



**User guide
to the online
mapping tool**

1. Introduction

The Kent and Medway Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS) has identified the priorities for nature recovery in Kent and Medway, the potential measures that could be taken to support the delivery of these and where in the county these would be best delivered. The measures are focussed around ten ambitions:

Ambition theme	Potential measure prefix
Connectivity	CON
Nature based solutions	(not mapped)
Land management and land use	LM
Grassland habitats	GL
Successional habitats	SH
Woodland, trees and hedgerows	WTH
Freshwater habitats	FW
Urban environments	URB
Coastal habitats	CL

The potential measures have been mapped and these maps are available online at https://webapps.kwtg.uk/lhrs_measures_webmap/

The Strategy also presents the Kent and Medway Local Habitat Map. The Local Habitat Map for Kent and Medway is a key part of the LNRS, comprising of:

- “Areas of Particular Importance for Biodiversity” (APIB) - areas already afforded protection (national conservation sites, local nature reserves, local wildlife sites and areas of irreplaceable habitat).
- Potential measures mapping.
- “Areas that Could become of particular Importance for Biodiversity” (ACIB) - the target areas identified by the LNRS as the focus for the delivery of the strategy’s potential measures.

The Strategy also presents mapped *wider measures* – these are measures identified as valuable to the recovery of a particular habitat but could only be mapped to the extent of that habitat, rather than prioritised areas. Whilst these do not feature in the Strategy’s Local Habitat Map, they play an important role in directing broad action across the whole of the Strategy area. Within the mapping tool menu, these maps are grouped separately from the potential measures maps.

For the purposes of the supporting authorities pre-publication review, the mapping tool supplied with the Strategy has been amended with updated maps but still just provides basic functions. We are in the process of creating a more user friendly and functional mapping tool, which will be available at the time of strategy publication. We will continue to add on more functions after publication, when we know exactly how the Local Nature Recovery Strategy will inform action, grants, funding and investment.

2. Notes on the maps

Before using the Strategy mapping it is important to note the following:

- Mapping indicates areas where the potential measures could be delivered. In some instances, these are wide ranging areas, in others they are specific areas depending on the mapping capability. In all cases, the mapped areas are indicative.
- The strategic nature of this document means that some measures may not be relevant or appropriate when considered in detail at the local level.
- The desk-based approach means the mapping is theoretical and not based on actual known site condition. Site assessments, and other permissions and pre-requisites, will inform the appropriateness of the action to that location.
- Inclusion of a site in the Local Nature Recovery Strategy does not preclude that action from any necessary permissions, site assessments and other pre-requisites before it is implemented.
- Sites of Special Scientific Interest, Special Areas of Conservation, Special Protection Areas, Ramsar sites and National Nature Reserves are statutory national and international designations. Measures have been mapped to these sites to maintain the integrity of the connectivity approach taken in creating a nature recovery network for the Strategy area. The potential measures also present future considerations for the site. However, the mapped potential measures do not override or replace existing management associated with the designation nor do they negate the need for any requisite consents or approvals. It is essential that the existing designated features and the legal processes and guidance are checked and followed prior to delivery of the suggested measure.
- Mapping is based on existing known data – consequently, other sites may hold potential interest or relevance to a potential measure but may not be mapped as there is no pre-existing data available.
- The Strategy and associated maps do not dictate actions, nor instruct their implementation – they are a guide for how landowners and managers could use or manage the land, or approach their operations, in a way that could support the recovery of nature.

- Mapping of an area to a potential measure, wider measure or areas that could become of particular importance to biodiversity does not offer any formal, or otherwise, protection which can only be provided through statutory designations or local planning policy. It also does not preclude any uses of the land or operations.
- Although mapping indicates where this action may be most needed or result in the greatest gains, the introduction of this action can be applied outside of the target area – nature recovery action does not need to be limited to the areas that could become of particular importance to biodiversity.
- A potential measure may have value locally, that is not reflected when considered strategically at a county scale – therefore its exclusion from the mapping does not indicate that the action is not applicable.
- The Strategy notes a number of management measures to increase the functionality or biodiversity of a habitat – some have been mapped, some not. These management measures apply to all the county and although mapping indicates where this management may be most needed or result in the greatest gains, the introduction of appropriate management will deliver benefits wherever it is applied.

IMPORTANT NOTE: In respect of the mapping tool itself:

- All layers will take time to load but in particular the first time you select the larger layers (ACIB, APIB and all potential measures) they can take several minutes to load, but on only this first selection, it will speed up the next. It also helps to only select one of these at a time and leave it to load, clicking around the screen is likely to slow it down or encourage a page refresh.
- Please follow the step-by-step guides to ensure that the maps work for you, particularly when using multiple layers to overlap each other as the order of selection will affect the visible result on your screen. The defining layer (i.e. ACIB/APIB) must be selected last in the sequence, if already on, it must be switched off and on again once the potential measures have been selected.
- Some of the mapped measures have different depths of colour within the maps – this does not indicate anything, and all coloured areas should be viewed as the same.
- For the purposes of the supporting authorities pre-publication review, the mapping tool supplied with the Strategy has been amended with updated maps but still just provides basic functions. We are in the process of creating a more user friendly and functional mapping tool, which will be available at the time of strategy publication. We will continue to add on more functions after publication, when we know exactly how the Local Nature Recovery Strategy will inform action, grants, funding and investment.

3. Accessing the online mapping tool and basic functions

The online mapping tool can be accessed via https://webapps.kwtg.uk/lhrs_measures_webmap/



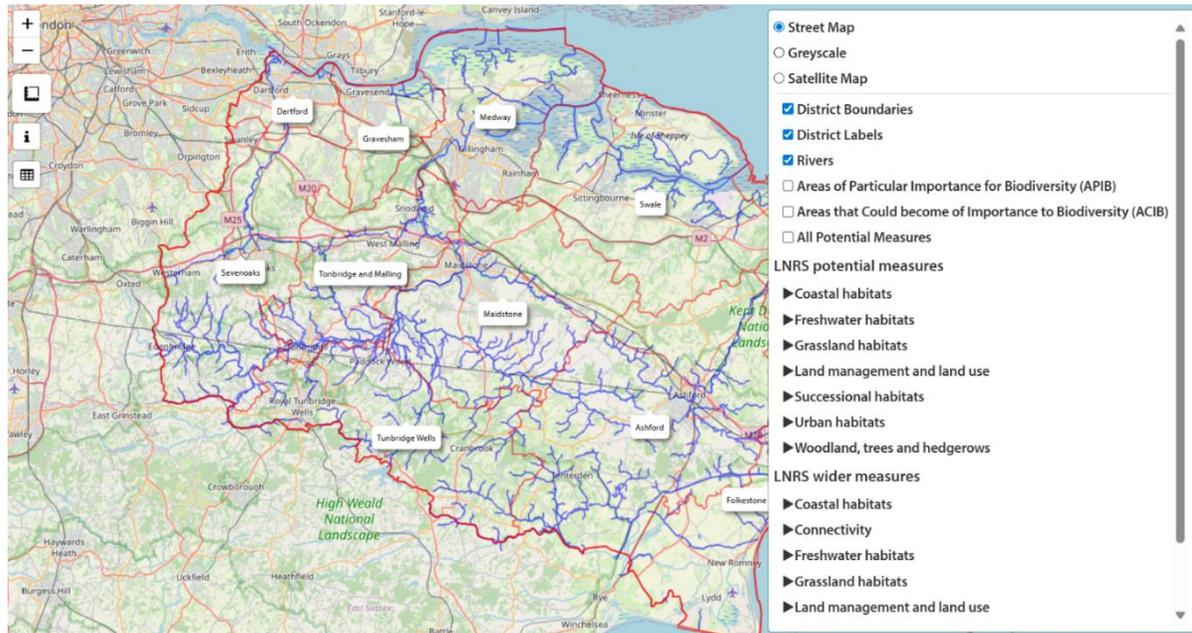
When you first launch the mapping tool, you will get the pop-up shown to the left.

Please read through the pop up and click ok.

Please note that owing to the amount of data available to view in detail from this platform, layers may take some time to view – depending on internet speeds and computer specifications this could be up to 2 minutes, so please be patient. If it stretches over 2 minutes, it may be worth refreshing the page.

Any problems accessing the tool, please email makingspacefornature@kent.gov.uk

Once you have clicked ok, you will get through to the mapping platform.



By using the various mapping functions, as detailed in this guide, you will be able to use the online platform to view:

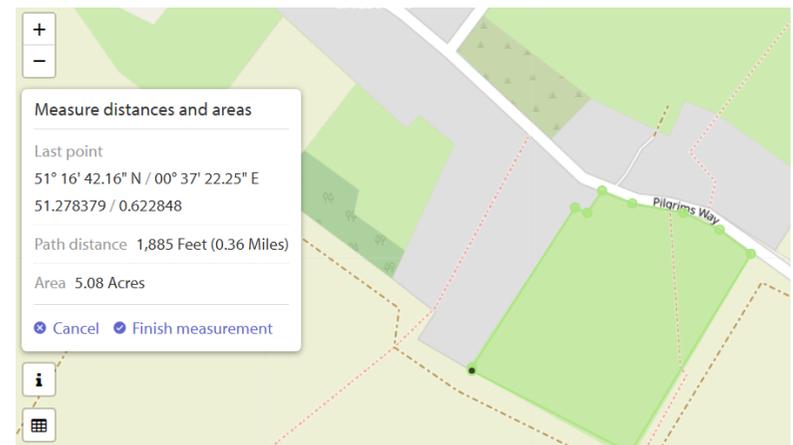
- Areas of Particular Importance for Biodiversity (APIB).
- Areas that Could become of particular Importance for Biodiversity (ACIB).
- All potential measures – illustrating the extent of potential measures mapped across the county.
- All the individual mapped LNRS potential measures.
- All the individual mapped LNRS wider measures.

The online tool includes the following functions:

- The mapping platform allows you to select your **preferred baseline map** (Street Map (default view), greyscale or satellite map).
- You can also select **map features** of district boundaries, district labels and the rivers network.
- From the platform you can find **full details of all the mapped potential measures** by clicking on the mapping table button  on the left of the screen.
- If you want to know **what a potential measure reference number relates to**, click the table button  on the left of the screen and enter the reference number into the search box under PotMeasRef. This will bring up what the measure and a brief description of the mapping methodology. More detail on the mapping method and the data sources can be found in the LNRS appendices 1.2a, 1.2b and 1.3.
- The map also includes a **zoom function** – use the + and – buttons on the left of the screen.
- You can bring the initial **information pop-up box** back at any time by pressing the information button  on the left of the screen.
- You can also use the **measuring tool** or  left of the screen for an indication of distances and area by creating an outline of the area you wish to measure.

PotMeasRef	Measure	ACIB	Method
GL2.2	GL2.2 Deliver grazing marsh habitat restoration, extension and creation where it will offer the greatest gains to support the county's important grazing marsh flora and fauna, and is designed to minimise recreational disturbance and reduce risk from predation.	Yes	Mapped waders population data, coastal and floodplain grazing marsh, coastal saltmarsh, lowland meadows, purple moor grass and rush pastures; 30m away from current woodland. Additional RSPB suggested areas have been included.

Showing 1 to 1 of 1 entries (filtered from 128 total entries) Previous 1 Next



This document explains how to use the various functions in order to view the different mapping elements of the Kent and Medway Local Nature Recovery Strategy – and how these can be used to inform your action for nature recovery action. Overleaf are quick links, which will take you directly to the “how to” guide to view specific information using the map.

Quick links to the mapping guides

[View all measures for a broad habitat](#)

[View all measures for a specific habitat](#)

[View where to target specific measures](#)

[View measures at specific location](#)

[Informing delivery of BNG](#)

[Using the wider measures mapping](#)

[View Areas of Particular Importance for Biodiversity](#)

[View extent of all potential measures](#)

[View Areas that Could become of particular Importance for Biodiversity](#)

[Prioritising action](#)

4. Using the LNRS mapping to identify action to recover nature

The Strategy mapping provides a spatial context to the wide number of priorities set out in the Kent and Medway Local Nature Recovery Strategy. It takes what could be seen as an overwhelming list of actions and sets a county-wide plan for where these actions would best be delivered.

As such, the mapping is a key part of the Strategy – it breaks down what we need to do, and crucially where, to recover nature in Kent and Medway. How you use the maps will be dependent on what you are wanting to know.

Where are the priority areas for a specific habitat type?

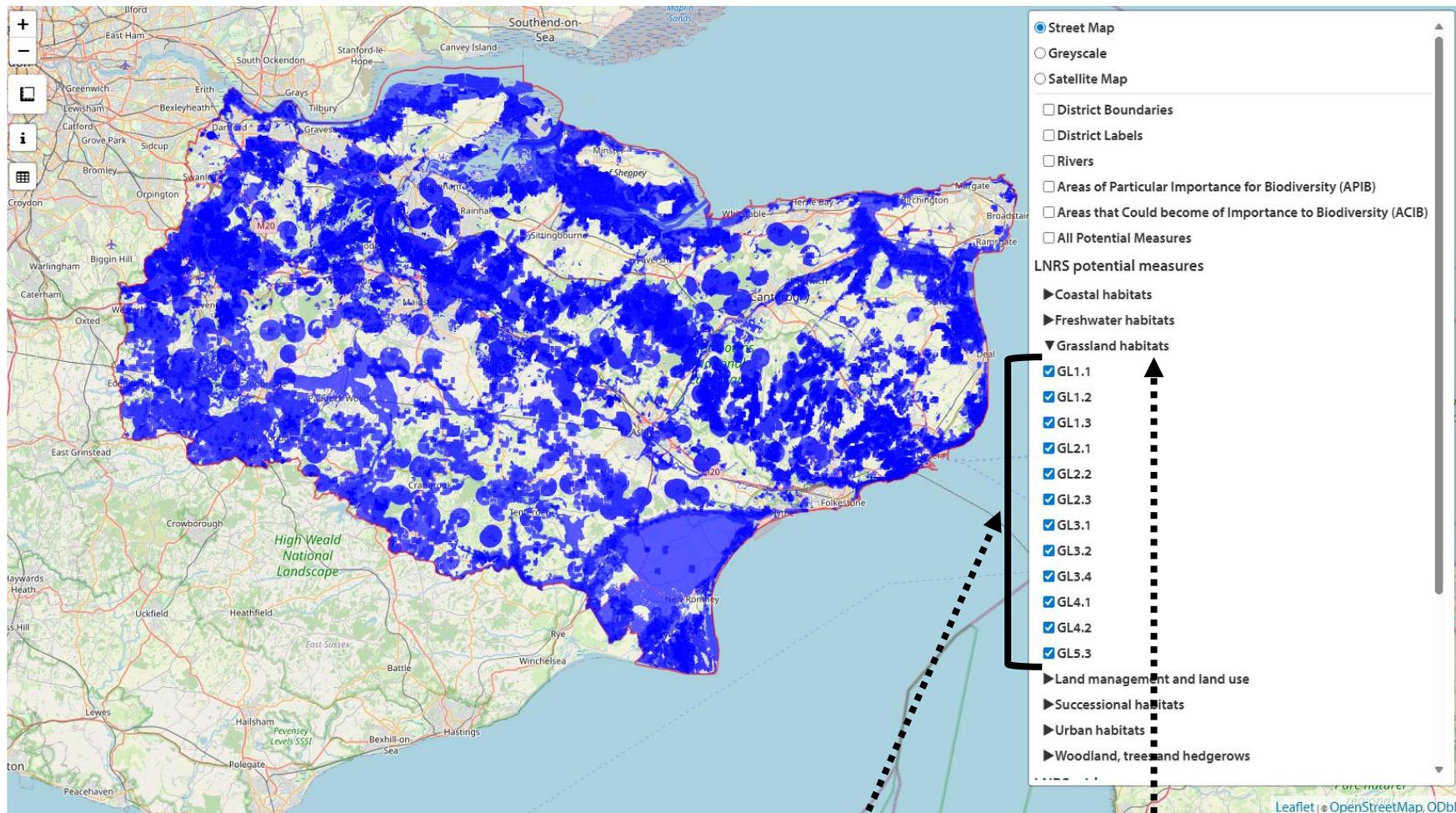
You may be interesting in knowing where in the county has been identified as the key areas for a specific habitat type – this might be a broad habitat group, like grasslands, or a specific habitat like lowland meadows.

You can view these on the map by selecting all the potential measures that start with the relevant prefix. Continuing the example, this would be looking at mapped measures that start with GL, if your interest is all grasslands, or GL3 if your interest is specifically lowland meadows.

This will show you, in **blue**, where in the county the Strategy has identified action should be targeted for that broad habitat group and/or specific habitats. The habitat prefixes can be found in the table below. When viewing the maps, you may find that more than one potential measure is identified for an area – see [guidance on prioritising measures](#).

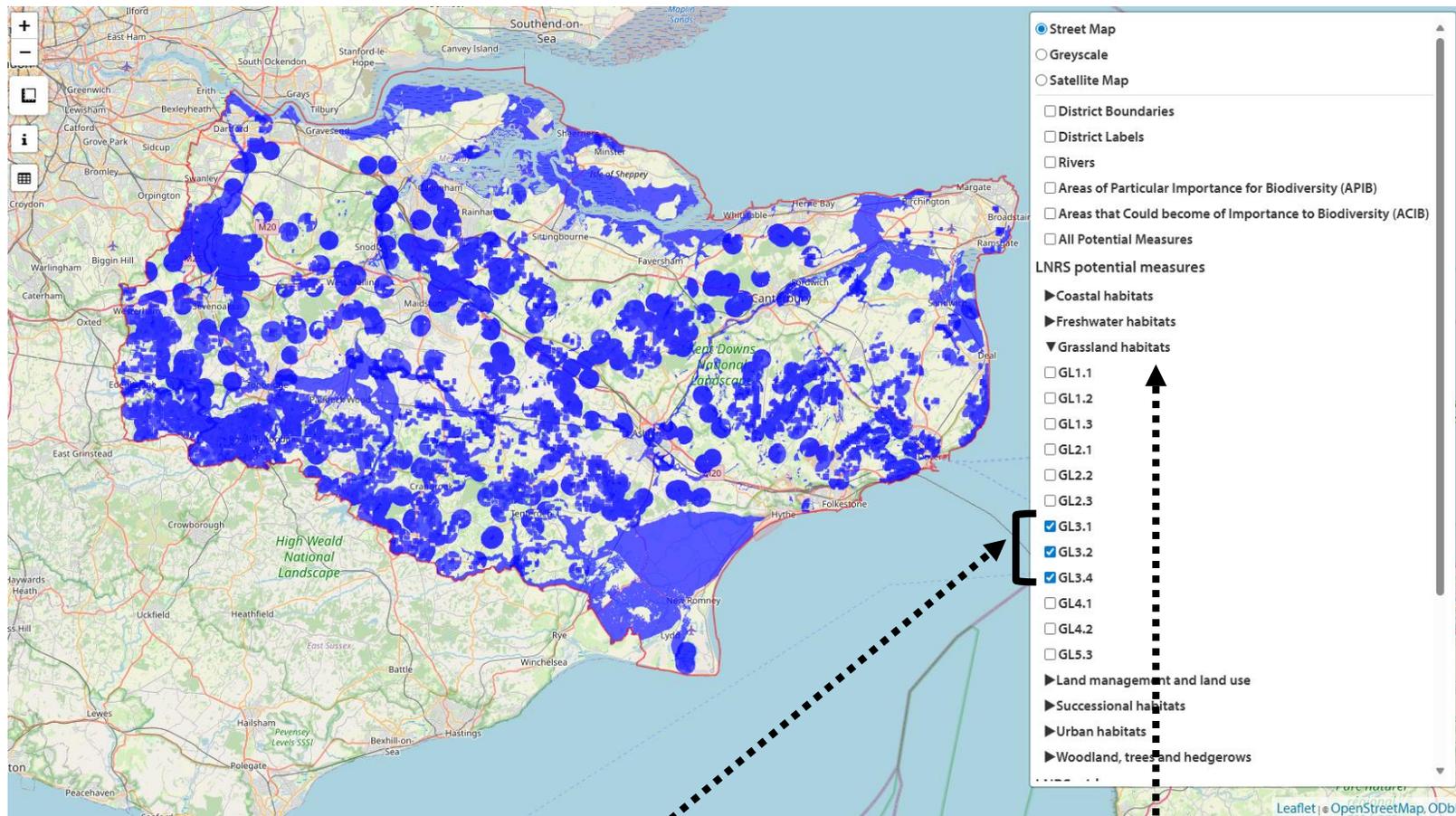
Ambition habitat grouping	Prefix	Kent and Medway Local Nature Recovery Strategy priority habitat	Prefix
Grassland	GL	Chalk grasslands	GL1
		Coastal and floodplain grazing marsh	GL2
		Lowland meadow	GL3
		Acid grassland and heathland	GL4
		Arable field margins	GL5
Successional habitats	SH	Open mosaic habitats found on previously developed land (brownfield)	SH1
		Scrub	SH2
Woodland, trees and hedgerows	WTH	Existing woodland, including wood pasture and parkland	WTH1
		New woodland	WTH2
		Lost woodland	WTH3
		Woodland resilience	WTH4
		Ancient woodland and ancient and veteran trees	WTH5
		Wet woodland	WTH6
		Gill woodland	WTH7
		Hedgerow	WTH8
		Traditional orchards	WTH9
Freshwater	FW	Rivers and streams, including chalk and clay rivers (naturalised)	FW1
		Rivers and streams, including chalk and clay rivers (clean)	FW2
		Rivers and streams, including chalk and clay rivers (supply)	FW3
		Rivers and streams, including chalk and clay rivers (buffered)	FW4
		Headwater streams	FW5
		Ponds and lakes	FW6
		Lowland mire sites (fen and valley mires)	FW7
		Reedbeds	FW8
		Freshwater wetland	FW9
		Semi-natural lowland drains and marshlands	FW10

Ambition habitat grouping	Prefix	Kent and Medway Local Nature Recovery Strategy priority habitat	Prefix
Urban	URB	Urban (fragmented)	URB1
		Urban greenspace	URB2
		Urban greenspace (nature-based solutions)	URB3
Coastal	CL	Estuary and open coast	CL1
		Saltmarsh and mudflats	CL2
		Seagrass	CL3
		Chalk cliffs and reefs	CL4
		Native Oyster and Blue Mussel reefs	CL5
		Saline lagoons	CL6
		Vegetated shingle	CL7
		Sand dunes	CL8



To view all measures for a broad habitat grouping

1. Select the habitat grouping you wish to view by clicking on, in this instance, grassland habitats.
2. Select all the potential measures sitting under this habitat grouping.
3. The result map shows you where all grassland habitat potential measures have been mapped – as indicated by the blue areas.
4. Remember, if at any time you want to check what the potential measure is that you're viewing the mapping for, you can search for the relevant reference number by selecting the  button – this will then tell you what the potential measure is.



To view all measures for a specific habitat type

1. Select the habitat grouping the habitat type you wish to view falls under, by clicking on, in this instance, grassland habitats for lowland meadows.
2. Select all the potential measures related to lowland meadows by selecting all the maps with the relevant reference prefix – in this case GL3 for lowland meadows.
3. The result map shows you where all lowland meadows potential measures have been mapped– as indicated by the blue areas..
4. Remember, if at any time you want to check what the potential measure is that you're viewing the mapping for, you can search for the relevant reference number by selecting the  button – this will then tell you what the potential measure is.

Where should specific action be targeted?

You may be interested in knowing where in the county has been identified as the key areas for a particular action – this might be actions that relate to one of the Strategy principles, for instance “more”, or a particular action you’ve seen identified against a priority.

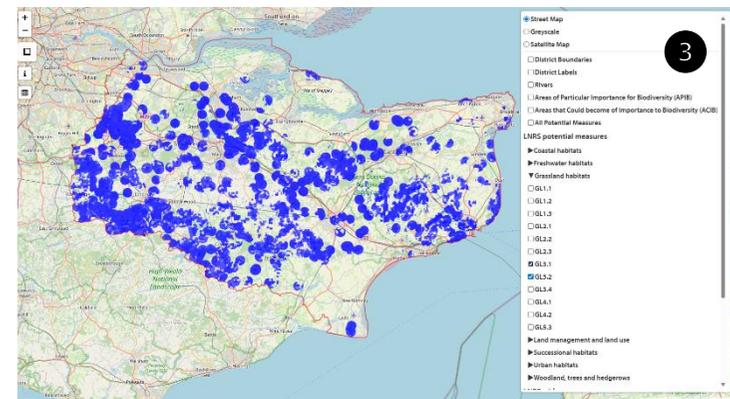
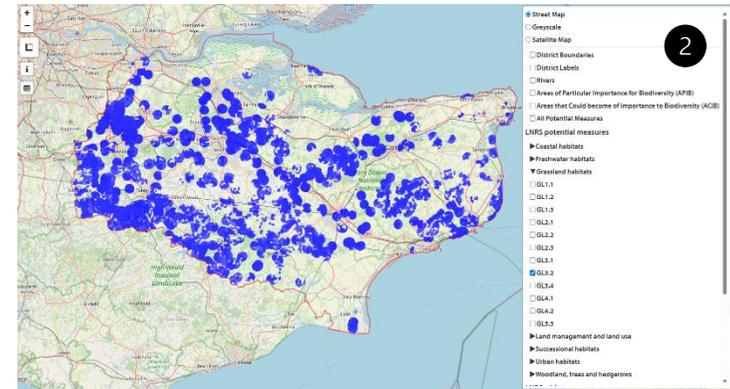
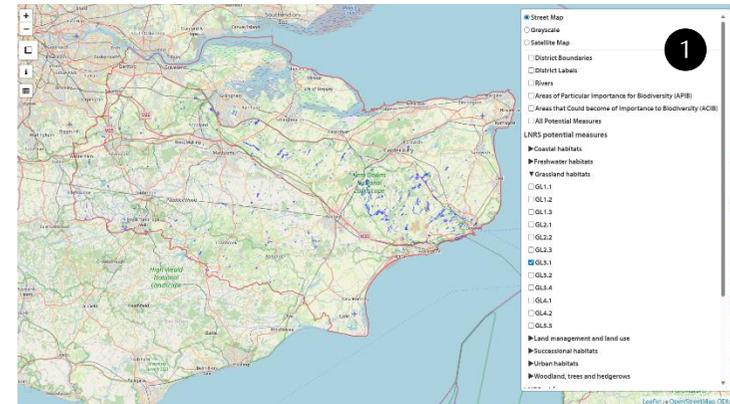
You can view these by selecting the specific measure, using the reference number – areas identified for delivery of a potential measure are indicated in **blue**.

If you wanted to see where actions delivering “better” for lowland meadow had been mapped, you would select the map for GL3.1 (see map 1).

If you wanted to see where the potential measure “increase the extent of high quality, connected lowland meadow by creating new lowland meadow sites, in close proximity to core/good condition sites” had been mapped, you would select the map for GL3.2 (see map 2).

You can view more than one potential measure at a time (see map 3), but the current online map will not distinguish between the potential measures. When doing so, you may find that more than one potential measure is identified for an area – see below for [guidance on prioritising measures](#). The reference numbers for each measure are provided in the priorities’ potential measures tables.

Remember, if at any time you want to check what the potential measure is that you’re viewing the mapping for, you can search for the relevant reference number by selecting the  button – this will then tell you what the potential measure is.



What should be done at a specific location?

You may be interested in knowing if any action has been identified at a specific location – whether that be land you own or manage, land you volunteer on or land that is of particular interest to you.

In viewing the map at that particular location, you can view whether potential measures have been mapped to that area. If there are no potential measures identified, you should also look at the wider measures mapping – whilst these are not a constitute part of the areas that could become of particular importance to biodiversity, they have been identified as offering a wider opportunity for nature recovery.

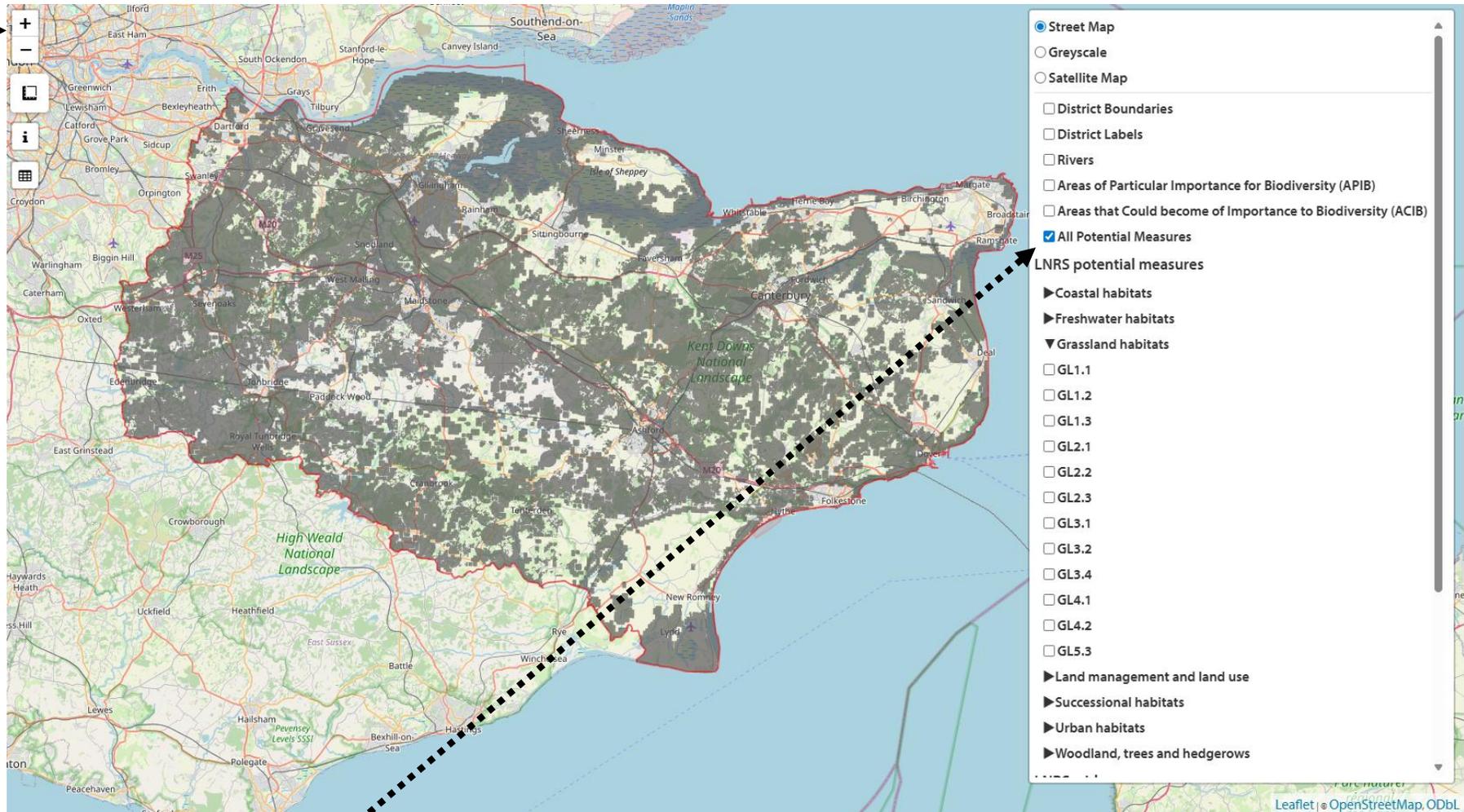
If the area of land you are interested in has a statutory national or international designation (Sites of Special Scientific Interest, Special Areas of Conservation, Special Protection Areas, Ramsar sites and National Nature Reserves), you may still find potential measures mapped. These do not override any existing management for the site, and it is essential that the existing designated features and the legal processes and guidance are checked and followed prior to delivery of the suggested measure.

If there are neither potential measures nor wider measures mapped to the area of interest, this does not mean that it holds no value for biodiversity, nor does it not offer any opportunity to support the recovery of nature. It is simply that, within the requirements of the Local Nature Recovery Strategy potential measures mapping, it has not been identified as significant at a strategic-county scale.

When viewing the maps, you may find that more than one potential measure is identified for an area – see below for [guidance on prioritising measures](#).

The current online mapping tool does not allow you to click on a specific location and see the measures mapped. This will be a future function of the published mapping tool. Currently, it is necessary to click through the relevant potential measures that you may be interested in delivering on the land of interest, to see if they have been mapped. Before doing so, you can view whether any measure has been mapped by selecting the all potential measures layer and then using the +/- buttons to zoom to the location you're interested in – this will at least tell you whether a potential measure has been mapped to the site. All sites mapped to a potential measure are shown in **grey**.

Remember, if at any time you want to check what the potential measure is that you're viewing the mapping for, you can search for the relevant reference number by selecting the  button – this will then tell you what the potential measure is.



To determine if there is a potential mapped to a specific location:

1. Select all potential measures from the menu to view whether a potential measure has been mapped to the location of your interest – indicated by the **grey** areas.
2. Use the +/- buttons to zoom to the location of interest.

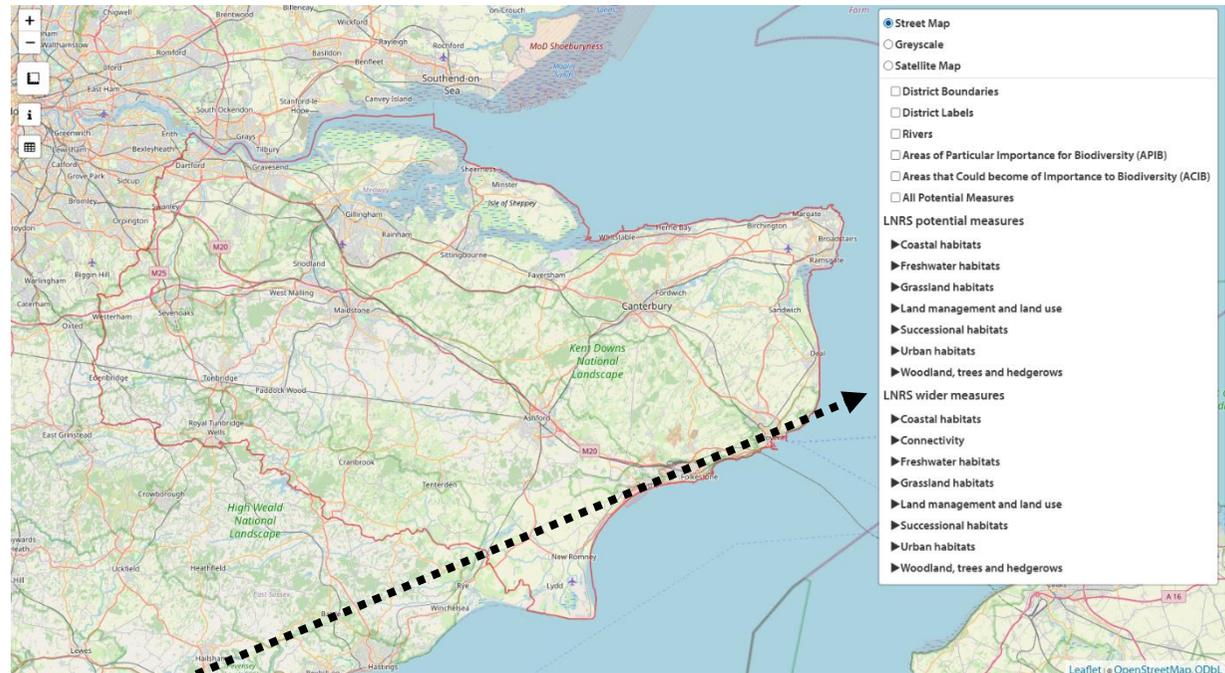
5. White space – using the wider measures mapping

Users of the Strategy and its mapping may be concerned about the ‘white space’, in the local habitat map, which indicates that the area is not mapped as being – or could become – of particular importance for biodiversity.

Every area has a biodiversity value and is important in the recovery of nature. This Strategy was developed under the project title *Making Space for Nature*, and that is absolutely what we need to do in every bit of the county’s landscape, if our wildlife is to have the room it needs to return to a thriving state. However, as noted by the Local Nature Recovery Strategy guidance, indiscriminate or widespread mapping of areas will not aid the targeting of available resources. Therefore, the Strategy is required to determine and map the areas that will have the greatest impact on achieving the priorities.

An unmapped area does not mean that no action should be taken – and there are measures that can be taken indiscriminately across the county. A number of the priorities have mapped wider measures – these are measures identified as valuable to the recovery of a particular habitat but could only be mapped to the extent of that habitat, rather than prioritised areas. Whilst these do not feature in the Strategy’s Local Habitat Map, they play an important role in directing broad action across the whole of the Strategy area and collectively fill in much of the “white space”.

Wider measures can be viewed online using the same method as potential measures – just select the mapping layers that are presented in the menu under LNRS wider measures.



6. Informing delivery of biodiversity net gain

The potential measures mapping has an important role in the delivery of meaningful biodiversity net gain. Biodiversity net gain is a mandatory requirement that aims to make sure that development has a measurably positive impact on biodiversity. This “gain” is calculated using a standardised metric, which identifies the biodiversity value of the land lost and the biodiversity gained.

The 2025 updated planning guidance notes that Local Nature Recovery Strategies will identify areas where habitat creation, restoration or enhancement would be most beneficial for nature recovery and wider environmental outcomes and that the Strategies can play a critical role in supporting offsite gains to be delivered in a way that maximises biodiversity benefits, when these are required to achieve a development’s biodiversity gain objective. This can help to support bigger and more joined-up areas in which our wildlife can thrive.

Local Nature Recovery Strategies are designed to promote the delivery of offsite biodiversity gain in the right places, where offsite provision is needed to meet the biodiversity gain condition for a development and it cannot be met in full through onsite habitat enhancements.

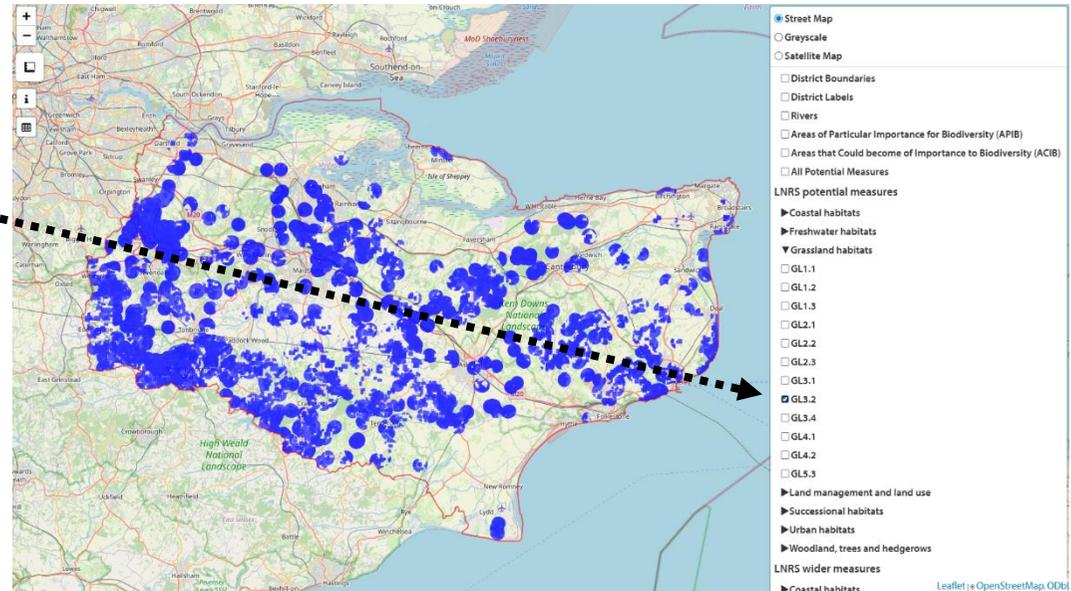
The Local Nature Recovery Strategy can be used as a key source of information regarding strategic approaches to off-site biodiversity net gain delivery and connections to existing habitat, when local planning authorities are carrying out their functions in respect of biodiversity net gain.

The statutory biodiversity metric formula takes different factors into account, including the habitat’s size, condition, type and strategic significance. Strategic significance is the local significance of the habitat based on its location and habitat type. Where a Local Nature Recovery Strategy has been published, high strategic significance (and the associated score) is applied when:

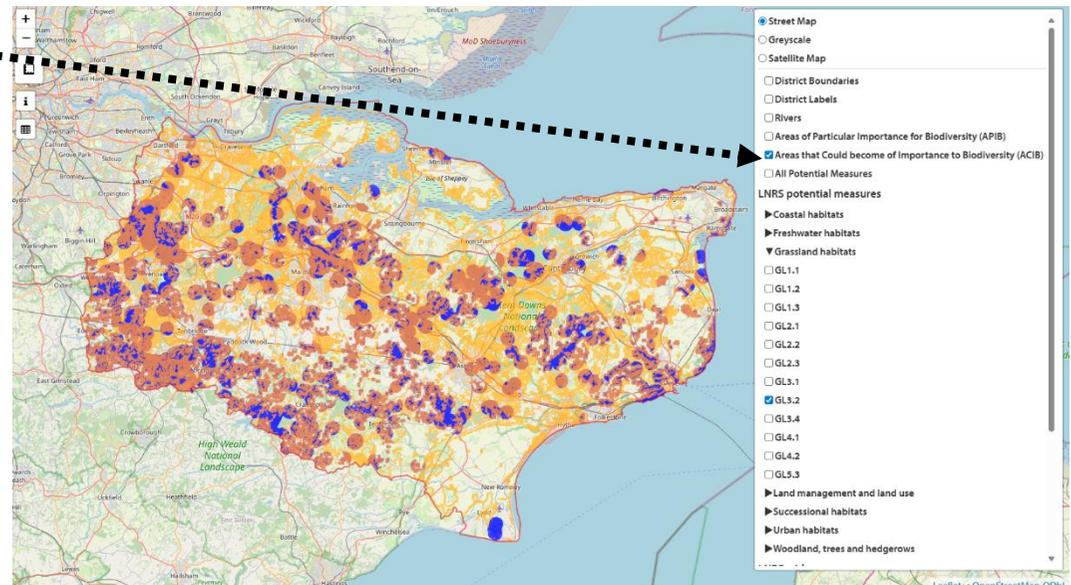
- the location of the habitat parcel has been mapped in the Local Nature Recovery Strategy as an area where a potential measure has been proposed to help deliver the priorities of the Strategy; and
- the proposed intervention is consistent with the mapped potential measure in the Local Nature Recovery Strategy for the habitat parcel.

The mapping tool can assist you in identifying whether the land and action you are planning will meet the criteria for strategic significance.

First select the potential measure you are interested in delivering by choosing the relevant measure map from the LNRS potential measures menu – only measures in this menu are eligible for strategic significance; it does not apply to the LNRS wider measures.



Then select the Areas that Could become of Importance for Biodiversity. If this is the first time loading this layer, please be patient as it can take some time to load in the first instance.

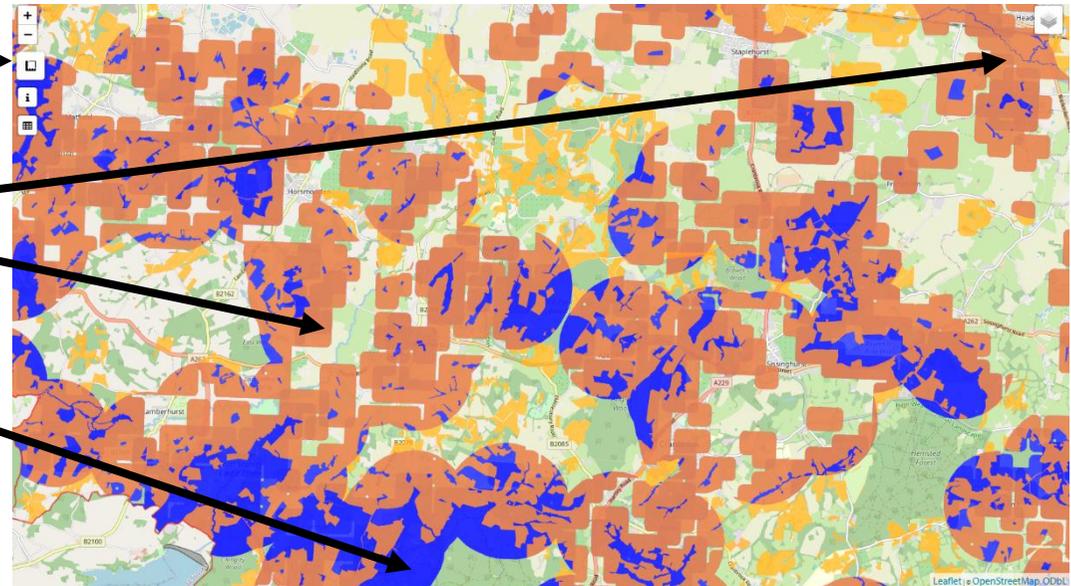


Then use the +/- keys to zoom to the location you're interested in. 

If the site is shown as **dark orange**, the potential measure is mapped to that location and it is within the Areas that Could become of Importance for Biodiversity.

If it remains **blue**, there is a measure mapped to the location but not within the Areas that Could become of Importance for Biodiversity.

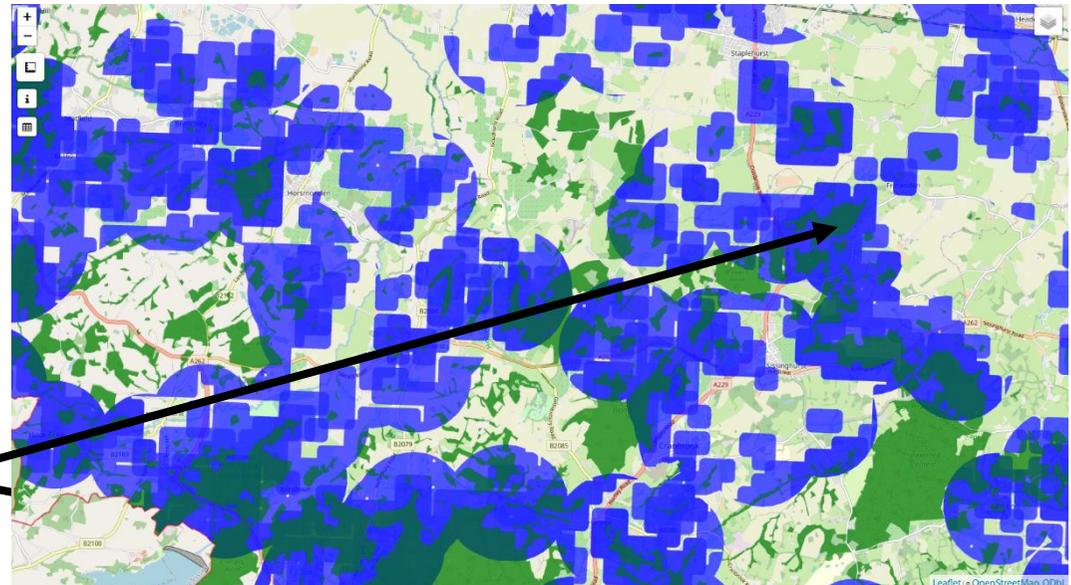
In this case check whether it falls within an Areas of Particular Importance to Biodiversity.



First ensure you have deselected Areas that Could become of Importance for Biodiversity from the menu – this should leave you with a map with just blue mapped areas.

Then select Areas of Particular Importance to Biodiversity. If this is the first time loading this layer, please be patient as it can take some time to load in the first instance.

If the site is shown as **dark green**, the potential measure is mapped to that location and it is within the Areas of Particular Importance to Biodiversity.



7. Protecting nature

The purpose of the Strategy is to provide a framework for nature recovery, directing action to where it is most needed and where it will deliver the greatest gains. It does not offer any formal, or otherwise, protection which can only be provided through statutory designations or local planning policy.

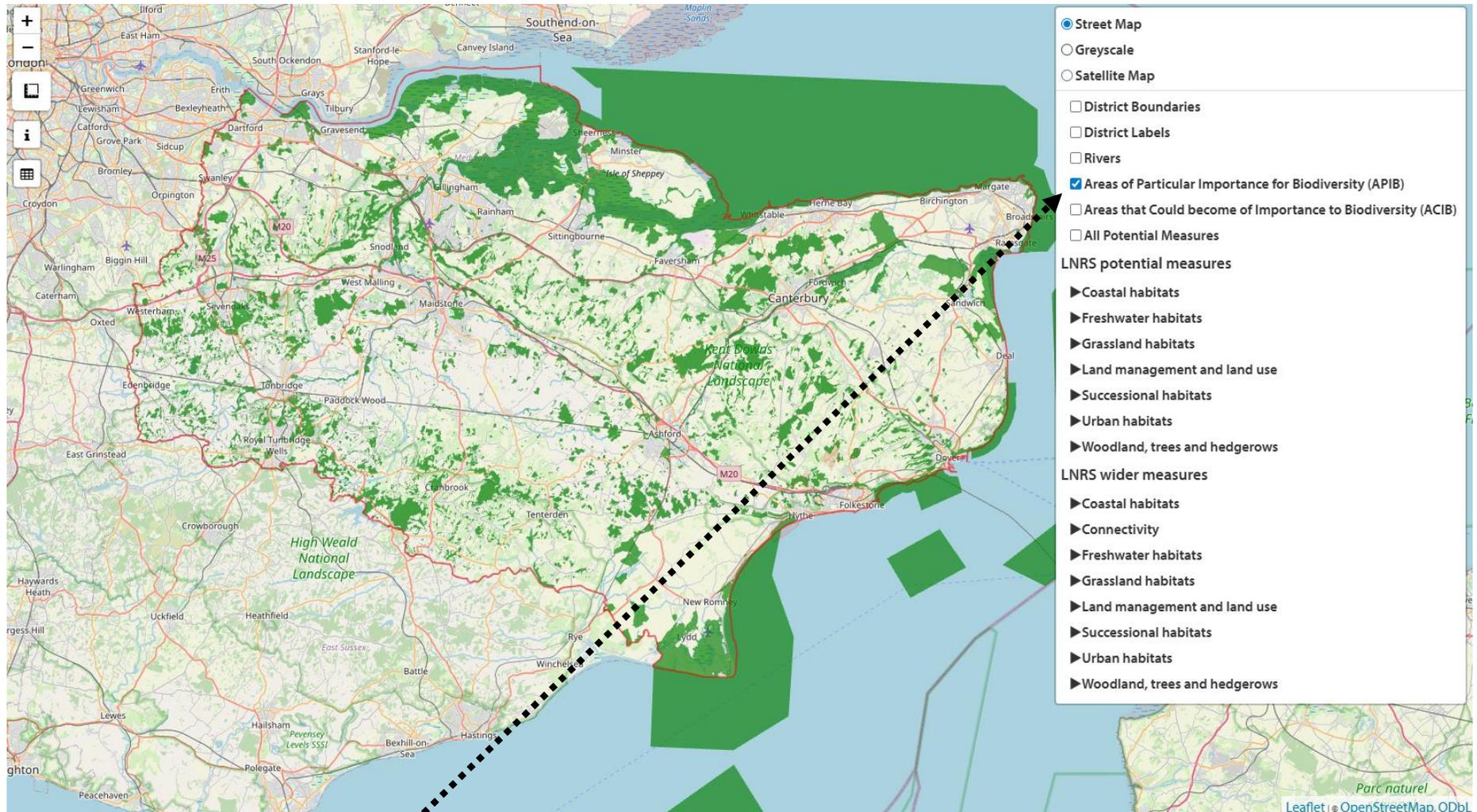
Throughout the document the term safeguard is used. In the context of this Strategy, this does not imply a formal protection nor prevention of potentially impactful activities, unless already identified within an existing and adopted local plan or an already established legal protection. Safeguarding may be delivered by setting aside the land but also refers to the use of active management that prevents loss and damage, the use of buffers to minimise human impacts and connecting habitats to increase resilience. Where measures refer to safeguarding areas, this does not mean that nothing can happen in these areas; rather that appropriate action should be taken within these areas to support the habitats and species they are notable for.

Land use decision making bodies, largely local authorities, and land owners, may choose to use the Strategy to help identify land that should be set aside for the purposes of nature recovery but there is no requirement on them to do so. The Strategy is there to offer direction and proposed measures that can assist public bodies in meeting their duties relating to the recovery of nature.

The LNRS Local Habitat Map can provide information for this purpose in its presentation of:

- Location and extent of areas identified as of particular importance for biodiversity.
- Locations where potential measures have been proposed.
- Location and extent of areas identified that could become of particular importance for biodiversity.

These mapping layers can all be viewed online.



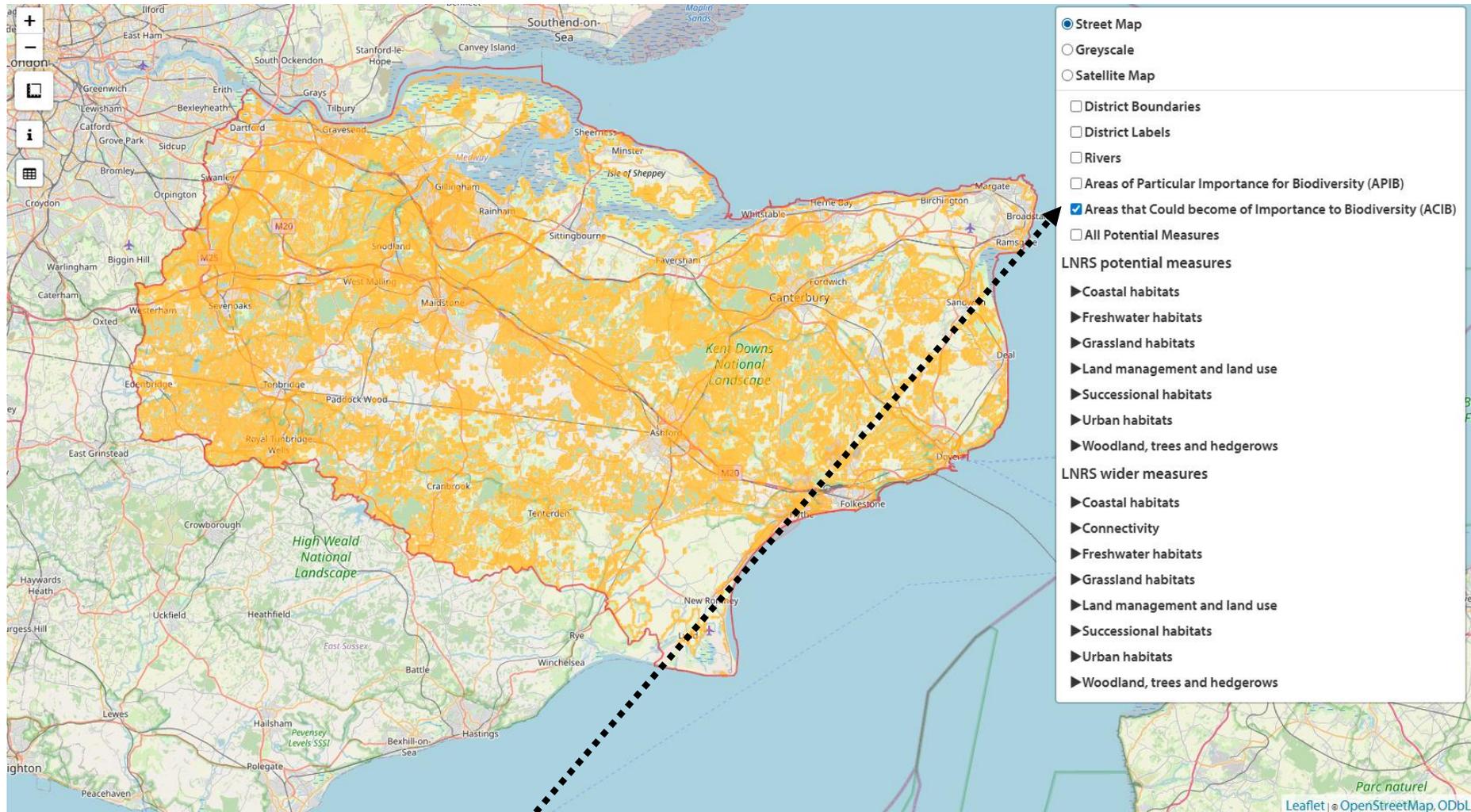
View the location and extent of areas identified as of particular importance for biodiversity by selecting this mapping layer from the menu. If this is the first time loading this layer, please be patient as it can take some time to load in the first instance.

All areas shown as **green** are those identified as of particular importance for biodiversity.



View the location and extent of all mapped potential measures by selecting this mapping layer from the menu. If this is the first time loading this layer, please be patient as it can take some time to load in the first instance.

All areas shown as grey have potential measures mapped to their location.



View the location and extent of areas identified that could become of particular importance for biodiversity by selecting this mapping layer from the menu. If this is the first time loading this layer, please be patient as it can take some time to load in the first instance.

All areas shown as **orange** are those identified that could become of particular importance for biodiversity.

8. Prioritising action when more than one potential measure is mapped to the same location

In some locations, more than one potential measure is identified. This is to ensure that no opportunity for nature recovery is missed and that broad areas consider a range of habitats, to create the mosaic of habitats that nature recovery needs.

Where the most appropriate measure, based on the site, is not clear following a local site assessment, the approach overleaf is recommended to aid the selection of the most appropriate measure to deliver. It is advised that professional advice is sought from a land advisor, nature conservation body or another appropriately qualified source.

