

5.7 TOW7 Green infrastructure and biodiversity

Development proposals should have full regard to maintaining and, where practicable, improving the functionality of the green infrastructure and biodiversity assets including Local Green Spaces, public rights of way (footpaths and bridleways), woodland, trees, hedgerows, ponds, and land of biodiversity value, in the design of their layouts and landscaping schemes, including delivering a net gain to general biodiversity assets.

Development proposals that would lead to an increase of green infrastructure and biodiversity assets will be supported where they are consistent with all other relevant policies of the development plan.

Proposals that would lead to an unacceptable loss of green infrastructure or biodiversity assets will not be supported.

5.7 1 The policy defines the presence of Green Infrastructure assets in the Parish. The Parish contains a variety of Green Infrastructure that provides an environmental support system for communities and wildlife. By doing so it supports Local Plan Policies ENV1 – ENV5. Its purpose is linked with the vision and principles of green infrastructure in the District - defining a network of green infrastructure assets in the neighbourhood plan area as a means of providing environmental support for the community and wildlife. The policy requires that all development proposals that lie within the Network, or that adjoin it, should consider how they may improve it, or at the very least do not undermine its integrity of connecting spaces and habitats. Where proposals include provision for landscaping, new means of access or new layouts, there may be opportunity to relate the land better to the Network, e.g. in complementing existing biodiversity value through the design of the landscape scheme. At the very least, the policy requires that proposals that will undermine the existing value of the Network will be refused permission.

5.7.2 The Network will become more valuable over time, and although the majority of these features are physically attached to enable habitat connectivity, some features of the Network are not. This does not devalue their integral biodiversity or recreational value and at some point in the future an opportunity may arise to achieve similar connectivity. As appropriate to the scale, nature and location of the development proposal a full survey of any affected green infrastructure or biodiversity assets should accompany the planning application concerned.