

## **Consultation matters determined by the Data, Evidence and Mapping Technical Advisory Group**

**June 2025**

### **1. Approaches to, and principles of, mapping**

1a. Suitability of habitat creation or measure to area – should mapping approach exclude certain land types, land uses and habitats from some measures? Or is current caveat that states that “the nature of the mapping approach means that a measure may not always be appropriate to where it is identified and mapping is indicative rather than definitive” sufficient.

- The KWT mapping team noted that a small number of exclusion areas have already been built in, as advised on and provided by the LPAs. These can be added to, but specific locations will need to be identified to the project by GIS maps. It was also noted that
- In respect of ground-truthing the data sets, although this hasn't specifically been done, the KSH2012 habitat maps used have been checked against more recent landcover data to check and update what is recognised as old data.
- It was noted that in respect of one of the possible unsuitable measures for habitats raised - woodland creation on grassland – this had been considered and built in by using with EWCO low sensitivity woodland creation layer for the mapping,
- Noted that a blanket exclusion may result in missed opportunities.
- Noted that projects should be sense checked against other data at the time of development and the caveat approach will help to ensure that.

**Decision:** DENTAG determined that no further refinement on the basis of excluding certain land types, land uses and habitats from some measures was required, noting that some specific exclusions had already been applied on the advice and input of partners. A robust and clear caveat for the mapping would be sufficient.

1b. Conflicting measures – where more than one measure is mapped to the same area of land, how should potentially conflicting measures be identified and addressed.

It was noted that measures which may be conflicting would not be considered at the same time and therefore shouldn't pose a problem. But clarity on which measure was the priority would be beneficial and would also help to avoid any potential conflict and/or confusion.

**Decision:** DENTAG determined that nothing further was needed in respect of mapping of measures and potentially conflicting measures in the same area. This would be sufficiently dealt with by guidance on prioritising of measures where there was more than one in the same location, and with caveats for measures as appropriate.

1c. Presentation of connectivity modelling layers to provide context to its use in refinement of Areas that Could become of particular Importance for Biodiversity (ACIB)

**Decision:** DENTAG determined that the connectivity modelling outputs should be available via the online mapping platform when published as additional information. It was noted that it would need to be accompanied with a sufficient explanation of what the maps were showing so that they were not misinterpreted.

1d. Treatment of priority habitats within LNRS

Used as many priority habitats as possible in creating potential measures mapping but only where it aligned with the actual measure. Wasn't used for measures that created, as didn't want to be creating new habitat on something already identified as priority habitat.

**Decision:** KWT will look inclusion of priority habitats when finalising the "better" potential measures mapping. Ask DDC (who originally commented on this) to advise KWT is there are any measures that sit outside this, for which exclusion of priority habitat is an issue.

## **2. Approaches for mapping of measures**

2a. Mapping of CON4.2 *Implement broad buffer zones and connecting strips between significant habitat areas* – exclusion of irreplaceable habitat and clarification of significant habitat area

**Decision:** Retain mapping approach as it is but KWT will check that areas of irreplaceable habitat are included (likely already are under other sites already mapped but will ensure this is the case). Change measure to "Implement broad buffer zones and connecting strips between habitat areas designated or managed for their biodiversity value".

2b. Mapping of LM4.1 *Protection of habitats and species sensitive to disturbance by employing site management, and other measures, which support connection to, and experience of, wildlife but ensures our most sensitive sites remain undisturbed* - exclusion of land allocations and used of INNS layer

**Decision:** Use of the INNS layer in methodology will be revisited by KWT and KMBRC and amended as appropriate (or rationale for its use explained in methodology). Exclusion, or not, of the land allocations to be decided by Supporting Authority Group.

2c. Value of mapping CON1.2 - *Identify and safeguard areas that are strategically important in reducing fragmentation and addressing bottlenecks for species movement* – is coverage too broad to be useful

**Decision:** To be removed as mapped measure and instead have as a principle for planning. Will also include under data and evidence needs, the identification of strategically important areas for planning authorities to safeguard. Instead the mapping output can be used in the pressures section, as an illustration of the fragmentation and bottlenecks for species movement that occur across the county. KMBRC will look at how the connectivity mapping can inform or supplement the heat maps for priority species habitat assemblages.

2d. Value of mapping LM1.2 - *Identify key pieces of farmland that are strategically important for linking natural habitats* – is coverage too broad to be useful

**Decision:** To be removed as mapped measures and instead include under data and evidence needs.

### **3. Areas of Particular Importance for Biodiversity**

3a. Areas of Particular Importance for Biodiversity left isolated/unconnected from ACIB

**Decision:** No action to be taken. The area of concern raised in relation to this consultation response, Dungeness, will likely be connected and linked with the Sussex LNRS (noted that Kent LNRS will be consulted on their mapping). It was noted that the mapping result is a reflection of the nature of Kent's habitats, landscape and species.

#### **4. Areas that Could become of particular Importance to Biodiversity**

##### **4a. Small, isolated pockets identified as Areas that Could become of particular Importance to Biodiversity**

**Decision:** Retain these areas – they represent priority ponds, veteran trees and other critical features in our landscape which need action.

##### **4b. Small areas cut out of Areas that Could become of particular Importance to Biodiversity**

**Decision:** No broadbrush approach to correct or address will be taken to address small cut out areas in ACIB. However, it was agreed that within the urban measures, connectivity is critical, and these gaps do need to be addressed. KWT and KMBRC to collaborate to find an approach that will ensure all parks (and the entirety of the park) is mapped into measures and ACIB.

##### **4c. Proposal to omit the high-density urban areas from the ACIB map**

**Decision:** On the basis that this exclusion would reduce the opportunities and benefits of NBS in urban areas, would exclude some important areas of greenspace and would be counterproductive, it was determined that high-density urban areas would not be omitted from the ACIB map.

##### **4d. Proposed inclusion of Central Park (Dartford) in ACIB**

**Decision:** Where an urban measure is mapped to an urban area and has been used to inform the ACIB but areas of it have been excluded because of the connectivity refinement applied, these areas will be added back in on the basis that connectivity is most difficult across urban landscape, and that the connectivity refinement seemingly has negative unintended consequences in the urban areas.