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Mid Sussex District Council - using UPRNs to secure £2.2m Government funding for local broadband improvements

Mid Sussex District Council's use of Unique Property Reference Numbers (UPRNs) helped to secure funding that will deliver significant economic value to the area.

In the 2017 Budget, the Chancellor created the £190m Local Full Fibre Networks Challenge Fund to encourage the roll out of fibre broadband to homes and businesses.

Mid Sussex District Council wanted to submit a bid for part of that funding with a focus on Burgess Hill, an area that had already been targeted for growth within the District Plan.

Projections showed that some 5,000 new homes will be constructed in and around Burgess Hill over the next decade, along with an area of commercial and industrial space known as 'The Hub', and a Cambridge style science park, all of which demand high capacity, reliable communications.

To submit a bid, the council had to provide hard evidence that its proposal would harness public sector connectivity and deliver a significant economic benefit to the local economy, motivating inward investment and the growth of local businesses – particularly those in the digital economy.

By using UPRNs to identify network coverage at an individual property level, Mid Sussex ensured a successful bid for £2.2m Government funding.

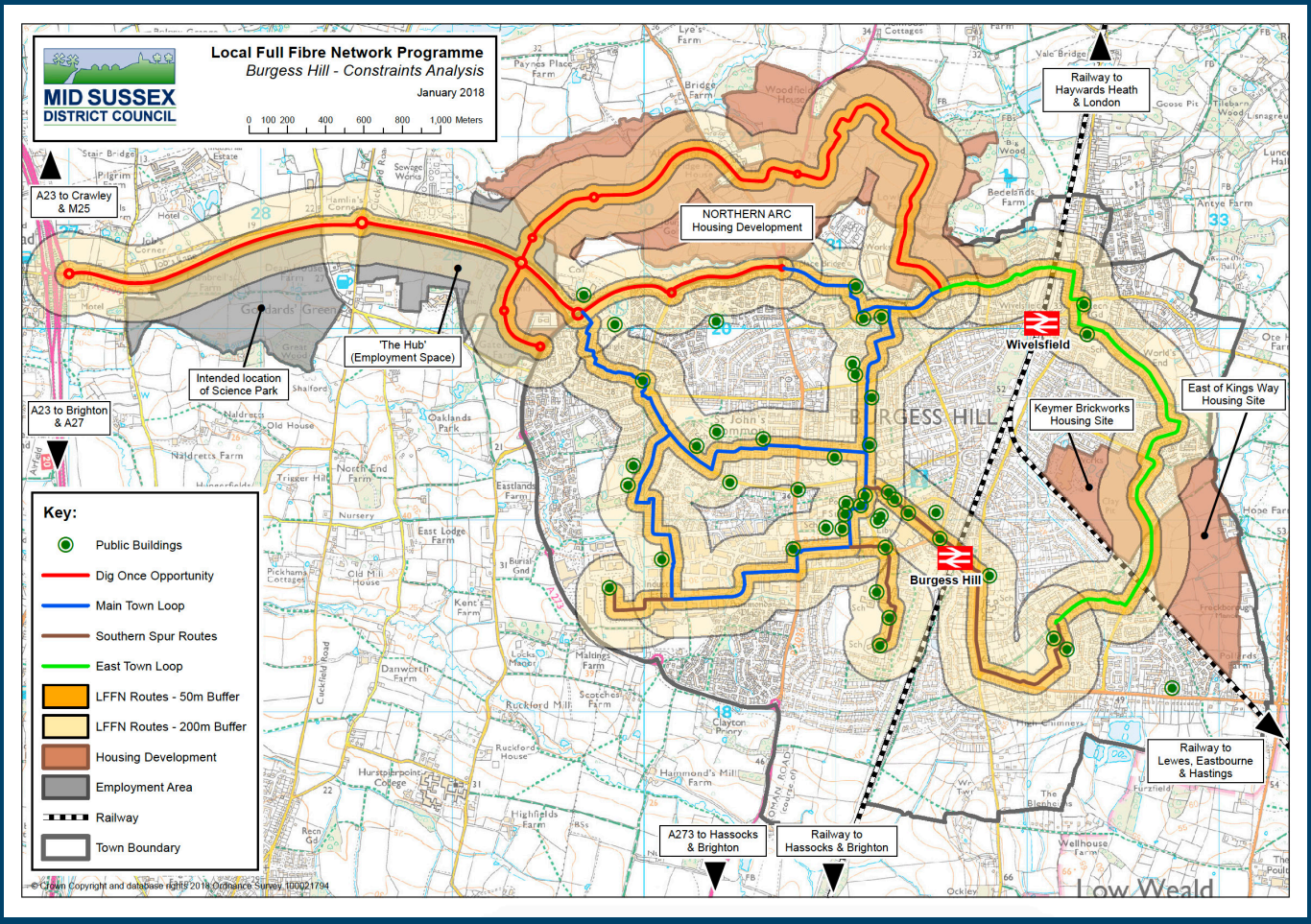
Linking UPRNs

The bid process required local authorities to identify key public facilities that could be used as anchor tenants. It also asked teams to calculate likely coverage along primary corridors of 50m and 200m between these anchor tenants.

To achieve this, the team created a dataset of public sector buildings and points of connectivity, all of which were linked, using UPRNs, to a Basic Land and Property Unit to demonstrate validity. From this new dataset, an optimal route for the new network was devised. This route was then 'buffered' to 50m and 200m, to show corridors where deployment of full fibre would be easily achieved.

With a desktop geospatial information system, Local Land & Property Data was then filtered by that BLPU classification to identify which entries were commercial, which were residential.

Point-in-polygon analysis then provided counts of commercial and residential properties falling within the corridors, and the calculated total economic value of the bid was submitted in the documentation – dropping precisely into the Economic and Financial Template provided by the Department for Digital, Culture, Media & Sport.



UPRNs provide accuracy in projections of network coverage

Delivering results

The principle benefit to Mid Sussex District Council and its residents is clear: the 2018 Spring Statement confirmed that £2.2m of central Government funding was awarded to the area from the Local Full Fibre Networks Challenge Fund. The bid was strongly supported by Sir Nicholas Soames MP.

Feedback demonstrated the effectiveness of the mapping provided with the bid, which, in itself, generated considerable interest from organisations interested in the value of using UPRNs and the deployment of geospatial data to visualise solutions with ease.

Overall, the bid process highlighted the importance of using UPRNs in analysis – guaranteeing dependable results when different datasets must be brought together. Local Land & Propety Gazetteer data was critical in assessing the potential economic benefit that would accrue for the area, from a successful roll out of a full fibre network.

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GeoPlace 157-197 Buckingham Palace Road London · SW1W 9SP · T. 020 7630 4600 · **www.geoplace.co.uk**