styles from this time. Population growth led to the building of Victorian terraces and villas.

20th Century

- 2.13. The 20th century saw the closure of Steyning's two remaining breweries and its markets. The railway was closed in 1966. In the 1980s, a bypass was constructed, redefining the eastern boundary of the town. With less employment Steyning became a small market town, with local shopping, a home for commuters and a tourist centre.

21st Century

- 2.14. Development for housing has continued within the town boundary, but at a much slower rate, with smaller developments and infilling on large individual plots. Many properties have been extended.

2.15. The High Street remains a vibrant centre of the town, with a good range of largely unique retail premises that, together with a variety of food outlets, are able to fulfil the everyday and occasional needs of the community and visitors alike. The primary and secondary schools continue to excel and expand, attracting families to settle in the town. A number of businesses operate within the parish boundary, all providing the opportunity for local employment.

TRANSPORT INFRASTRUCTURE

- 2.16. The closure of the railway in the 1960's left the parish heavily reliant on private motor vehicles, buses and bikes to get around.
- 2.17. The historic nature of Steyning means that many streets are narrow and not ideally suited to high volumes of vehicular traffic and this is what lead to the construction of the bypass in the 1980's which ensures the majority of road traffic doesn't need to go through the town's historic centre.
- 2.18. The reliance on private motor vehicles however has led to a substantial rise in on-street car parking in recent years which many consider to be the result of parking charges being introduced into the town's three main car parks (all owned by Horsham District Council) and inadequate enforcement of parking breaches.
- 2.19. Pedestrian footpaths throughout the town are quite extensive but certain streets are too narrow to accommodate them. Given the Parish's location partly within the South Downs National Park walking and cycling can be a pleasant experience, however there is currently no dedicated and safe cycle network. Local action groups (in particular

'Greening Steyning') have sought to encourage walking and cycling in recent years through the creation of a Green Transport Plan which not only connects local towns and villages but seeks to do so in a safe way by encouraging clear separation of vehicles from cyclists.

- 2.20. Steyning town has relatively good bus services compared to the rest of the parish but there is still much room for improvement. Public transport needs to be much better to tempt people away from private cars. In addition, there are no public electric vehicle charging facilities in the Parish at present so making the move to less polluting modes of transport hard. Like many semi-rural settlements, there is a substantial reliance on private cars for personal transport, and more needs to be done to improve communal transport opportunities
- 2.21. Steyning may be typical of many similar rural communities in terms of its reliance on cars – but the point is we have to begin rapidly to decarbonise our transport infrastructure, and we are not well placed to do that
- 2.22. The Steyning Grammar School accepts students from beyond its catchment area including places as far as Dial Post and Worthing with over two thirds (of 2228 pupils in 2018 - this figure is updated annually and the most up to date figure can be found in the latest Planning School Places report produced by West Sussex County Council) being bussed or transported into school every day. WSCC runs school bus services for qualifying students in the catchment area.

HEALTH AND WELLBEING

- 2.23. The Steyning Medical Centre provides health care services for Steyning and the surrounding Parishes (Upper Beeding, Bramber, Ashington, Washington, Wiston and Ashurst), catering for just over 12,000 patients. The centre includes dental, pharmacy, audiology, diabetes, personal counselling, physiotherapy, speech therapy and podiatry clinics. At weekends this facility is closed, and the nearest A&E is located some 9 miles away in Worthing.
- 2.24. Steyning Area First Responders currently have 10 responders and others at various stages of training. Defibrillators are located in and around the Parish and further afield, providing rapid first aid care to the community.
- 2.25. The Steyning Leisure Centre is located adjacent to the main Steyning Grammar School campus. Run by a partnership between Horsham District Council, Steyning Grammar School, Places Leisure and Steyning Parish Council the facilities include a gym, swimming pool, sports hall, squash courts, outdoor tennis courts, multi-sport all-weather court, indoor cycling studio, changing and meeting rooms.

THE ECONOMY

- 2.26. Steyning High Street provides a focus for economic activity in the market town. There are 85 small and larger businesses. There is a constant challenge of shops and amenities closing but a dynamic array of outlets for food and drink supports residents and provides a focus for many people who visit the town with the potential to increase tourism and associated Natural Capital opportunities as a gateway to the South Downs National Park.
- 2.27. The Steyning Business Chamber currently represents the interests of over 60 member businesses. Its principal objective is; “to promote, protect and develop the interests of the business community of Steyning and District area”.
- 2.28. Steyning has been the home of specialist audio and engineering product manufacturing industries which provide precision made audio, aerospace, Formula 1, and medical equipment. One of these industries, SME, produce world class turntables and tonearms for showcasing as British Made products for the export market.
- 2.29. Steyning has been a seat of learning for well over 400 years, having had a dedicated school building in iconic Church Street since 1614. This long-standing establishment, Steyning Grammar School, has developed strongly over the centuries, and now boasts 3 sites across the area with the main 2 campuses located within the parish, providing senior school learning to 2,228 pupils. It is the largest state school in West Sussex and the size enables the widest opportunities and a curriculum with nearly 30 subjects at GCSE and over 30 at A-Level.

- 2.30. The Steyning Grammar School which includes a highly prized and recognised boarding facility, catering for over 130 students from 30 countries across the globe, is at the heart of the Steyning Community and plays an important part in the local economy through strong links to St Andrews and St Cuthman church, leisure centre, arts festival and the environment through the Steyning Downlands Scheme.
- 2.31. School staffing includes resident and newly qualified teachers and support staff from Steyning and the local area.
- 2.32. Local businesses provide associated services to the schools, including catering, cleaning, maintenance and extra-mural activities within Steyning and nearby.
- 2.33. The school employs over 300 staff and represents an important part of the local economy as the town's largest employer.
- 2.34. The local primary school, Steyning CofE Primary School has 392 pupils as of 2018 (This figure is updated annually and the most up to date figure can be found in the latest Planning School Places report produced by West Sussex County Council) and many staff who live within the parish.

BIODIVERSITY & THE ENVIRONMENT

- 2.35. Steyning is biologically diverse which is recognised by the range of national designations present in the parish. These include the South Downs National Park, Local Wildlife Sites (Wiston Pond, River Adur Water Meadows & Wyckham Wood and Steyning Coombe and Steyning Round Hill), Local Geological Sites (Steyning Bowl and Steyning Round Hill), Designated Road Verge (A283 Washington Road, Bostal Road Steyning, Ingrams Road and Penlands Rise Steyning) and 8 Section 41 habitats.
- 2.36. Wiston Pond is a relatively large area of open water. There are extensive beds of Lesser Reedmace with some Common Reedmace and occasional Bulrush and Branched Bur-reed. On the field edge of the Reedmace beds, there are additional species such as Water Mint, Meadowsweet, Common Fleabane, Yellow Iris and Wild Angelica. The pond is surrounded on three sides by trees and scrub including Alder, Willow, Hazel and Hawthorn and some Oak, Ash and Poplar. The islands are covered in trees, mostly Alder. This site is particularly important for amphibians. It supports exceptional populations of Common Toad, good populations of Common Frog, and Smooth Newt is also present. Breeding toads migrate across the A283 road to the north of the pond, and so a toad-tunnel has been constructed to aid their safe passage. It is also a significant site for birds. Little Grebe and Mute Swans breed here, and other species such as Tufted Duck and Water Rail have been recorded using the pond.
- 2.37. Wyckham Wood is a small, ancient semi-natural woodland situated 300 metres west of the River Adur. It is fairly open deciduous woodland of mature Ash and Oak. Bluebell and Bramble dominate the

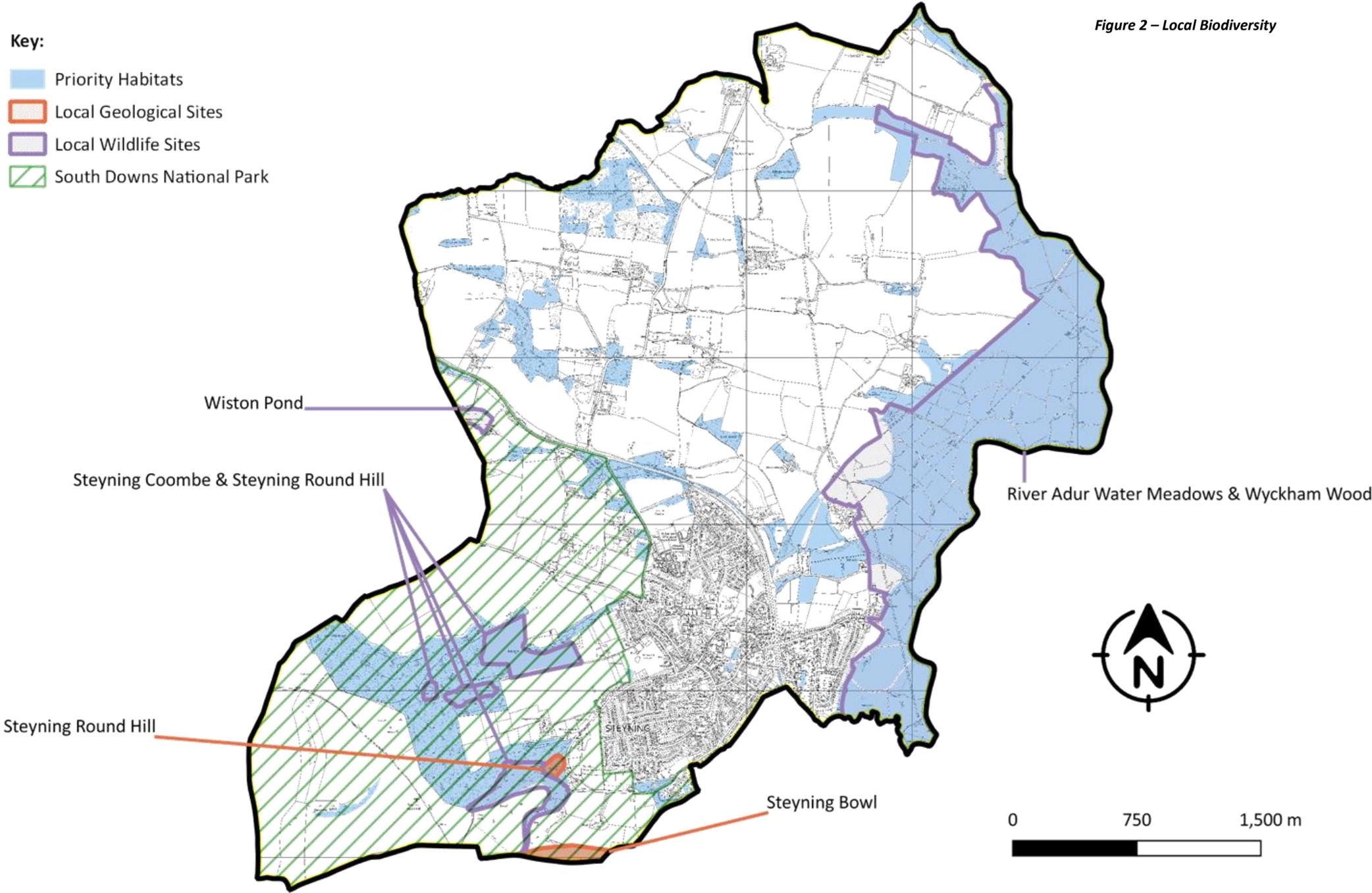
ground flora. Some 19 pairs of Herons nest here annually. The network of ditches includes some that are of outstanding botanical importance. The rare Water-violet occurs here. In West Sussex this plant is virtually confined to the Adur Valley. Other uncommon plants found in these ditches includes Fine-leaved Water-dropwort, Tubular Water-dropwort, Arrowhead, Marsh Pennywort, Marsh Stitchwort, Pink Water-speedwell, Common Club-rush and Sea Club-rush. Small numbers of Reed Warblers breed in the reed-fringed ditches. North of the disused railway line near Wyckham Dale Farm, there is an interesting area comprising tall herb fen, scattered scrub, ditches and a pond. This small area supports a range of breeding birds, including Reed Warbler, Sedge Warbler, Willow Warbler, Whitethroat, Reed Bunting and Yellowhammer.

- 2.38. Steyning Coombe and Steyning Round Hill are both important areas of unimproved downland on the escarpment above Steyning. Together these areas are extremely diverse, having steep slopes facing all directions, both short herb-rich sward and tall ungrazed sward, open grassland and grassland with scattered scrub. The rich flora and invertebrate fauna include several rare plants, snails and butterflies.
- 2.39. Steyning Coombe is a small east-facing coombe, once used as a rifle range. There are some fairly extensive areas of species-rich grassland, particularly on the west and south sides of the coombe. Notable downland herbs include Small Scabious, Devil's-bit Scabious and Autumn Gentian. The two woodland clearings above the coombe contain several interesting plants such as Vervain, Common Gromwell and Dropwort. Steyning Coombe is of great importance for its snail fauna. Two rare grassland species, *Monacha cartusiana* and *Helicella itala*, occur in abundance on the south-facing slopes.

- 2.40. Steyning Round Hill is mostly species-poor grassland dominated by Tor-grass. However, there are areas of herb-rich sward with Horseshoe Vetch, Autumn Lady's-tresses, Common Valerian, Wild Thyme and Autumn Gentian.
- 2.41. Bostal Chalk pit, adjacent to the lane on the south side of Steyning Round Hill, is an extremely important site. The steep banks of short
- 2.42. herb-rich sward support Autumn Lady's-tresses, Dropwort, Common Gromwell, Yellow-wort, Early-purple Orchid and Pyramidal Orchid. The rare Early Gentian was recently re-discovered in Bostal Chalk pit, its only West Sussex locality. A rare moss, *Weissia tortilis*, two rare lichens, *Gyalecta jenensis* and *Petractis clausa*, and a localised species of snail, *Lauria cylindracea* have also been recorded. The roadside embankment to the south-west of Bostal Chalk pit is of botanical interest, particularly for the presence of at least thirty Junipers. At least twenty- seven species of butterfly have been recorded on Steyning Round Hill, including Small, Adonis and Chalkhill Blue, Brown Argus, Green Hairstreak, Dingy Skipper, Ringlet and Marbled White.
- 2.43. These habitats support a range of species living in the parish including many which are protected by national and international law. These include the Great Crested Newt, European eel, Brown/sea trout, Water Vole, Grass snake, Adder, Osprey, Hen harrier, Peregrine, Skylark and Black Redstart.

Figure 2 – Local Biodiversity

- Key:
- Priority Habitats
 - Local Geological Sites
 - Local Wildlife Sites
 - South Downs National Park



2.44. The neighbourhood area is now affected by recent guidance on water neutrality. In September 2021 Natural England issued a Position Statement on water neutrality which impacts on the whole of the Horsham District. For all plans and projects, this has triggered an additional requirement to screen for likely significant effects on Arun Valley Special Area for Conservation (SAC), Arun Valley Special Protection Area (SPA) and Arun Valley Ramsar site from the increased demand for mains water in the Sussex North Water Resource Zone. The District Council has responded to these changed circumstances by preparing an Addendum to the initial Habitats Regulations Assessment.

2.45. With specific reference to Natural England's Position Statement, Steyning lies within this Water Supply Zone which includes supplies from a groundwater abstraction which cannot, with certainty, conclude no adverse effect on the integrity of the Arun Valley SAC, SPA and Ramsar site. As it cannot be concluded that the existing abstraction within Sussex North Water Supply Zone is not having an impact on the Arun Valley site, Natural England advises that developments within this zone must not add to this impact.

2.46. Natural England has advised that this matter should be resolved in partnership through local plans across the affected authorities, where policy and assessment can be agreed and secured to ensure water use is offset for all new developments within Sussex North. To achieve this Natural England is working in partnership with all the relevant authorities to secure water neutrality collectively through a water neutrality strategy. Whilst the strategy is evolving, Natural England has advised that decisions on planning applications should await its completion. However, if there are applications which a planning

authority deems critical to proceed in the absence of the strategy, then Natural England advises that any application needs to demonstrate water neutrality.

2.47. Developments within Steyning must therefore not add to this impact and one way of achieving this is to demonstrate water neutrality. The definition of water neutrality is the use of water in the supply area before the development is the same or lower after the development is in place.

CLIMATE CHANGE

2.48. The threats posed by climate change are staring humanity in the face and awareness and concern among the public has never been stronger. It is also higher up the political agenda than ever before. The clear consensus from scientists is that we need to take urgent and decisive action now as we have only a few years to turn the situation around if we are to avoid the worst effects of climate change.

2.49. Steyning is part of this global challenge. It contributes to the problem, and it will be affected by it. The plan's timeframe (till 2031) takes us beyond the 2030 deadline that the United Nations (UN) has set to turn emissions trajectories around. If Steyning is to be part of the solution, not just the problem, it needs to act now and use the Plan as an opportunity to galvanise action and shape a more resilient and sustainable future.

2.50. Sussex is in no way immune from these global trends and threats and numerous reports are now highlighting the impact Climate Change will

have on our ecosystem and way of life both as a result of changing weather and rising sea levels.

2.51. Despite being an environmentally aware community, Steyning cannot claim to be ahead of the game in terms of its green credentials. In some respects, it starts in a worse position than many communities.

2.52. Steyning's ageing housing stock is relatively inefficient and whilst householders have been installing better insulation and adopting other energy saving measures over the last decade there is still much work to be done in bringing Steyning's homes up to scratch in energy efficiency terms.

2.53. On a more positive front Steyning has made significant progress in the adoption of renewable energy technologies over the past decade with; around 110 residential properties having solar PV, several dozen residential properties having solar hot water, solar PV on some public buildings, active efforts for renewable energy installations within the parish, a battery energy storage facility being created and an anaerobic digester system installed on a local farm.

2.54. How we get around is generally not climate-change friendly with relatively poor bus services creating a reliance on private motor vehicles. This is made worse by relatively poor cycle links. A move to electric vehicles is imminent but at present there are no public charging points within the parish which may hamper efforts to adopt this new technology.



Figure 3 – Steyning from above(April 2020)

3. PREPARATION OF THIS PLAN & THE VISION

- 3.1. Steyning Parish Council officially began working on this plan in January 2018 after the dissolution of the team working on a combined plan for the parishes of Steyning, Washington, Ashington and Bramber (known as SWAB). The local community came together, and volunteers were interviewed and selected to form a Steering Committee which were entrusted by Steyning Parish Council to guide a plan for Steyning through the necessary stages.
- 3.2. Throughout 2018 a series of events took place to help the Steering Committee understand exactly what was important to our local community. A full chronology of these events is set out in the Consultation Statement which accompanies this plan. Towards the end of the year the Steering Committee prepared a survey to gather feedback which ran from September 2018 to January 2019 and raised awareness of this at public meetings and local events (such as the Farmers Market, Winter Fair and the High Street's Late-Night Christmas Shopping Event).
- 3.3. The results of the survey were used by the Steering Committee to prepare a draft Vision Statement. This draft statement was then extensively consulted on in February 2019 to arrive at our vision for the parish, which would be used as the foundation for of the plan.
- 3.4. Work subsequently commenced on investigating the issues identified and how the plan could seek to ensure the vision is met. A series of evidence documents were drafted, consuming many hundreds of hours of volunteer time.
- 3.5. Running alongside our neighbourhood plan process Horsham District Council are preparing a new Local Plan for the district. In mid-2019 Horsham District Council advised that neighbourhood plans submitted to them after the end of November 2019 would not proceed to examination until the new Local Plan had been adopted. This position is understandable as there is a need to avoid two separate plans coming forward for an area at the same time to avoid confusion and potentially conflicting visions for the area.
- 3.6. This deadline meant the Steering Committee and Parish Council had to decide whether the plan should be delayed until after the Local Plan is adopted or finalise as much of the evidence base as possible, prepare a plan and go through the various regulatory stages to achieve submission of the plan before the end of November. The latter was chosen, and the team has focussed on those topic and policy areas with demonstrated community support and evidence to support the policy content.
- 3.7. The emerging Horsham Local Plan has not proceeded as quickly as was intended. A draft Regulation 18 Local Plan was published for consultation between February and March 2020. However further progress on the Plan has now been affected by Natural England's Position Statement on Water Neutrality which was issued in 2021. The District Council is currently addressing the significance of this matter on the overall strategy of the Plan.
- 3.8. Having a 'made' neighbourhood plan also secures an increased amount (25% instead of 15%) of Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) monies generated within the parish to spend on local infrastructure.

Waiting until after the new Local Plan is adopted risks missing some development therefore missing funds for the community.

- 3.9. The final vision statement for the parish is set out on the following page which has taken into account responses received prior to and during the Regulation 14 Consultation held in late Summer 2019. Sections 4 – 8 of this plan considers matters that have been directly derived from the vision statement.

A Vision for Steyning

Steyning Parish has an exceptional and picturesque rural setting on the edge of the South Downs National Park. Our historic market town provides the hub for our community.

In 2031, Steyning Parish will:

- i. Treasure its heritage, having enhanced it where possible so that the Parish continues to be an attractive place to live, learn, work and visit.
- ii. Have a vibrant and prosperous High Street providing both everyday goods and services as well as offering a variety of shopping and dining outlets.
- iii. Have housing that meets the needs and aspirations of the local community, that is well designed, promotes environmental efficiency and takes account of the demand on infrastructure. There will be sufficient affordable housing, particularly for key workers.
- iv. Have a vibrant economy with innovative new employment opportunities complementing existing work opportunities and with fast and efficient internet connection for home and agile working. It will promote tourism to help support our local economy.
- v. Be a community that continues to encourage social interaction between everyone who lives, works and visits the town, particularly through art, culture, leisure and sport. Our venues will support a diverse range of community events and our open spaces will be safeguarded for their biodiversity and for all to enjoy.
- vi. Be a key gateway to the South Downs National Park and the Adur Valley.
- vii. Be better connected. It will have a network of well-maintained and safe roads and supported by bridleways, cycle routes and footpaths suitable for all non-motorised users. The Parish will also benefit from improved transport links and more frequent and better-connected bus services will provide greater opportunities for contact with neighbouring towns and villages, both coastal and inland, and reduce reliance on cars.
- viii. Steyning will take active steps to become a 'climate smart' community, so that it is resilient to the changes and risks caused by climate change, and is taking measures as far as reasonably practicable to reduce its own environmental footprint.

4. THE NATURAL ENVIRONMENT

- 4.1. Steyning has a diverse natural environment, and the natural environment is close to many people's hearts. After all, it is the reason many people have chosen to make Steyning their home. Surrounded by the South Downs National Park and Adur Valley it is a beautiful place to live and those that live, and work locally benefit from our carefully managed landscape.
- 4.2. It is therefore important that developments within the Parish do not detract from the natural beauty of it. Quite the opposite, new developments should seek to enhance what we already have and make a positive contribution to our local environs.
- 4.3. This section of the plan therefore concentrates on two elements, the first being green infrastructure and biodiversity and the second being responsible design.

GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE

- 4.4. Green infrastructure is the network of natural and semi-natural areas designed and managed to deliver a wide range of ecosystem benefits in both rural and urban settings.
- 4.5. Simply speaking, most natural vegetation, whether it is in a garden, road verge, field or on the highest point of the South Downs all contribute towards our green infrastructure. But vegetation is not the only element of it, watercourses and other natural processes also contribute to our green infrastructure. It therefore follows that ensuring we have great green infrastructure will also create habitat for our rich and diverse ecology.
- 4.6. A review of Steyning's biodiversity has been undertaken and is set out in a supporting evidence document which sets out that ecology and biodiversity, and the opportunity to support a 'net gain' in its composition and richness, should be considered a fundamental issue across the parish.
- 4.7. We believe that development should not come forward at the expense of our green infrastructure or ecological diversity which, among other things, makes a valid contribution towards combating climate change. Therefore, the policy below seeks to ensure that all development within the parish respects our natural environment and ideally provides an overall benefit for the local biome.
- 4.8. Policy SNDP1 provides a local dimension to national planning policies and those in the Horsham District Planning Framework. Valued landscape features include, but are not limited to green road verges, accessible green space, public rights of way and their

settings, hedgerows, trees, copses and woods, including ancient woodland and orchards and river corridors. The specific habitats protected by this policy are set out in paragraphs 3.1.4 and 5.14 of the Biodiversity Report. They specifically include four Local Wildlife Site (LWS) – Wiston Pond, River Adur Water Meadows & Wyckham Wood and Steyning Coombe and Steyning Round Hill and the Local Geological site at Steyning Bowl and Steyning Round Hill.

SNDP1 GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE & BIODIVERSITY

SNDP1.1 Development proposals which protect and, where practicable, enhance the green infrastructure, natural capital and valued landscape features of the parish, and/or add to the potential for carbon sequestration will be supported.

SNDP1.2 Development proposals, which result in a biodiversity net gain will be supported, particularly when such proposals would increase the amount of publicly accessible green infrastructure.

RESPONSIBLE ENVIRONMENTAL DESIGN

- 4.9. New developments are often designed to reflect their immediate site and surrounding built form. This is important but quite often little attention is given to how new built form can work with the environment rather than moving nature out of the way to accommodate it.
- 4.10. The same goes for the impact of buildings on the wider environment and climate. The threats posed by climate change are staring humanity in the face and awareness and concern among the public has never been stronger. The clear consensus from scientists is that urgent and decisive action is needed now as we have only a few years to turn the situation around if we are to avoid the worst effects of climate change.
- 4.11. Steyning is part of this global challenge. It contributes to the problem, and it will be affected by it. The plan's timeframe (until 2031) takes us beyond the 2030 deadline that the United Nations (UN) has set to turn emissions trajectories around. If Steyning is to be part of the solution, not just the problem, it needs to act now and use the Plan as an opportunity to galvanise action and shape a more resilient and sustainable future.
- 4.12. This plan therefore requires all developments to be designed in a sensible way, to ensure that they respect and incorporate the environment into the scheme and actively seek to incorporate other measures to reduce the impact of development of the local and global environment.

SNDP2 RESPONSIBLE ENVIRONMENTAL DESIGN

SNDP2.1 As appropriate to their scale and nature, development proposals should be designed responsibly, and take account of their impact on the environment throughout their lifetime.

SNDP2.2 As appropriate to their scale and nature, and taking account of the findings of the Steyning Character Assessment 2019, development proposals should:

- a) Incorporate existing hedgerows, trees, woodlands, banks, ponds, watercourses and other natural features, such as green corridors, into the design.
- b) Provide additional indigenous habitat on site where possible through planting and the creation of new wildlife corridors.
- c) Incorporate indigenous plant species into landscaping schemes, avoiding species which would not normally be found within the parish.
- d) Utilise landscaping to minimise negative visual impacts and actual urbanising impacts of any new built form.
- e) Incorporate permeable hard landscaping and sustainable urban drainage solutions.
- f) Design buildings so that they are energy efficient, ensuring they are sited and orientated to optimise passive solar gain, use high quality and thermally efficient building materials.
- g) Be energy self-sufficient, utilising renewable energy sources wherever possible.

- h) Promote the use of non-motorised or zero-emission transport modes.

5. STEYNING'S DISTINCTIVE CHARACTER

- 5.1. Steyning is a small rural town in the Horsham District of West Sussex. It is surrounded by farmland to the south, east and north and has close links to the nearby villages of Bramber, Ashurst and Wiston. Situated in the valley of the River Adur and at the foot of the South Downs National Park, Steyning has existed since Anglo-Saxon times, when it was an inland port and major crossing point of the Adur and a thriving market location.
- 5.2. Steyning's architecture reflects a wide range of historic styles, mainly within its Conservation Area, but with more contemporary domestic housing estates surrounding its centre. There is a strong desire locally to preserve the historic nature of the town whilst planning to meet the needs of our growing community.
- 5.3. To this end a character appraisal has been undertaken by volunteers during the summer of 2019. This document records our parish's distinctive appearance and 'feel', identifies key features and characteristics that combine to give our settlement its distinctiveness and unique identity.
- 5.4. This plan does not seek to require new developments to mirror existing built form. Instead, we believe a more holistic approach should be taken to ensure that the distinctive character of each part of the parish is retained. Key features that make up an area's character can be influenced by, but not limited to, architectural styles, land use, tranquillity and level of activity (or 'buzz').

- 5.5. This approach is captured in Policy SNDP3. The first part of the policy refers to the general character of Steyning. In formulating proposals developers should take into consideration the most recent character assessment of the area (currently the Steyning Character Assessment 2019).

SNDP3 CONTRIBUTION TO CHARACTER

- SNDP3.1 Development proposals which demonstrate how they will positively contribute towards Steyning's character will be supported.
- SNDP3.2 Development proposals should respect the amenity of properties in their immediate locality, and respond positively and sensitively to the scale, mass, height, building materials and form of neighbouring properties.



Figure 4 - Steyning's diverse character

6. RESOURCES

- 6.1. Our community resources provide the things our community needs to grow in a positive way and improve the quality of life for the people of Steyning. As such, our community resources can be owned, run or funded by Steyning Parish Council, Horsham District Council, businesses, non-profit groups, or even individuals so long as it serves the community.
- 6.2. Whilst our 'community resources' are therefore very wide ranging this section concentrates on certain resources which are considered important by the local community.

IMPROVING OUR FACILITIES

- 6.3. As set out earlier in Section 1.18 (page 7 onwards) of this plan the parish has an impressive range of existing facilities which serve the community. However, it is recognised that some of these may need to be upgraded in the coming years.
- 6.4. The policy below provides policy support for the upgrades that may be required and the provision of new facilities that serve the community.

SNDP4 IMPROVING OUR FACILITIES

SNDP4.1 Development proposals will be supported which:

- a) Improve the health and wellbeing of our community; OR
- b) Improve recreational facilities; OR
- c) Improve public / non-motorised transport infrastructure; OR
- d) Provide new or improved essential infrastructure to serve our community.

LOCAL GREEN SPACE

- 6.5. Neighbourhood planning allows communities to identify and protect green areas of particular importance to them. Designating land as Local Green Space must be consistent with the local planning of sustainable development. Local Green Spaces should only be designated where they are capable of enduring beyond the end of the plan period. Spaces should only be designated as Local Green Space where the space is:
- (a) in reasonably close proximity to the community it serves; AND
 - (b) demonstrably special to a local community and holds a particular local significance, for example because of its beauty, historic significance, recreational value (including as a playing field), tranquillity or richness of its wildlife; AND
 - (c) local in character and is not an extensive tract of land.
- 6.6. Volunteers have prepared a detailed assessment of the open spaces within the Plan Area to identify which spaces meet the above criteria and should therefore be designated as Local Green Space. The site at Fletcher's Croft is considered to meet the criteria for designation as Local Green Space.
- 6.7. National policy sets out how Local Green Spaces are protected. Development proposals should not conflict with the reasons that the local green space has been demonstrated to be special to the local community or prejudice its role as a Local Green Space.
- 6.8. Policy SNDP5 follows the matter-of-fact approach in the NPPF. In the event that development proposals come forward on the Fletcher's Croft local green space within the Plan period, they can be assessed

on a case-by-case basis by the District Council. In particular it will be able to make an informed judgement on the extent to which the proposal concerned demonstrates the 'very special circumstances' required by the policy.

SNDP5 LOCAL GREEN SPACE

- SNDP5.1 Land at Fletcher's Croft (as shown on the Proposals Map) is designated as local green space.
- SNDP5.2 Development proposals on the Fletchers Croft local green space will only be supported in very special circumstances.

- 6.9. For clarity, the justifications for the above designated LGS are set out below with the full assessment being included in the Evidence Base.

Fletcher's Croft

- 6.10. This space is demonstrably special to the local community and holds a particular local significance primarily because of its recreational value and also because it provides a key viewpoint of the Church.
- 6.11. Although located within The Steyning Conservation Area, LGS designation is considered to provide additional protection. The Conservation Area status requirement that any development should protect and enhance the Area is not considered to give the same degree of local protection to the site itself as does the aim of permanent openness which comes from LGS designation.

7. POLICIES MAP

7.1. The Policies Map shows designations arising from policies contained in this plan, and other relevant planning documents. For ease of reference the policies map is included across several inset maps on the following pages.

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Geopolitical Boundaries

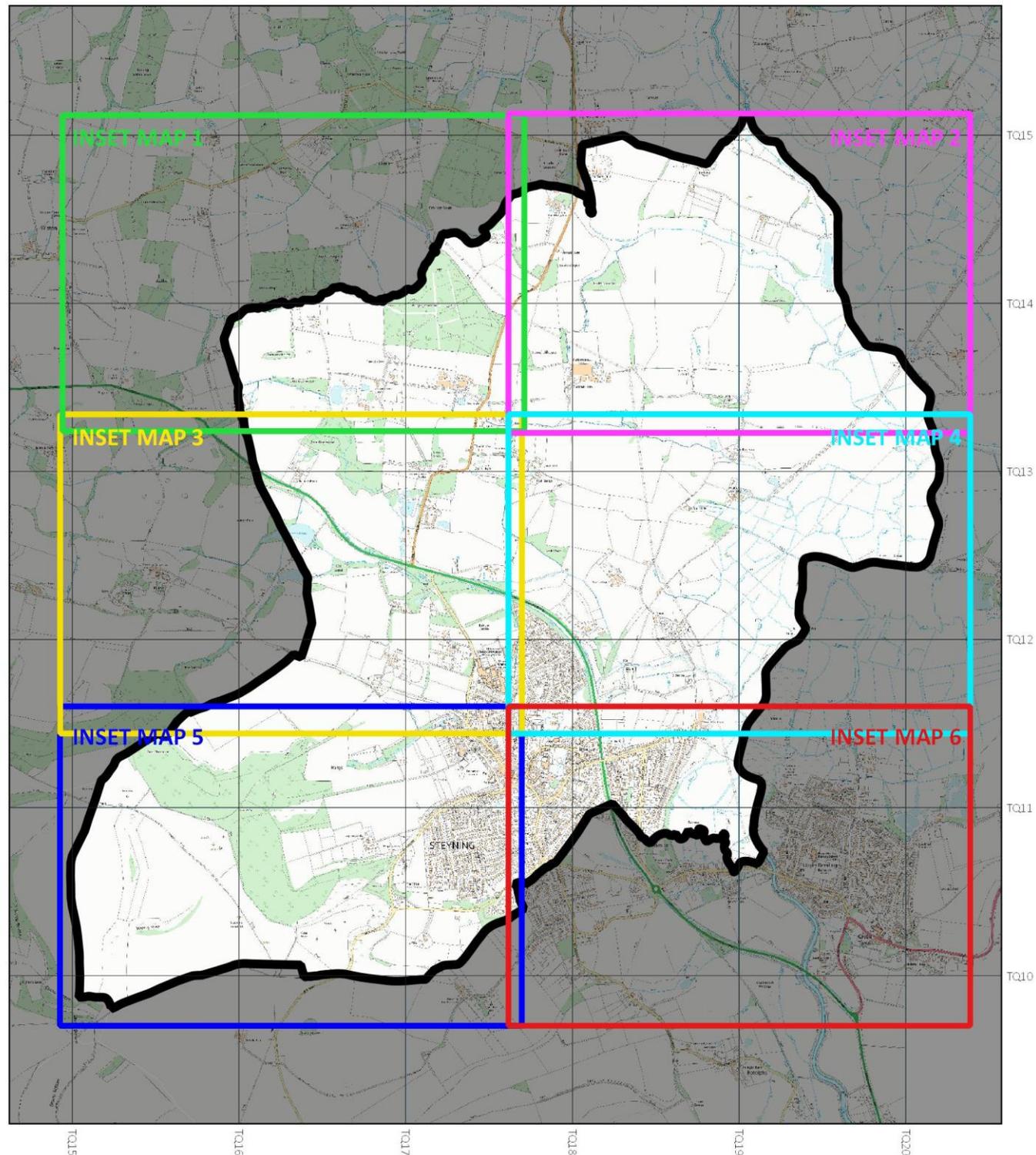
-  Parish Boundary
-  Not in Plan Area
-  South Downs National Park

Steypning Neighbourhood Plan

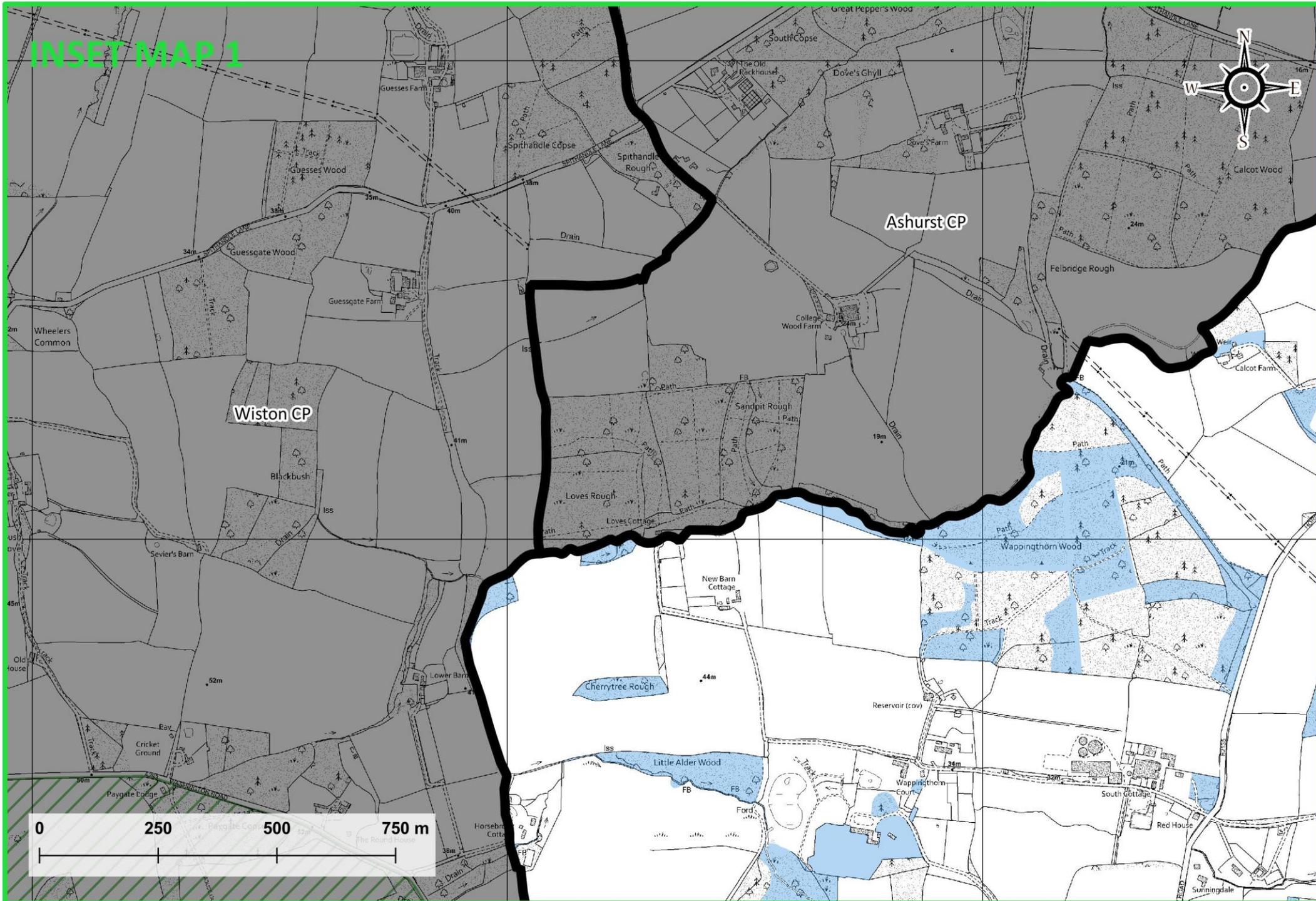
-  Local Wildlife Sites (SNDP1, SD9, & Policy 25)
-  Local Geological Sites (SNDP1, SD9, & Policy 25)
-  Priority Habitat (SNDP1)
-  Local Green Space (SNDP5)

Other relevant planning policy

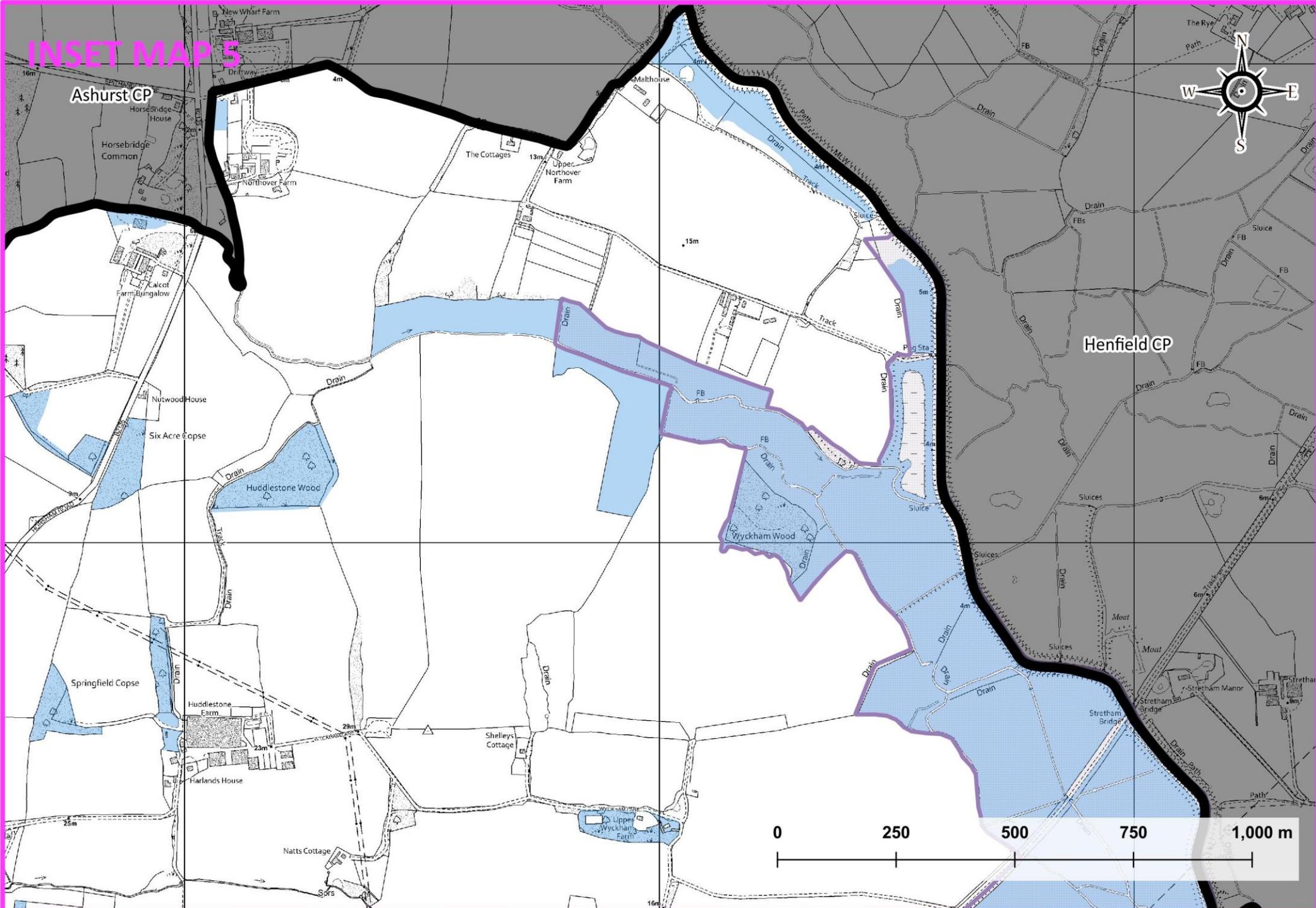
-  Conservation Areas (SD15 & Policy 14)
-  Scheduled Monuments (SD15 & Policy 14)



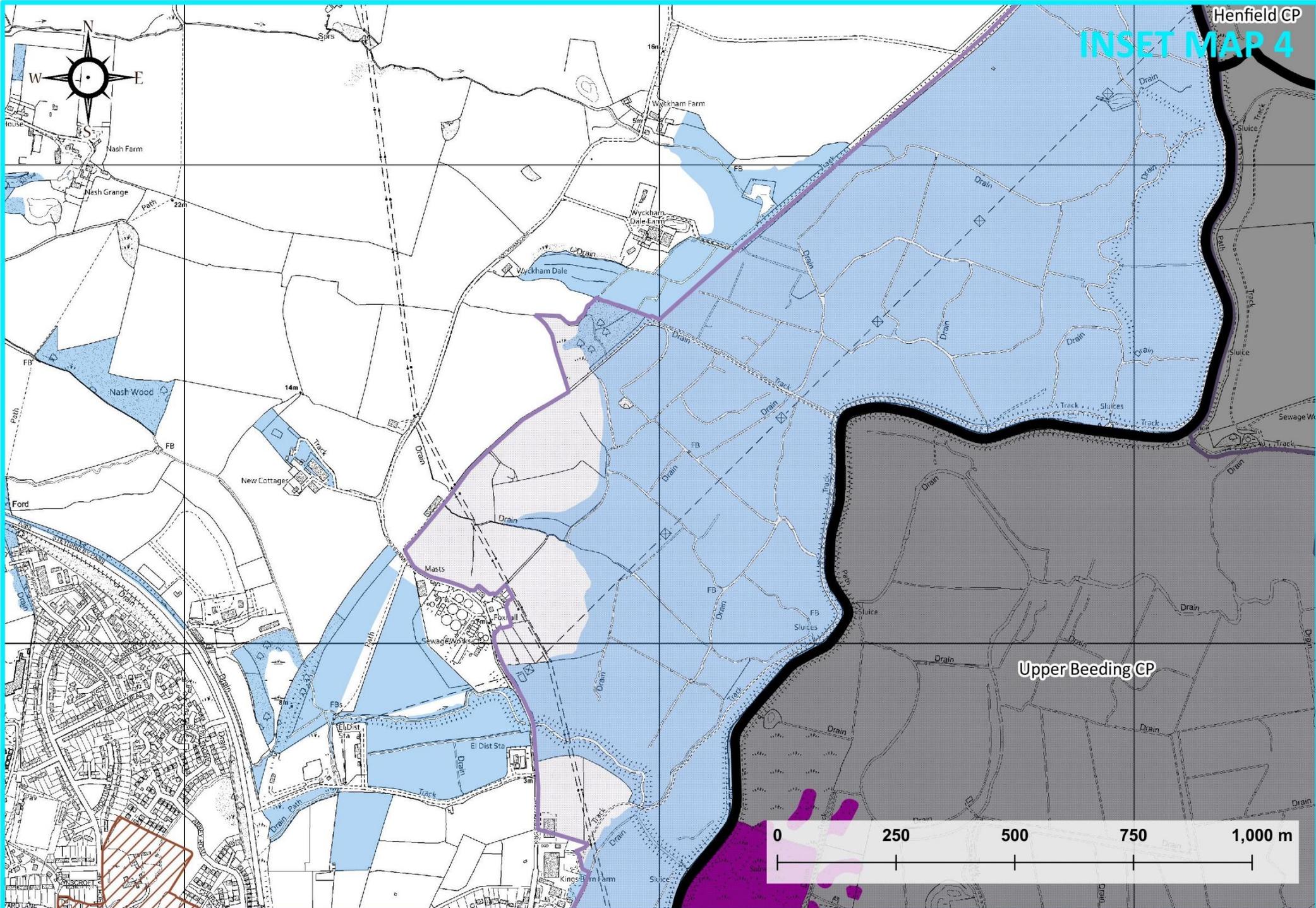
INSET MAP 1



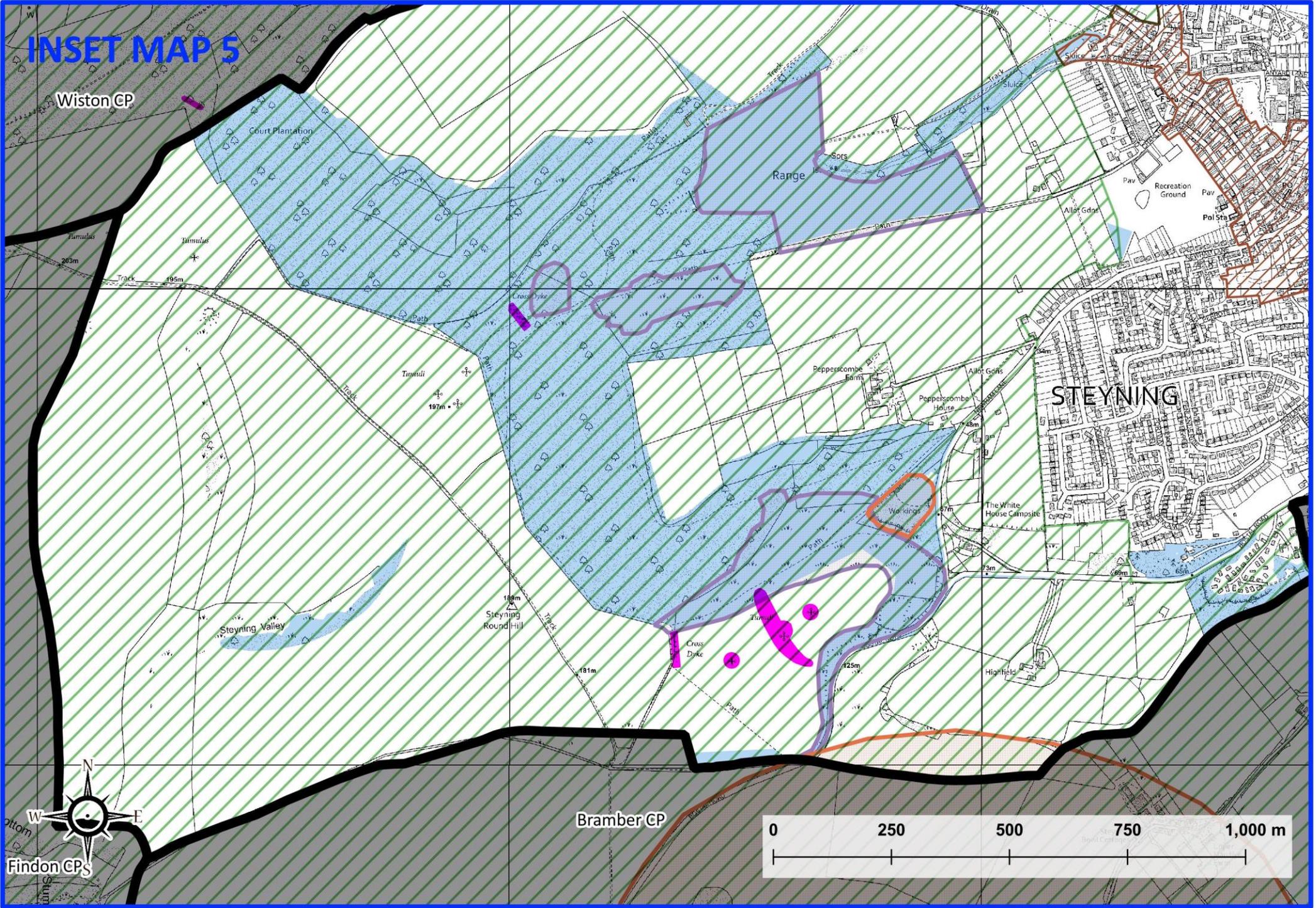
INSET MAP 5



INSET MAP 4



INSET MAP 5



8. COMMUNITY ACTION

- 8.1. This part of the Plan comments about an issue which has arisen as the Plan was being prepared. Whilst it is not a land use matter it is an important issue for the Parish Council. In addition, it may assist with the delivery of the ambitions of Policy SNP4 (Improving our Facilities).
- 8.2. The Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) is a planning charge introduced by the Planning Act 2008 (and brought into force by 2010 Community Infrastructure Levy Regulations) as a mechanism for local authorities to provide or improve infrastructure that will support the development of their area.
- 8.3. In England, where there is a neighbourhood plan in place, the neighbourhood is entitled to 25% of CIL revenues from new development taking place in the Plan Area (for areas without a neighbourhood plan, the neighbourhood proportion of CIL is a lower figure of 15%). This money is paid to Parish Councils to spend on local priorities.
- 8.4. The policy below confirms how CIL monies will be spent and provides community action support for appropriate developments.

9. SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS

- 9.1. The documents set out below have been prepared by members of our community and used by the Steering Committee to inform the formation of this neighbourhood plan.
- 9.2. It should be noted that some of the proposals and recommendations in these documents are not included in this plan. This is because this plan only includes policies which are considered by the Steering Committee and Parish Council to have evidenced local support and support the vision statement developed with the people of Steyning
- 9.3. In order to meet the submission deadline, it has not been possible to include all of the areas initially considered for inclusion in the plan.

CLIMATE CHANGE

- 9.4. This document has been prepared by Geoff Barnard, a local resident and leader of Steyning's climate group, 'Steyning 10/10'. It makes the case that climate change should be considered as a central issue in the drafting of the Plan, and that this is a key opportunity to shape Steyning's future in a way that is 'climate smart'. It aims to:
 - Set the scene in terms of the climate risks that Steyning faces, and the wider scientific and policy context.
 - Present an evidence base on where Steyning is starting from in terms of its readiness to face future climate challenges.
 - Outline a vision for what a 'climate smart' Steyning might look like.

- Make practical recommendations on measures and policies that the Community Plan could incorporate to deliver on this vision.

ECOLOGY & BIODIVERSITY

- 9.5. This report has been prepared by a father and son team, Paul Maidment and Ryan Maidment (MSc, BSc. (Hons), GradIEMA), who both live in Steyning. It makes the case that ecology and biodiversity, and the opportunity to support a 'net gain' in its composition and richness, should be considered a fundamental issue in the drafting of the Plan to support and actively encourage a biodiverse parish.
- 9.6. The report:
- Sets the scene by reviewing the risks to ecology and biodiversity loss in the context of international, national, district and local policy.
 - Presents an evidence base that describes the current status of biodiversity within the Steyning Parish boundary.
 - Outline Steyning's vision for the future of biodiversity and the integration of ecological values in the Parish.
 - Makes practical recommendations on measures and policies that the Plan could incorporate to deliver on this vision.

A CHARACTER APPRAISAL OF STEYNING

- 9.7. This document has been prepared by a group of residents including Gill Muncey, Cllr Michael Bissett-Powell and Cllr Chris Young.
- 9.8. It provides an objective appraisal of the Parish and describes its distinctive appearance and 'feel'. It records the key features and characteristics that combine to give an area and environment its local distinctiveness and unique identity. It divides Steyning Parish into 8 character areas, each of which is examined so as to identify its unique quality such as architectural types and ages, materials, public realms or spaces, maintenance and general condition.
- 9.9. The information within the Assessment comprises descriptive text supported by photographs, maps and other graphic material. Where appropriate it also identifies opportunities for future enhancement of the Parish of Steyning.

10. ABBREVIATIONS & GLOSSARY

We recognise that this document contains words that are not used in everyday language. This section therefore contains an alphabetical list of words contained in this document alongside explanations as to their meaning.

Basic Conditions	<p>Only a draft neighbourhood Plan or Order that meets each of a set of basic conditions can be put to a referendum and be made. The basic conditions are set out in paragraph 8(2) of Schedule 4B to the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 as applied to neighbourhood plans by section 38A of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004. The basic conditions are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">a. having regard to national policies and advice contained in guidance issued by the Secretary of State it is appropriate to make the neighbourhood plan.d. the making of the neighbourhood plan contributes to the achievement of sustainable development.e. the making of the neighbourhood plan is in general conformity with the strategic policies contained in the development plan for the area of the authority (or any part of that area).f. the making of the neighbourhood plan does not breach, and is otherwise compatible with, EU obligations.g. prescribed conditions are met in relation to the plan and prescribed matters have been complied with in connection with the proposal for the neighbourhood plan.
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Community Infrastructure Levy:	A levy allowing local authorities to raise funds from owners or developers of land undertaking new building projects in their area. Where a Neighbourhood Plan is made, 25% of CIL monies gathered within the Plan Area is handed to the Parish Council to spend on infrastructure.
Development plan:	The adopted Local Plan and Neighbourhood Plan for a given area and is defined in section 38 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.
Green infrastructure:	A network of multi-functional green space, urban and rural, which is capable of delivering a wide range of environmental and quality of life benefits for local communities.
National Planning Policy Framework:	The document that contains planning policy that applies across England and is created and published by central government.
Neighbourhood plans:	A plan prepared by a Parish Council or Neighbourhood Forum for a particular neighbourhood area (made under the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004).
Open space:	All open space of public value, including not just land, but also areas of water (such as rivers, canals, lakes and reservoirs) which offer important opportunities for sport and recreation and can act as a visual amenity.
Plan Area:	The area to which this Neighbourhood Plan applies as designated by Horsham District Council and South Downs National Park.

Planning condition: A condition imposed on a grant of planning permission (in accordance with the Town and Country Planning Act 1990) or a condition included in a Local Development Order or Neighbourhood Development Order.

Planning permission: Formal permission from a local authority for the erection or alteration of buildings or similar development.

Previously developed land: Land which is or was occupied by a permanent structure, including the curtilage of the developed land (although it should not be assumed that the whole of the curtilage should be developed) and any associated fixed surface infrastructure. This excludes: land that is or has been occupied by agricultural or forestry buildings; land that has been developed for minerals extraction or waste disposal by landfill purposes where provision for restoration has been made through development control procedures; land in built-up areas such as private residential gardens, parks, recreation grounds and allotments; and land that was previously-developed but where the remains of the permanent structure or fixed surface structure have blended into the landscape in the process of time.

Referendum: A general vote by the electorate on a single political question which has been referred to them for a direct decision. In this case whether this neighbourhood plan should be used in the determination of planning applications in the parish.

South Downs National Park Authority: The Authority responsible for the South Downs National Park with the power to determine planning applications within it.

Wildlife corridor: Areas of habitat connecting wildlife populations.