

BUILDING

A BETTER FUTURE



FOREWORD



**Councillor
Elizabeth Lloyd**

Cabinet Lead for
Local Plan,
Environment and
Water Quality

The world around us is changing radically. The effects of climate change, the aftermath of the pandemic, and the advances in technology which can provide alternative forms of transport and energy, are all changes to which we need to adapt.

Climate change is the biggest crisis the world is facing today. This change is happening locally as well as globally, and we all need to play our part in reducing harmful emissions. We are at a critical point to best influence positive change.

Work is underway to develop a Local Plan. This is a key strategy which will define development in the borough of Havant and also confront the challenges of climate change. The Local Plan will address multiple needs - housing, industry, transport, the environment, heritage and more.

Anticipating and fulfilling the needs of the borough, as well as addressing the urgent environmental issue of reducing our carbon footprint, are reliant on a significant volume of existing and original research from a variety of parties. Critically, it also requires feedback from residents and businesses, as it progresses, in order to adapt where possible, to reflect local need and sentiment.

This Local Plan will be integral in ensuring we have the right homes for our residents and that we can meet local need. It will redefine townscapes and help provide a relevant and varied offer, and it will support businesses through ensuring the right facilities are developed to meet local employment need.

We want to hear how you believe our Local Plan – entitled Building a Better Future - should address the key challenges we face. This consultation document sets out the direction we believe the Local Plan will take. We value your thoughts and welcome feedback on the approach taken.

I urge everyone with an interest in the borough to engage with the creation of our Local Plan. Your engagement will help us secure positive and long-lasting changes that best support local communities and businesses, while at the same time address the pressing need to protect and enhance the natural environment.

CONTENTS

Foreword	2
Introduction	4
The Local Plan for Havant Borough	5
The national planning system	6
Vision and Objectives	10
Development Strategy	14
Housing	18
Economy and Employment	22
Regeneration	26
Land and Densities	28
Retail & Town Centres	31
Flood Risk	34
Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople	36
Climate Change	38

The Natural Environment	42
Biodiversity Net Gain	45
Local Nature Designations	48
Affordable Housing	51
Housing design standards and specialist accommodation	53
Landscape and loss of agricultural land	56
Infrastructure	59
Effective Transport & Communications	62
Green Infrastructure	65
Sports and Recreation	67
High Quality Design	69
Heritage and the historic environment	71
Pollution	73
Your priorities for the Building a Better Future Plan	75
Summary of allocations methodology	78

INTRODUCTION

The Building a Better Future Plan is a key strategy for everyone who lives, works, visits or invests in Havant Borough. It sets out the vision for the Borough's future and how we will collectively meet the challenges ahead. Putting this plan together represents an opportunity to set a fresh direction for how we balance the need to develop and provide the homes and jobs that the Borough needs whilst ensuring the surrounding environment isn't harmed.



THE LOCAL PLAN FOR HAVANT BOROUGH

The Building a Better Future Plan will be the Local Plan for Havant Borough. Local plans are at the heart of the planning system and every local authority in England is required by Government to prepare one. The local plan addresses the needs and opportunities for development in an area setting out how much, what type and where development will take place over at least a 15 year period. It also sets out how development should take place, what infrastructure is required to support development and how harm is avoided.

Once finalised, the local plan will carry great weight in making decisions on planning applications. As a result, anyone who wants to influence decisions on how much development comes forward, where it should take place, and what form it should take should become involved in the preparation of the Building a Better Future Plan.

The Council's Corporate Strategy sets out the importance of the local plan in achieving the Council's overall purpose of enhancing the lives of our residents, businesses and visitors. It is also considered integral to implementing other Council strategies.

The Council's Climate Change and Environment Strategy provides a clear statement of the Council's environmental objectives and identifies priorities that will drive action within the Borough. This includes ensuring that the local plan contains policies which minimise emissions from new development and contributes to a goal of zero net emissions from the Borough by 2050.

Additionally, the Council's Regeneration and Economy Strategy sets out the economic case and opportunities for redevelopment and investment across the Borough. It highlights how the Council will target intervention to have the greatest impact. The Local Plan is key to implementing this strategy, including policies which identify key development sites and highlighting how development schemes should be implemented.



THE NATIONAL PLANNING SYSTEM

Like every local plan in the country, the Building a Better Future Plan has to be prepared in line with a number of regulations and national policies which cover the process of preparing the plan and required supporting documents. These regulations are more detailed for certain topic areas than others, particularly around the environment.

Whilst a local plan has to be unique and specific for the area it covers, it has to do so in line with a large amount of national rules and regulations. The Government has published the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) which sets out key topics that all local plans must cover and key requirements that it has to address.

The most significant and wide reaching is the Government's Standard Method which has to be used to calculate the need for new housing.

This must be the starting point for the local plan's approach to housing development, which is explored in later sections of this discussion document.

Within this discussion document, we've pulled out the key elements of the NPPF, though to get a full picture of how the Building a Better Future Plan will need to fit with Government's requirements, we would recommend that you read through the NPPF yourself.

The Government is proposing reforms to the plan making system through the Levelling Up and Regeneration Bill, which is currently progressing through Parliament. There are a number of reforms which could impact on the preparation of the Building a Better Future Plan. However, under the proposals as currently set out, local plans would remain. As such, the Council intends to continue pushing forward with the preparation of the Building a Better Future Plan whilst the reforms are finalised and will refine the plan at a later stage if necessary.



BECOMING INVOLVED IN THE BUILDING A BETTER FUTURE PLAN

The Building a Better Future Plan is for everyone and so it is essential that it is informed by as wide a range of views and information as possible. We use a mailing list to make sure that anyone who is interested in the local plan stays up to date with its progress. You can sign up through our website at www.havant.gov.uk/localplan. If you do not have access to email, you can write to us and ask to be sent postal notifications; our address is on the back cover of this consultation document.

The next stage is for the plan to be fully developed before it is consulted on. The plan itself will include a set of policies and development allocations designed to address the issues set out in this discussion document.

HOW THIS CONSULTATION DOCUMENT IS SET OUT

This document is not a draft of the Building a Better Future Plan; rather it is a discussion paper that explores the key issues. It recommends the approach we think should be taken and sets out questions over how to address the issues.

There are a series of topics that are explored. For each one, the national policies and regulations that apply are set out followed by any local evidence or policies that are in place. The proposed approach for the Building a Better Future Plan is set out with the kinds of policies that we would propose are in the plan. For almost every area, there are some things that limit what we can do and so these are also set out to help you respond to the consultation.

Where we think there is only one reasonable thing to do, we provide a reason why. Before we prepare the Building a Better Future Plan, we would like your views about our recommendations in this discussion paper and several questions.



A CALL FOR SITES

As part of this consultation we are seeking suggestions of sites which could be used to deliver the Building a Better Future Plan.

Sites will be needed for different kinds of development. Sites are also required for environmental mitigation, for which there is now a flourishing market in South Hampshire.

If you are a landowner or developer who would like to suggest a site, please use our Call for Sites form. It is essential that we have the most up to date information about sites, including timescales for when they may come forward and the necessary mitigation measures that might be needed, particularly where these might be off-site. As such, even if you have sent us information on the site before, please do so again, completing the necessary forms comprehensively.

HOW DECISIONS ON PLANNING APPLICATIONS WILL BE MADE WHILST THE BUILDING A BETTER FUTURE PLAN IS BEING PREPARED

England has a plan-led planning system, meaning that decisions on planning applications should ideally be made in line with an up-to-date local plan. However, this ideal scenario is not one that is available to Havant at this point in time.

The current local plan was adopted in 2010 and 2014 and so at this point is out-of-date as national policy has changed. This is particularly so for the first part of our current local plan – the Core Strategy – this pre-dates the introduction of the NPPF, which changed the national planning system, particularly the approach to how much development is needed in any one place. In addition, the NPPF does not allow us to prevent development on the basis of prematurity unless very exceptional circumstances are met, which is not the case for the vast majority of planning applications we receive.

Additionally, in the last few years, there has not been enough new homes built in Havant Borough to meet the need by a significant margin. As a result of this, when deciding that a new local plan was needed, the Council also adopted the Housing Delivery Position Statement. This sets out how the Council will work with developers to progress schemes for new housing sites whilst the new plan is being prepared. As fewer homes have been built than are needed, this does mean having to consider housing development, even on sites that are extremely heavily constrained or which have been rejected for development in the past.

This is one reason why the Council is looking to develop the Building a Better Future Plan as quickly as possible, so that decisions can be made with the benefit of an up-to-date local plan. Once the plan is at the next stage of its preparation, it will start to have some weight in making decisions on planning applications.

HOW DOES THIS CONSULTATION WORK?

Whilst we are still gathering most of the evidence, we feel it is important to gather your views at this stage before the strategy is finalised and detailed policies are written. Your views will help us to draft the plan itself and establish the priority areas for it to address.

There is a series of questions which we would particularly value your views on which are available alongside this discussion document.

Alongside the Building a Better Future Plan will be a number of statutory assessments. These are principally the Sustainability Appraisal and the Habitats Regulations Assessment. We have prepared initial assessments, associated with the ideas explored in this discussion paper and these are available as part of the consultation.

HOW THE BUILDING A BETTER FUTURE PLAN WILL BE PREPARED

As set out above, there are certain stages in preparing a local plan which need to be followed. There are also supporting assessments which will inform the contents of the plan as well as other evidence base, studies and strategies.

Once the Council finalises the strategy and the policies which support it, further consultation will take place. The plan will then be subject to an examination by an independent planning inspector to ensure that it meets the Government's tests for a local plan.



VISION AND OBJECTIVES

The Corporate Strategy 2022-2025¹ provides the overall vision for the Building a Better Future Plan, which is to enhance the lives of our residents, businesses and visitors.

This strategy is to be achieved through six themes which will deliver the Council's priorities:

An environmentally aware and cleaner borough



A safe environment, healthier and more active residents



A thriving local economy



A revitalised borough with infrastructure that meets our ambitions



A responsive and commercial council



A quality home for all.



These in turn have informed the Objectives for the Building a Better Future Plan, which follow.

AN ENVIRONMENTALLY AWARE AND CLEANER BOROUGH

Minimise the climate impact from and on new development including by reducing energy demand through the sustainable location, design and construction of new development.

Focus transport improvements on walking, cycling and public transport rather than the private car and providing easy connections for walking and cycling between people and places.

Move from protecting our natural environment to pursuing a net gain in biodiversity in line with the new Environment Act.

Minimise the impact of development on all types of natural resources.

Links to: Climate Change; Transport & Communication; Biodiversity Net Gain; Local Nature Designations and Pollution

A SAFE ENVIRONMENT, HEALTHIER AND MORE ACTIVE RESIDENTS

Secure high quality development design and layouts that support the wellbeing of all residents, encourage active lifestyles and foster a sense of place and community.

Provide safe, easy access to recreation and leisure facilities, children's play areas and outdoor spaces to support physical and mental health and boost wellbeing.

Make choices about development locations and protection schemes that avoid or minimise the risk of flooding.

Links to: High Quality Design; Healthy & Safe Communities; Climate Change; Flood Risk; Transport & Communications; Landscape; Heritage; Green Infrastructure; Sport and Recreation

A THRIVING LOCAL ECONOMY

Secure business and employment growth in the Borough by identifying appropriate and sufficient employment land which will attract businesses and create new jobs, particularly in the advanced manufacturing and engineering sectors.

Facilitate delivery of the Freeport Tax site at Dunsbury Park including a new skills and innovation centre for Leigh Park.

Protect and enhance the Borough's key existing employment areas.

Links to: Regeneration; Employment & Economy



A REVITALISED BOROUGH WITH INFRASTRUCTURE THAT MEETS OUR AMBITIONS

Ensure that infrastructure delivery is fully considered, and provided alongside new development to deliver safe, healthy and vibrant communities.

Ensure that opportunities for active travel are incorporated into new developments, integrating them into the Borough's existing communities.

Provide a sustainable and vibrant future for the town centres and Hayling seafront, whilst improving residents' quality of life and protecting the Borough's environmental assets and coast.

Links to: Infrastructure; Transport & Communications; Regeneration; Landscape; Flood Risk; Habitats Regulations and Local Nature Designations

A RESPONSIVE AND COMMERCIAL COUNCIL

Take an active role in the development opportunities to deliver sites, in particular regeneration in our town centres and at Hayling Island seafront, setting out where the Council will use tools such as development agreements and compulsory purchase to focus on the delivery of the most sustainable development sites in the Borough.

Links to: Regeneration; and Retail and Town Centres



A QUALITY HOME FOR ALL

Address the need for housing as a basic human right, helping future generations to have the access to an affordable high quality home that has been the case in the past. This will need to be done in a sustainable manner recognising the environmental constraints that exist in Havant Borough, though acknowledging that with a limited number of sites available for development, robust solutions to overcoming site constraints will have to be found.

Maximise development within the urban area, though acknowledging that extensive greenfield development will also be needed to address the need for housing.

Provide a choice of housing which meets the varied needs of residents, including the specific needs of different groups in the community.

Links to: Housing Delivery; Regeneration; the Use of Land and Densities; Homes for All; Gypsy and Traveller; Healthy and Safe Communities; Habitat Regulations; Local Nature Designations; Landscape and Flood Risk

DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

Building on the objectives in the previous section, the Building a Better Future Plan will set out the local priorities for the use of land to 2040, and possibly beyond. It will become the strategy which guides the quantity, pattern and quality of development during that period.

HOW MUCH DEVELOPMENT

In preparing the Building a Better Future Plan, the council is committed to doing everything it can to meet the development needs of the borough. It will leave no stone unturned to identify sufficient land for 516 homes per year.²

The need for employment land will be assessed, and opportunities for new employment development within and outside of existing employment areas will be highlighted, to create a mixed portfolio of sites to support employment development need.

The Council will work with providers to assess and address the borough's infrastructure needs to support development.

Valued facilities will be protected from loss to other uses, and land may be safeguarded to provide additional or expanded services.

The approach to the natural environment is changing significantly at the national level. As a result, the Building a Better Future Plan will not only look to protect the Borough's biodiversity but achieve a net gain. To achieve this, sufficient land will need to be safeguarded for biodiversity mitigation.

In making the commitment to do everything it can to meet the borough's needs into the future, it is clear from the outset that land in the borough is limited and much of the available land is constrained in its suitability for development. Where development is possible, we must make the very best use of land.



PATTERN OF DEVELOPMENT

The Building a Better Future Plan will influence the pattern of development in three main ways:

- **Development allocations which earmark sites for development**
- **Safeguarding land, which can be used to protect sites from development or retain them for certain uses such as infrastructure or biodiversity projects in the future**
- **Criteria based policies, which set the council's expectations of new development and allow future planning applications to be assessed for their overall sustainability.**

The preferred place to develop is brownfield land. In particular, the Borough's main town centres of Havant and Waterlooville provide excellent opportunities for extensive brownfield, high density redevelopment. They have the added benefit of shops and facilities being in easy reach for residents without the need to travel by car. Havant in particular also has excellent bus and rail connections to the wider borough and beyond. At the same time more people living in the town centres will help to breathe life back into these areas. Hayling Seafront is a key leisure destination for local people as well as visitors and will see some development to support wider regeneration. The Council will take an active role in driving these projects forward.

Havant is a Borough with a relatively small land area and high development pressure on the areas beyond those that are already built up. The Borough's natural areas and habitats, landscapes and heritage assets are highly valued, and designated areas will be protected from development.

Legal requirements to protect the environment and biodiversity may also require land to be safeguarded specifically for environmental mitigation. There are also substantial areas that are at risk of flooding, now and in the future due to climate change. The strategy will avoid development in those areas except in exceptional circumstances.

Much of the land outside of these designated areas has already been developed and there are few, if any, new sites that are unconstrained by protective designations or other difficulties. Some difficult choices will have to be made, and the Building a Better Future Plan will need to allocate substantial areas of undeveloped land to aim to meet needs. Land allocations for development will have to be made in all parts of the borough. It will require both brownfield and greenfield land, and of a variety of types and sizes. This will include a strategic site of around 2100 homes on the land between Havant and Emsworth, known as Southleigh.

² The figure is the current assessment of need based on the national standard method. The overall development target for the Building a Better Future Plan will be determined by the relevant need figure at the time of the submission of the plan, the plan period (at least 15 years from adoption), and further work to assess the borough's ability to accommodate this amount of development.

In selecting suitable development locations beyond the already build up areas, the level of access to services and to sustainable transport options will play a key role. Well connected sites will, all other things being equal, be preferable to those that are less accessible or where residents would be highly reliant on the private car.

Crucially, it will not be possible to continue to build at the low densities seen in the suburban estates of the past. Higher densities will be necessary to make the best use of all land that is developed, be it brownfield or greenfield.

Most sites will have environmental impacts of some kind or another, and change in the character of the area is inevitable. It will not be possible to avoid all negative effects, for example on landscape, or increased pressure on infrastructure. National policy on planning makes this inevitable. It will be the Building a Better Future Plan's role to manage and mitigate these impacts and create the best living environment possible in the context of significant change.

QUALITY OF DEVELOPMENT

As development is inevitable, it is essential that it meets the Borough's needs, is of sufficient quality and will stand the test of time. The strategy to guide the amount and location of development will be supported by a suite of detailed policies setting out the Council's expectations with regard to development quality. The topic headings in the following section provide further detail.

This consultation looks at the kinds of measures that the Building a Better Future Plan can bring into force in the Borough and seeks your views on where the priorities should be.



HOW MUCH DEVELOPMENT



HOUSING

LEGISLATION AND GOVERNMENT POLICY

The Government has a national target of delivering 300,000 new homes a year. The adopted local plan, which is now out of date, was produced under a different national planning system. This has a housing requirement of 315 new homes per year. The Government's Standard Method for calculating housing need sets out that 516 new homes per year are needed in Havant Borough, although that could rise during the preparation of the Building a Better Future Plan. This shows that a significant step change is needed in the amount of being built in the Borough.

Local plans are required to set out a local housing requirement and then allocate a set of sites to meet that requirement. The NPPF also requires local plans to include a trajectory showing the expected rate of housing delivery over the plan period.

However addressing the need for housing does not begin or end with the preparation of a local plan. Local Planning Authorities are required to monitor, at least annually, the amount of housing coming forward and ensure that at least a five year supply of deliverable housing sites is maintained.



LOCAL EVIDENCE AND POLICY

The Council monitors and maintains housing delivery figures in order to keep up to date on developments coming forward, completions, starts and outstanding planning permissions.

Other supporting documents analyse the Council's 5 year supply, explain and provide justification over the Council's housing position and also provide action plans for how housing delivery will be boosted in Havant Borough. The Council would support a relief from the requirement for a five year supply while a plan is in preparation, however at this point, it is a Government requirement to provide a five year supply of housing sites at all times.

The documents which set out the current position on housing supply are:

- 5 Year Housing Land Supply Update (November 2021)
- Housing Delivery Position Statement (March 2022)
- Housing Delivery Action Plan (March 2022).

The Council is part of the Partnership for South Hampshire (PfSH).

The partnership has undertaken sub-regional planning work since 2003. A Joint Strategy is currently being prepared which looks at a number of key strategic matters. The Joint Strategy will look at the level of housing supply across the sub-region, whether this meets the need for housing and the options to boost this. The approach to the Joint Strategy is set out in a Statement of Common Ground.³

Whilst the Standard Method for calculating housing need is set, unless there are exceptional reasons to calculate the need for housing differently, the housing requirement in the local plan can be different. In particularly constrained local authorities, it would be lower. In these circumstances, the Joint Strategy is key as it will set out how the overall housing need across the sub-region will be met even if some individual authorities cannot meet their own.

Local authorities working together in this collaborative way is required by Government through the 'duty to cooperate'.

³ <https://www.push.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/10/Item-11-Statement-of-Common-Ground-Revisions-and-Update.pdf>



THE PROPOSED APPROACH

The Building a Better Future Plan is required to address the Borough's housing need of 516 homes a year. This means that the plan must identify all possible available land that could contribute towards Havant's objectively assessed need (OAN) and propose potential future housing allocations in the Borough. If the Borough cannot achieve its housing need then the Council must present a strong justification as to why this is and demonstrate everything that has been done to try and achieve it.

The council is therefore engaging in a new call for sites as part of this consultation to actively engage with local landowners and site promoters. We are also asking other stakeholders for suggestions of sites that could be brought forward. We will engage with the landowners of any suggested sites that are feasible and suitable for development to find out if they are available.

Of the sites that come forward the council will prioritise brownfield sites for development, but with such a high housing need to be met, all available and suitable greenfield sites will be needed. The council also proposes to review its approach to housing density, to ensure that potential development sites are achieving the appropriate numbers and make an effective use of land. A later section in this consultation document sets this out in more detail.

Achieving such a step change in housing supply will necessitate bringing forward larger, more complex sites, in particular Southleigh, Havant Town Centre and Waterlooville Town Centre. These sites require a great deal of up-front analysis of infrastructure requirements and land assembly, which take time. Additionally, the increase in the rate of housing delivery needed is substantial and a step change like that cannot happen overnight. As such, the Council is exploring a 'stepped trajectory' where a different housing requirement is used for different years in the plan. It would likely need to be set at a lower rate in the early part of the plan period, and increase once the larger, complex sites are brought forward.

The Government requires 516 new homes per year as a starting point, but having regard to the extent of housing need that exists alongside environmental constraints, it is unlikely that the Borough will be able to address its housing need in full over the plan period. This will mean working with our neighbouring authorities to ask whether they are able to plan for additional homes over their own need. The Council will continue to discuss this with neighbouring and nearby local authorities. This will primarily be through the preparation of the PfSH Joint Strategy, though individual discussions will be needed as well, particularly with Chichester District Council who are not a member of PfSH.

PROPOSED POLICIES

- A policy setting out the overall housing requirement of the Building a Better Future Plan, with the requirement per year starting at a lower rate and then stepping up delivery once larger, more complex sites are brought forward.
- A suite of allocation policies to meet the plan's housing requirement.

LIMITATIONS TO NOTE

Government requires all Local Planning Authorities (LPAs) to address the area's need for housing based on the standard method. Due to population growth and the affordability of new housing in Havant the need figure for the Borough is 516 dwellings per year. To accommodate this the loss of some valued sites is necessary, and every area of the Borough will need to play its part.

Havant Borough Council is a small, built-up borough positioned within an environmentally sensitive region between the coast and South Downs National Park. Furthermore, the Borough has many protected designations and environmentally sensitive areas within it. Due to this not all land is readily available or suitable to be built on which is a significant barrier to achieving an ever-increasing housing need.

Consideration shall always be given to how development takes place, not only whether it takes place and the environmental constraints affecting the Borough have to be acknowledged. Most of the housing sites in the Borough are challenging to deliver and are on both brownfield and greenfield land.



ECONOMY AND EMPLOYMENT

LEGISLATION AND GOVERNMENT POLICY

National planning policy expects local plans to set out a clear economic vision and strategy which positively and proactively encourages sustainable economic growth. Local plans should help create the conditions in which businesses can invest, expand and adapt.

Significant weight should be placed on the need to support economic growth and productivity taking into account both local business needs and wider opportunities for development. Each area should build on its strengths, counter any weaknesses and address future challenges.

LOCAL EVIDENCE AND POLICY

A great deal of local research and policy already exists, which the Building a Better Future Plan will build on and implement. In particular, the plan will support the delivery of the Local Enterprise Partnership's Solent 2050: An Economic Strategy for the Solent as well as the Council's Regeneration and Economy Strategy.

There are just under 41,000⁴ people employed in Havant Borough, with a large proportion employed in manufacturing, engineering and construction (full-time employees), as well as retail and education (part-time employees). There are also a large number of micro-sized Enterprises (those with under 10 employees)⁵ in the Borough. These kinds of companies often rely on older, cheaper premises in the Borough's existing employment areas. Whilst unemployment rose during 2020 due to the impact of the pandemic, this has since fallen to 3.5% as at December 2021⁶ showing there are signs of recovery.

The PfSH Economic, Employment and Commercial Needs Study identifies a need for 38,000 sq. m of office space and 36,500 sq. m of industrial space to be delivered by 2040⁷. Whilst we don't yet know the impact of pandemic will have had on these forecasts, the Building a Better Future Plan will need to consider whether increased homeworking in a post pandemic world will mean there is a reduced demand for office stock. The strength of any economic recovery will also have a bearing on how many 'big box' warehouses are required if the rise in online sales continues, and how many people return to the high street for their shopping needs. All of these factors will determine how much, where and the type of employment land that is needed depending on which sectors of the economy are expected to grow.

⁴ ONS Business Register and Employment Survey, 2020

⁵ ONS UK Business Counts, 2021

⁶ ONS, Labour market in the regions of the UK, July 2022

⁷ <https://www.push.gov.uk/work/publications/research-reports/>

THE PROPOSED APPROACH

The Borough has a number of employment areas with older stock which offer affordable accommodation to occupiers, but may no longer suit the modern day working practices. As such, the Building a Better Future Plan will need to consider which employment sites are no longer needed and so should be lost proactively to other uses.

The mixed-use redevelopment at the former Colt site on New Lane is one such example where the Council has released part of an older employment area for housing. Where undeveloped sites have been proposed for business and industrial uses, these will need to be carefully assessed to ensure they best meet the needs of the area.

The Solent Freeport includes the Dunsbury Park site, which is one of Havant's strategic employment sites and provides an exciting opportunity to create jobs and investment for the local area. The site already has planning permission for around 62,000 sq m of employment floorspace with potential expansion to the north. In particular, an innovation, educational and skills centre is proposed which will support skills and employment opportunities for Leigh Park. The Employment Land Review Update (May 2021)⁸ indicated that the site should be removed from the Borough's employment land supply. This is because a successful tax site will be expected to stimulate additional demand. Other employment allocations will therefore be needed in order to meet the Borough's needs.

⁸ <https://cdn.havant.gov.uk/public/documents/EB54a%20Employment%20Land%20Review%20Update.pdf>

PROPOSED POLICIES

- New employment requirement to set out the quantity and mix of new employment floorspace which is needed in the borough.
- Protection of existing employment sites, setting out which sites should be protected and under what circumstances employment sites could be developed for other uses, including housing.
- Dunsbury Park freeport strategic site allocation
- Other site allocations for new employment floorspace
- Allocations for housing where this is the best use of the land, including requirements to address the legacy of its employment use such as contamination.



LIMITATIONS TO NOTE

The Building a Better Future Plan will need to review the position on supply and whether existing employment sites could be used for other uses such as housing. In the case of a planning appeal in Purbrook in 2016, planning permission was granted for housing because there was plenty of vacant commercial property in the Borough at the time.



PATTERN OF DEVELOPMENT



REGENERATION

LEGISLATION AND GOVERNMENT POLICY

The NPPF highlights that local plans and decisions should:

- support the role that town centres play at the heart of local communities, by taking a positive approach to their growth, management and adaptation
- optimise the density of development in town centres and other locations that are well served by public transport
- support development that makes efficient use of land while securing well-designed, attractive and healthy places.

LOCAL EVIDENCE AND POLICY

The Havant Borough Regeneration and Economy Strategy 2022–2036⁹ identifies four spatial priority areas: Havant Town Centre, Waterlooville Town Centre, Leigh Park and Hayling Seafront, with the associated objectives:

- Transform Havant Town Centre into a thriving place to live, work and invest. This is a critical employment hub for the borough (15% of Havant's total workforce works in this area¹⁰) and it has good connections to major transport networks but suffers from a lack of diversity in usage and footfall levels have not recovered to pre-pandemic levels.

- Create an exciting and modern seafront at Hayling Island, supported by a strong brand, which increases the quality of the visitor experience and opportunities for visitor spend. The borough lags behind local comparisons for tourism visits, night stays and spend, attracting a fraction of tourist expenditure compared to neighbouring authority areas¹¹.
- Address inequalities by tackling the economic and social challenges facing Leigh Park. This area includes communities amongst the 10% most deprived areas in the country¹² and high unemployment, with Leigh Park wards registering the highest claimant counts in Hampshire¹³.
- Regenerate Waterlooville into a vibrant and inclusive town centre. This town centre serves a densely populated area and is home to the borough's highest concentration of businesses¹⁴, but suffers from high vacancy rates and a limited sense of character.



THE PROPOSED APPROACH

The Building a Better Future Plan will highlight the four spatial priority areas as the focus for regeneration in the Borough. All of the regeneration areas offer an excellent opportunity for development alongside improved services, facilities and public realm. The town centres, in particular Havant, provide a clear opportunity for higher density sustainable living.

A high-level delivery plan for Havant Town Centre has already been put together and an Ambition Framework for Hayling Island Seafront¹⁵ has been consulted on. Waterlooville and Leigh Park Regeneration Plans will be developed.

Hayling Island Seafront is a key asset for the borough and the Building a Better Future Plan will support improvements to the seafront which provide opportunities for sustainable tourism and promote active lifestyles.

The Council, through the Building a Better Future Plan and its investment activities, will promote infrastructure that supports a strong economy and connected communities, including through Havant Town Centre active travel packages including Town Centre and Warblington footbridges and improvements to the Hayling Billy Trail.

⁹ <https://cdn.havant.gov.uk/public/documents/Regeneration%20and%20economy%20strategy%202022-36.pdf>

¹⁰ ONS Business Register and Employment Survey, 2020

¹¹ Visit Britain GB Tourism Survey, 2019

¹² Indices of Multiple Deprivation, 2019

¹³ ONS Claimant Count, May 2022

¹⁴ ONS UK Business Counts, 2021

¹⁵ <https://www.havant.gov.uk/ambition-hayling-island-seafront>

PROPOSED POLICIES

- A strategic policy for each key regeneration area.
- Site allocations for mixed use redevelopments including significant residential development in the town centres, which have good access to shops, services and facilities; Key opportunity areas in Havant Town Centre are suggested at the Plaza campus; Bulbeck Road car park; the Meridian Centre and Market Parade.
- Site allocations flowing from work on the Waterlooville and Leigh Park Regeneration Strategies.
- Site allocations for mixed use redevelopments on Hayling Island Seafront, to support investment in the wider area.
- Site allocation in support of the Dunsbury Freeport (see also Employment & Economy).

LIMITATIONS TO NOTE

Development sites in town centres are more complex to bring forward, are less likely to be economically profitable and are likely to require greater intervention from public bodies. The market tends to favour simpler greenfield or single site brownfield development. The evidence base for the Building a Better Future Plan will need to demonstrate how such development will be achieved in practice.

Regeneration sites on Hayling Seafront are at risk of flooding from the sea. This will need to be addressed to allow development to come forward.

LAND AND DENSITIES

LEGISLATION AND GOVERNMENT POLICY

The NPPF requires development proposals to make efficient use of the land. This includes:

- Identifying the need for different types of housing and other forms of development and the availability of land to accommodate it.
- Local market conditions and viability.
- The availability and capacity of infrastructure.
- The desirability of maintaining an area's prevailing character.
- Securing well designed, attractive and healthy places.

Where there is an existing or anticipated shortage of land for meeting identified housing needs, it is especially important that planning policies and decisions avoid homes being built at low densities and ensure that developments make optimal use of the potential of each site.

Given that there is a shortage of land for meeting identified housing needs, national planning policy expects that plans should contain policies to optimise the use of land. This should include the use of minimum density standards for town centres and other locations that are well served by public transport. Minimum density standards should be considered for other parts of the plan area. It may be appropriate to set out a range of densities that reflect the accessibility and potential of different areas, rather than one broad density range.

The National Design Guide states, 'Well-designed new development makes efficient use of land with an amount and mix of development and open space that optimises density.'



LOCAL EVIDENCE AND POLICY

The Council recognises that it is appropriate to identify a range of densities that reflect the accessibility and potential of different areas, specifically including and close to:

- Havant Town Centre
- Waterlooville Town Centre
- Leigh Park district centre
- Emsworth district centre

These parts of the Borough are both well served by public transport and have good access to shops and services. The Council's Housing Density Analysis¹⁶ identifies opportunity areas for high density residential development relative to accessibility to services, and access to public transport provision.

THE PROPOSED APPROACH

There is a high need for housing and a limited number of sites in the Borough, either greenfield or brownfield. As such, the density of development sites in the future needs to be a step change higher than it has been in the past across the board. In the areas set out that are close to public transport, shops and services, there is a particularly good opportunity to provide even higher density development.

Nonetheless, high density development does not mean poor design. It is perfectly possible to design schemes to a high quality whilst also achieving a high density. In town centres, this can mean the use of tall buildings, freeing up space around them for landscaping and public spaces. In suburban housing developments, this can be through minor design elements which add visual interest within development schemes. Nonetheless, whilst the approach in the plan should be of higher densities, there will be instances where this is not appropriate due to the specific constraints on a site.

Development proposals should not prevent future access to potential development sites or prejudice the delivery of future infrastructure schemes. Development will not be granted planning permission if it prejudices the potential for the satisfactory development of a larger area.

Brownfield sites in particular offer the opportunity to make particularly efficient use of the land as they have been previously developed and are a priority for any development which comes forward.

The Building a Better Future Plan will expect minimum densities of 40 dwellings per hectare across the Borough with much higher densities of at least 55dph close to town centres and 70dph in the town centres themselves. Any proposal that appears to have an artificially lowered density in order to avoid the affordable housing requirement may be refused planning permission.

¹⁶ <https://cdn.havant.gov.uk/public/documents/Residential%20Density%20Evidence%20Paper.pdf>

PROPOSED POLICIES

- A policy on housing density will allow the Council to influence which areas of the Borough can accommodate higher densities based on the density analysis and national guidance. The policy shall also contain the context around appropriate densities and the potential limitations when it comes to applying these.

LIMITATIONS TO NOTE

Government advises that LPAs should refuse applications which they consider fail to make efficient use of land, taking into account the policies in the NPPF.



RETAIL & TOWN CENTRES

LEGISLATION AND GOVERNMENT POLICY

The NPPF highlights that planning policies and decisions should support the role that town centres play at the heart of local communities, by taking a positive approach to their growth, management and adaptation. Local plans should:

- define a network and hierarchy of town centres and promote their long-term vitality and viability – by allowing them to grow and diversify in a way that can respond to rapid changes in the retail and leisure industries, allows a suitable mix of uses (including housing) and reflects their distinctive characters;
- define the extent of town centres and primary shopping areas, and make clear the range of uses permitted in such locations, as part of a positive strategy for the future of each centre;
- retain and enhance existing markets and, where appropriate, re-introduce or create new ones;
- allocate a range of suitable sites in town centres to meet the scale and type of development likely to be needed for retail, leisure, office and other main town centre;
- recognise that residential development often plays an important role in ensuring the vitality of centres and encourage residential development on appropriate sites.

LOCAL EVIDENCE AND POLICY

Havant Borough Regeneration and Economy Strategy 2022–2036¹⁷ identifies four spatial priority areas for regeneration, including Havant Town Centre and Waterlooville Town Centre (see also Regeneration).

An update to the Council's town centres evidence base prepared for a previous Local Plan will be required to inform detailed town centre policies, in particular to bring up to date information on current land uses, vacancy levels, as well as floor space needs for retail and office uses. However, it is clear that many of the issues and priorities identified previously remain the same:

- The role of town centres has changed and continues to evolve, with town centres having less of a retail function than they used to. This brings with it a need for a flexible approach to the land use mix in town centres, to support vitality and viability, while retaining a core shopping area and function
- Some town centres will need more intervention than others to secure their future (see also Regeneration)
- There is a need to review the extent of defined town centres – they may need to be more tightly drawn to reflect the changing role of those centres and the loss of town centre uses in peripheral areas over past years, such as East Street in Havant).

¹⁷ <https://cdn.havant.gov.uk/public/documents/Regeneration%20and%20economy%20strategy%202022-36.pdf>

Fast food outlets have been mapped across Hampshire and the Isle of Wight. This has shown a higher concentration of takeaways and fast-food outlets in Havant town centre and Waterlooville¹⁸, with obesity a key concern with prevalence in the borough above both regional and national levels¹⁹. Havant also has one of the highest levels of gambling premises in Hampshire (144 gambling premises are currently registered with Havant Borough Council²⁰), and most of these premises are in the town centres of Havant, Waterlooville and on Hayling Island.

THE PROPOSED APPROACH

The Building a Better Future Plan will set out a hierarchy of centres:

- Town Centres: Havant and Waterlooville, supporting larger format retail and leisure, as well as small to mid-scale town centre uses and high-density residential development
- District Centres: Cowplain, Leigh Park, Mengham and Emsworth, supporting small to mid-scale retail, small scale financial and professional services, cafés, and restaurants
- Local Centres across the Borough: Small scale shops, professional services, cafés and restaurants to meet the day-to-day top-up needs of the surround population

¹⁸ Public Health England, Density of fast food outlets in England, 2018

¹⁹ Public Health England, Obesity Profile, 2019/20

²⁰ Gambling Commission, Full premises register, July 2022

It is proposed that the Plan will be flexible about the types of uses it supports in town centre, in acknowledgement of the fact that their role is no longer focussed on retail, but is as much about services, entertainment and places to live. Residential will be an essential part of the mix, in particular in Havant Town Centre (see Regeneration), where high density sustainable living can be achieved close to services and excellent transport links.

In addition, it is proposed that outside of designated town centres, for stores up to 280 square metres of sales area, the sequential test set out in the NPPF would not apply. This would allow shops and other Class E uses up to the floorspace limit of the Sunday trading laws. This provides for small-scale top up shops and smaller employment premises, expanding the availability of these facilities within the Borough's communities.

Food, drink and entertainment uses can contribute to the vitality and viability of an area, while supporting the evening economy. However, such uses can also create environmental and health problems through noise, litter, fumes and odour. Takeaways and gambling venues can also negatively impact on the physical and mental health of residents by encouraging unhealthy eating and problem gambling. The council therefore considers it important that the design and concentration of such uses is controlled to protect residential amenity and health.

PROPOSED POLICIES

Mapping within the Building a Better Future Plan to define the extent of town centres and primary shopping areas. Policies will make clear the future vision for each centre and the range of uses supported there.

A policy setting out that the NPPF's sequential test will be required for Class E facilities with a sales area of more than 280 square metres.

A policy setting out the criteria under which the Council would accept the loss of shops and other community infrastructure to other uses, such as residential, outside of town centres.

LIMITATIONS TO NOTE

The Building a Better Future Plan cannot stem the tide of consumers move to shopping online, though it can support formats unlikely to compete in the online marketplace, such as smaller units for local and independent shops. In addition, services that cannot be accessed online can be increasingly encouraged to town centres.

In 2020, the Government introduced a new use class 'E', which covers many of the uses commonly found in town centres, including shops, banks, building societies and estate agents, cafés and restaurants, indoor sport and fitness, and offices²¹. The creation of this comprehensive use class limits the ability of the Council to support or prevent certain uses, as planning permission is not required to change use within a class. For example, all shops may now change to restaurants without the need for planning permission. In addition, there are some nationally permitted development rights for these uses to change to residential.

²¹ <https://www.planningportal.co.uk/permission/common-projects/change-of-use/use-classes>



FLOOD RISK

LEGISLATION AND GOVERNMENT POLICY

Inappropriate development in areas at risk of flooding should be avoided. Where development is necessary in such areas, it should be made safe for its lifetime without increasing flood risk elsewhere. Therefore, all plans should apply a sequential, risk-based approach to the location of development – taking into account all sources of flood risk and the current and future impacts of climate change – so as to avoid, where possible, flood risk to people and property.

Strategic policies should set out an overall strategy for the pattern, scale and design quality of places, and make sufficient provision for infrastructure for wastewater and flood risk and coastal change management.

Major developments should incorporate sustainable drainage systems unless there is clear evidence that this would be inappropriate.

Plans should identify as a Coastal Change Management Area any area likely to be affected by physical changes to the coast and be clear as to what development will be appropriate in such areas and in what circumstances.

Detailed national guidance has been published to guide various tools used in assessing flood risk in new development, such as Flood Risk Assessments (strategic and site specific), the sequential and exception tests and flood risk vulnerability classifications

LOCAL EVIDENCE

Havant Borough has an extensive coastline and as such, the impact of climate change is a significant issue for the borough, as it brings with it an increased risk of tidal flooding; surface water and fluvial flooding events are also likely to increase. The Council, through PFSH, is updating the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA)²² for the Borough, to determine the extent of future risk.

The Council has a strong record of flood risk management, particularly in the planning for tidal flood risk. Current schemes²³ include the Langstone Coastal Defence Scheme, protecting properties and infrastructure on the approach to Hayling Island. A Coastal Management Strategy to 2120 for Hayling Island²⁴ is also under preparation and is being consulted on alongside this consultation. A strategy for the mainland is already in place²⁵.

Flood risk avoidance, mitigation and management for all sources is a key issue, and a constraint on development at the strategic level and in new developments.

²² <https://www.push.gov.uk/work/planning-and-infrastructure/green-infrastructure-flooding-water-management/>

²³ <https://coastalpartners.org.uk/authority/havant/>

²⁴ <https://coastalpartners.org.uk/project/hayling-island-coastal-management-strategy-2120/>

²⁵ <https://coastalpartners.org.uk/project/portchester-castle-to-emsworth-strategy/>

THE PROPOSED APPROACH

Overall, the Building a Better Future Plan through its development strategy and development management policies will seek to manage flood risk from all sources. In doing so, it will consider both the present-day situation, as well as climate change scenarios.

The Council will take into account flood risk and coastal change now and in the future when deciding which sites to allocate for development through the Building a Better Future Plan, and will avoid inappropriate development in areas at risk of flooding and coastal change.

The Plan will actively support investment in coastal defence, drainage and wastewater infrastructure.

Development Management policies will support applications for development which avoid areas at risk of flooding and coastal change now and in the future. Policies will set out what is expected of developers in terms of addressing any flood risk and drainage issues on their site and demonstrating that development is safe for its lifetime without increasing flood risk elsewhere.

PROPOSED POLICIES:

- A strategic policy setting out the key infrastructure requirements over the plan period, including for coastal defences, flood alleviation schemes and drainage
- Site allocations which avoid inappropriate development in areas at risk of flooding and coastal change

- A development management policy on avoiding and managing flood risk in New Development
- A development management policy setting out expectations regarding effective drainage provision, including Sustainable Drainage
- Mapping to define Coastal Change Management Areas, and an associated policy explaining what development is and isn't appropriate in these areas

LIMITATIONS

National policy expects development in areas at risk to be avoided.

Flood risk from multiple sources will increase with climate change. If avoiding risk is not possible, development must be made safe for its lifetime.

The Building a Better Future Plan is required to be compliant with national policy on flood risk in the NPPF. This is detailed in terms of how to assess sites at risk of flooding. Therefore, the identified policies need to be in the Building a Better Future Plan in order to be found sound. There are no realistic alternatives to this approach.

GYPSIES, TRAVELLERS AND TRAVELLING SHOWPEOPLE

LEGISLATION AND GOVERNMENT POLICY

Government's overarching aim is to ensure fair and equal treatment for travellers, in a way that facilitates their traditional and nomadic way of life while respecting the interests of the settled community. It expects local planning authorities (LPAs) to make their own assessment of need for the purposes of planning and that LPAs work collaboratively to meet the needs of the travelling community.

LOCAL EVIDENCE AND POLICY

The Council jointly commissioned a Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople Accommodation Assessment (GTAA) (May 2017) with six other local authorities in Hampshire. The GTAA identified the level of need for sites in these local planning authority areas, including the need for one additional Gypsy and Traveller pitch in Havant Borough.

A single pitch along Long Copse Lane in Emsworth was subsequently granted planning permission in 2018 thereby meeting this requirement. Planning permission was recently granted through appeal for a second pitch at the same site.

Havant Borough Council plans to update the GTAA in order to ensure there is an up-to-date assessment of travellers needs in Havant Borough.

THE PROPOSED APPROACH

To safeguard the existing gypsy and traveller provision at Long Copse Lane in Emsworth.

To assess whether there is a need to identify further provision for travellers in Havant Borough.

PROPOSED POLICIES

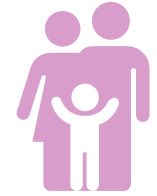
- A specific gypsy and traveller policy in the Building a Better Future Plan will safeguard the existing site and provide guidance for how any other planning applications for such accommodation would be assessed.

LIMITATIONS TO NOTE

Havant Borough Council is required by law to provide and safeguard existing sites for Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople for current and future need. Residents should be able to access education, health and community facilities in the same way that the settled community can.

The approach which the Building a Better Future Plan will set out is separate to the approach the Council will take when unauthorised encampments take place. This is where people and/or vehicles enter land, often public parks and open spaces, without the permission of the landowner, which is often the Council. There is more detail about the Council's approach to this on our website at <https://www.havant.gov.uk/unauthorised-encampments-faqs>.

QUALITY OF DEVELOPMENT



CLIMATE CHANGE

LEGISLATION AND GOVERNMENT POLICY

The NPPF seeks to 'protect and enhance our natural, built and historic environment; including making effective use of land, improving biodiversity, using natural resources prudently, minimising waste and pollution, and mitigating and adapting to climate change, including moving to a low carbon economy'.

The Climate Change Act 2008 requires the country's net carbon emissions to be at least 100% lower than the 1990 baseline by 2050. To achieve this the act sets out carbon budget targets which must be achieved per budgetary period.

In order to achieve this there has to be radical reductions in greenhouse gas emissions, reuse of existing resources, including the conversion of existing buildings, and new renewable and low carbon energy and associated infrastructure.

Major building regulation changes apply from June 2022, one of which is that new homes in England will have to produce around 30% less carbon emissions, and new non-residential buildings such as offices and shops will have to cut emissions by 27%.

National policy requires that new development should avoid any increased vulnerability to the range of impacts from climate change through managing risks through suitable adaptation measures. This includes through the planning of green infrastructure which will reduce greenhouse gases.

New development should also help increase the use of supply of renewable and low carbon energy and heat through positive planning including a positive strategy for energy from these sources that maximise the potential for suitable development. Local authorities should consider identifying suitable areas for renewable and low carbon energy sources and identify opportunities for development to draw its energy from decentralised, renewable or low carbon energy supply systems.



LOCAL EVIDENCE AND POLICY

Hampshire County Council has produced its Climate Change Strategy 2020-2050²⁶. The paper outlines two targets to be achieved:

- To be carbon neutral by 2050 and,
- To build resilience to the impacts of a two degree Celsius rise in temperature.

The strategy explains that this approach will involve a broad range of measures and a step change in lifestyle. It will include embracing new technologies, building new sustainable homes, reducing energy, water and waste and using local and sustainable energies, just to name a few.

Havant Borough Council has also produced the Havant Borough Climate and Environment Strategy²⁷ which sets out the targets to achieve as a Borough. It highlights the importance of achieving zero net carbon particularly by looking at development, industry and community. Alongside this protecting and enhancing green spaces is a key objective to achieve this. Key priorities for the implementation of this strategy have recently been agreed, including the inclusion of robust policies in the local plan together with increased collaboration with Hampshire County Council to encourage a switch to sustainable modes of travel.

²⁶ <https://www.hants.gov.uk/landplanningandenvironment/environment/climatechange/whatarewedoing/climatechangestrategy>

²⁷ <https://www.havant.gov.uk/climate-change-and-environment>

THE PROPOSED APPROACH

By reducing greenhouse gas emissions and water use the impacts of development on climate change can be lessened in the future. Given the significant amount of housing and commercial development over the lifetime of the Plan, it is critical that development is planned and designed considering its full environmental footprint.

By designing and constructing buildings using low carbon design principles, developments can not only reduce energy consumption, overheating and the Borough's carbon footprint, but also lower the overall costs of running the building for occupants and mitigate the need for costly retrofits later.



The plan can support this by:

- Identifying design and energy saving measures
- Review and encourage the integration of green infrastructure in new development
- Encourage tree planting
- Requiring charging points for electric vehicles and the accessibility of these
- Reviewing heating and ventilation proposals for new dwellings/development
- Provide guidance on renewable and low-carbon energy solutions for reduced reliance on fossil fuels and finite energy sources.
- Assess solutions to water efficiency and shortages.
- Review the materials and methods used in construction.
- Providing an Supplementary Planning Document/ supporting document to aid the assessment of planning applications and provide guidance to the above and consistency.



Residential developments will be expected to make a substantive contribution to addressing climate change.

This could be through including efficiency measures and provide low or zero carbon energy. Additionally, reusing existing buildings as construction materials wherever possible, integrating solar gain, natural ventilation or ventilation with heat recovery and low carbon energy are all areas that could be promoted in the Building a Better Future Plan.



PROPOSED POLICIES

- A policy for low carbon design/ zero net carbon in new housing development would be recommended to outline what developments need to be achieving to reduce this impact and provide more sustainable and green development.
- Having a policy around sustainable construction will inform and direct what design and materials etc should be used in development.
- A drainage and waste policy will help ensure the removal and disposal of development waste is done as sustainably as possible.
- Having a policy to encourage the installation of EV charging points in all new developments would contribute directly to improving accessibility of this source.
- Existing trees, hedgerows and woodland need to be protected and enhanced alongside new developments providing new trees and planting and increased green infrastructure.
- A policy protecting all existing green infrastructure and requiring new green infrastructure as part of new development schemes would ensure the Borough is retaining and growing its supply of green space.

LIMITATIONS TO NOTE

The council has a target for the Borough to be zero net carbon by 2050 and as such, Havant Borough Council will have to critically review and assess its approach to design, construction and green infrastructure to ensure all new developments coming forward are working to reduce their carbon output.

The Council will also need to ensure that any standards above building regulations do not make development unviable and these will therefore be tested through the whole plan viability appraisal. This will have to be balanced against other priorities in the plan, including affordable housing and infrastructure provision. This is explained in more detail later in this discussion document and is a key area where we are looking for your views.



THE NATURAL ENVIRONMENT

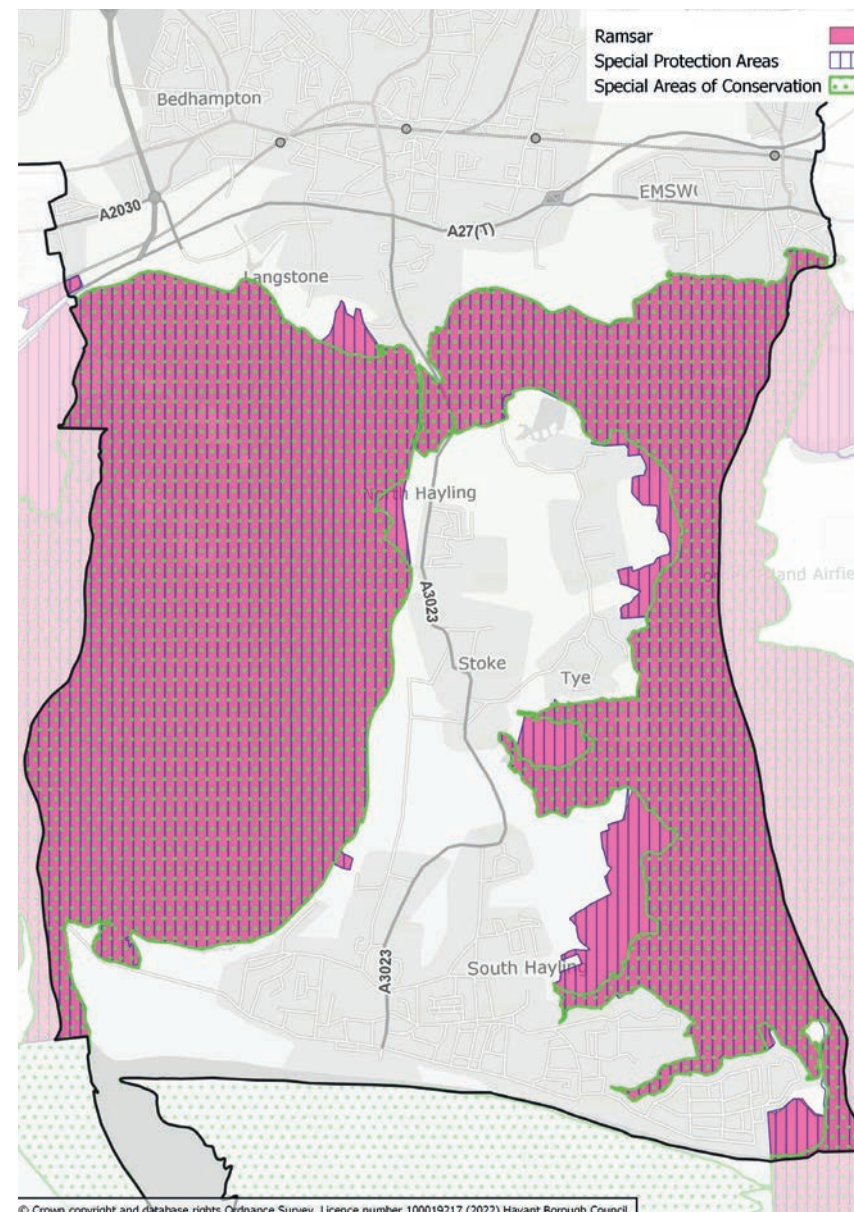
LEGISLATION AND GOVERNMENT POLICY

The Council is legally required to ensure that any land use plans are compliant with the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended).

New development therefore needs to comply with the Habitats Regulations and must ensure there is no likely significant effect on the internationally designated sites. The Council has a number of internationally designated sites, these include Special Area of Conservation Sites (SAC), Special Protection Areas (SPA), and Ramsar sites these can be seen below:

A number of environmental issues have been identified which planning applications and local plans within Havant Borough need to address in order to be compliant with the Habitat Regulations. These include:

- Disturbance from recreation
- Solent Wader and Brent Goose Sites
- Protected Species
- Water Quality



LOCAL EVIDENCE AND POLICY

There are a number of locally led strategies to deal with the environmental issues within the Borough.

Solent Recreation and Mitigation Strategy²⁸ (SRMS)

The Solent is home to a number of bird species during the winter and three SPAs have been designated specifically for those species. New housing leads to more people visiting the coast for recreational purposes, and this additional disturbance has an effect on the birds unless mitigation measures are put in place.

The SRMS was approved by Havant Borough Council and has been implemented since 1st April 2018 through Bird Aware Solent. The SRMS sets out planned mitigation measures which new residential dwellings within 5.6km from the SPAs²⁹ need to contribute towards to offset any significant impact in perpetuity in line with the Habitats Regulations. Developer contributions are collected by the Council to fund the work set out in the strategy by Bird Aware Solent.

Solent Waders and Brent Goose Strategy³⁰

This strategy aims to protect the network of non-designated terrestrial wader and brent goose sites that support the SPA in the Borough and protect them from land take and recreational pressure associated with new development. The terrestrial sites are located on land that falls outside the SPA boundaries.

However, this land is frequently used by SPA species and supports the functionality and integrity of the designated sites for these features. Therefore, the terrestrial sites identified through the strategy will contribute to the achievements of the SPAs conservation objectives. The strategy provides guidance for developers if new development is proposed on one of these sites.

²⁸ <https://birdaware.org/solent/about-us/our-strategy/>

The strategy outlines the mitigation and off-setting requirements to inform assessment of plans and projects made under the Habitats Regulations. The kind of mitigation and off-setting required for a site is dependent on its importance to the SPA network.

Protected Species

There is a great deal of pressure on plants and animal species from the impacts of population increase and new development. There are specific protected species within the Borough which are afforded legal protection, and it is an offence to harm or disturb these species or their habitats.

Legally protected species are a material consideration in the planning system. The potential impacts on them must be assessed and appropriate avoidance and mitigation measures must be provided where impacts are identified.

Water Quality

New development necessitates the provision of connections to the foul water drainage network and can increase surface water run-off. This could increase the amount of nutrients entering internationally designated sites. New housing and proposals which cause a net increase in overnight accommodation need to prevent any increase of nutrients into the designated sites. This is necessary in order for them to be nutrient neutral as they would otherwise lead to a likely significant impact on the designated sites.

The Position Statement and Mitigation Plan for Nutrient Neutral Development³¹ sets out how development calculates its likely significant effect in the designated sites in relation to water quality and how such impacts can be mitigated in order to meet the tests of the Habitats Regulations.

²⁹ This covers all of the Borough except a very small section in the north

³⁰ <https://solentwbgs.wordpress.com/page-2/>

³¹ <https://www.havant.gov.uk/nutrient-neutrality-what-developers-need-know>

THE PROPOSED APPROACH

The Council's proposed approach will be for each of these environmental issues to have their own standalone policy within the Building a Better Future Plan.

The Council will take into account the environmental issues which are set out in this section when deciding which sites to allocate for development in the Building a Better Future Plan, to avoid or mitigate any significant effect on the designated sites. Allocations will also be subject to a Habitats Regulations Assessment.

The policies will set out the requirements that development has to meet in order for a planning permission to be legally compliant under the Habitat Regulations. If development cannot remove the significant effect it is having on the designated sites then planning permission will be refused.

PROPOSED POLICIES:

- Strategic policies setting out the requirements for development to remove the potential significant effect it may have on the designated sites in relation to recreational disturbance, Solent Wader and Brent Goose Sites, Protected Species and water quality.

- Mapping to define the environmental designations, and associated policy mapping explaining the areas affected by the environmental issues outlined in this section.

LIMITATIONS/GIVENS

It is a legal requirement for these environmental issues to be assessed, through a Habitats Regulations Assessment, and to avoid or mitigate any likely significant effects identified. The Council must ensure that there isn't any likelihood of a significant effect from development on the designated sites. Therefore, the identified policies need to be in the Building a Better Future Plan in order to be legally compliant. There are no realistic alternatives to this approach.

The Building a Better Future Plan is required to be assessed in line with the Habitats Regulations and the report published with every version. The first stage in the assessment of the plan has been published alongside this consultation document.



BIODIVERSITY NET GAIN

LEGISLATION AND GOVERNMENT POLICY

Biodiversity net gain will deliver measurable improvements for biodiversity by creating or enhancing habitats in association with new development in Havant Borough. In England, it is a mandatory requirement of the Environment Act 2021 to ensure that the natural environment is in a measurably better state than it was beforehand. The Environment Act³² sets out the following key components for biodiversity net gain:

- A minimum of 10% biodiversity net gain is required using a biodiversity metric
- Secure habitat creation through biodiversity net gain for a minimum of 30 years via legal obligations/conservation covenants
- Habitats can be delivered on-site, off-site or via statutory biodiversity credits which can be purchased by developers
- There will be a national register for net gain sites
- The mitigation hierarchy still applies avoid, mitigate, and compensate for biodiversity loss

Under the Environment Act, biodiversity net gain can be provided on-site where the development is taking place, and/or where that can be shown not to be possible, off-site mitigation can be secured.

The NPPF sets out that planning policies and decisions should contribute to and enhance the environment by minimising impacts on biodiversity and providing net gains for biodiversity, including establishing coherent ecological networks that are more resilient to current and future pressures.

LOCAL EVIDENCE AND POLICY

The Borough has a rich and diverse ecological network as documented by the protected international, national, and local designations as well as its range of natural features. The local ecological network comprises an extensive coastline, trees, woodland, hedgerows, streams, rivers, wildlife and river corridors, springs, ditches and ponds. Hampshire Biodiversity Information Centre's Local Ecological Network mapping project³³ has identified a number of opportunity areas, within which it is possible to reconnect and enhance the Local Ecological Network to achieve biodiversity net gain.

The Havant Borough Biodiversity Strategy³⁴ sets out how the biodiversity network of Havant Borough can be conserved and enhanced through the planning system and makes recommendations to secure sustainable development which improves the quality of the environment and resident life. Nonetheless this is now out of date following the Environment Act becoming law and so will need to be updated.

³² <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2021/30/contents/enacted>

³³ <https://www.hants.gov.uk/landplanningandenvironment/environment/biodiversity/informationcentre/information>

³⁴ <https://cdn.havant.gov.uk/public/documents/Havant%20Borough%20Biodiversity%20Strategy.pdf#:~:text=The%20strategy%20will%20enable%20Havant,taking%20a%20collective%20approach%20to>

THE PROPOSED APPROACH

The Building a Better Future Plan will be prepared in line with the Environment Act and its secondary legislation (though the latter has not yet been published).

The Council's proposed approach is to include a strategic policy setting out the requirements for biodiversity net gain and what development needs to do to ensure biodiversity net gain is provided as set out in legislation.

It will require development to achieve a minimum amount of biodiversity net gain and if net gain credits are required, it will highlight opportunity areas off-site which could be used to reconnect and enhance the local ecological network of the Borough.

The options for biodiversity net gain credits will be set out and sites within the Borough will be safeguarded for environmental mitigation.

The policy will be underpinned by Local Ecological Network mapping which identifies opportunities to enhance natural environment through habitat recreation and restoration.

The mapping will help inform and shape development proposals so that they take account of on-site and surrounding ecology and inform enhancements to biodiversity. Development should contribute towards improving the wider local ecological network and reduce the network fragmentation and improve biodiversity connectivity.

The Council's Strategy will also be updated in line with relevant legislation and guidance.

PROPOSED POLICIES:

- A strategic policy setting out the requirements for development to achieve biodiversity net gain on-site first before looking at off-site net gain options.
- Mapping to define areas which could be improved for biodiversity net-gain purposes if it cannot be provided on the development site.
- Allocation of strategic mitigation options which development could contribute to within the Borough.



LIMITATIONS

New development offers a potential threat to the natural environment in some cases, although it also presents an opportunity to provide biodiversity net gain.

Without a policy for biodiversity net gain, there is the potential that net gain would not be secured in the best places for the Borough's ecological network.

The mapping of the Local Ecological Network cannot be published within the Local Plan due to its scale and the nature of the mapping components but is available through the Hampshire Biodiversity Information Centre. The information changes annually as ongoing survey work will provide more up to date information, so it is impractical to include it in the Local Plan.

The Council will also need to ensure that any standards above the 10% required by the Environment Act do not make development unviable and these will therefore be tested through the whole plan viability appraisal. This will have to be balanced against other priorities in the plan, including affordable housing and low carbon design. This is explained in more detail later in this discussion document and is a key area where we are looking for your views.



LOCAL NATURE DESIGNATIONS

LEGISLATION AND GOVERNMENT POLICY

There are two types of local nature designations in the Borough: Local Nature Reserves (LNRs) and Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINCs). These can also overlap with other national or international designations:

1. Local Nature Reserves (LNRs) are a local statutory designation under the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949 (as amended). All district and county councils have powers to acquire, declare and manage LNRs.
2. Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINCs) are also important wildlife sites which contribute to the local ecological network. These are also known nationally as Local Wildlife Sites.

The NPPF states that plans should identify, map and safeguard components of local wildlife-rich habitats and wider ecological networks, including locally designated sites of importance for biodiversity and connect them to areas identified by national and local partnerships for habitat management, enhancement, restoration, or creation.



© Creative Commons Attribution-Share Alike 2.0 Generic

LOCAL EVIDENCE AND POLICY

1. Local Nature Reserves

The Biodiversity Strategy³⁵ identifies a number of Local Nature Reserves within Havant Borough. As a local designation, an LNR can be given protection against damaging development on or around it. However, the level and type of protection afforded to an LNR is decided locally and varies from site to site.

LNRs can also be designated as a SINC, or have national and international environmental designation status. An additional requirement of LNRs by Hampshire County Council is that the site has present or potential access both within the site and the wider Rights of Way network.

The following LNRs have been identified in the Borough:

Site Name

Brook Meadows

Farlington Marshes

Gutner Point

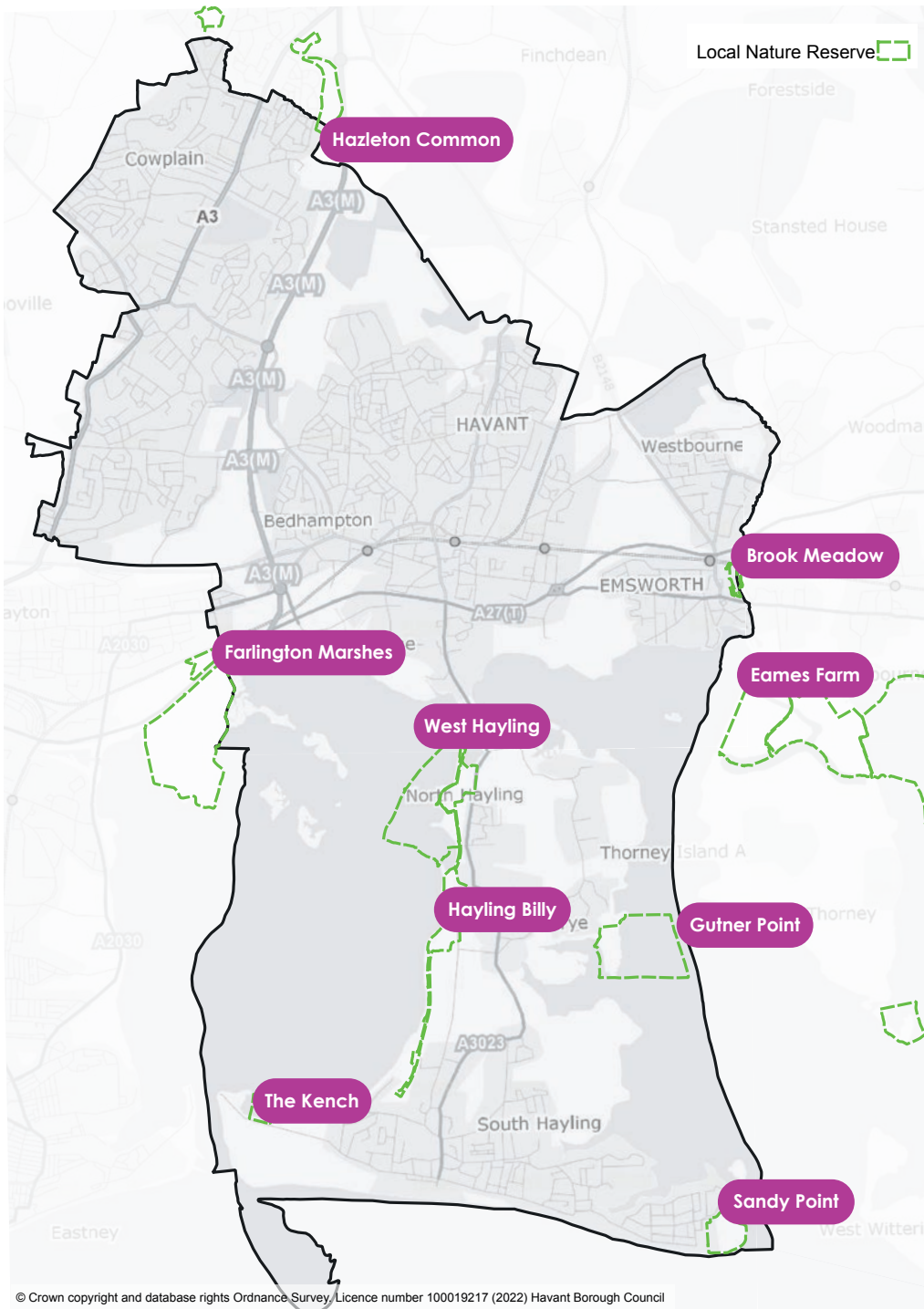
Hayling Billy

Hazleton Common

Sandy Point

The Kench, Hayling Island

West Hayling



³⁵ <https://cdn.havant.gov.uk/public/documents/Havant%20Borough%20Biodiversity%20Strategy.pdf#:~:text=The%20strategy%20will%20enable%20Havant,taking%20a%20collective%20approach%20to>

LOCAL EVIDENCE AND POLICY

2. Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation

There are also 110 Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINCs), designated locally. The number, boundary and qualifying features of SINCs are updated regularly as sites are re-surveyed.

Designating a SINC raises awareness of its important for wildlife and needs to be considered in planning decisions, particularly in terms of biodiversity net gain.

SINCS are administered by local authorities, including Havant Borough Council in partnership with conservation organisations, such as the Hampshire Biodiversity Information Centre (HBIC) which follows a strict set of guidance and selection requirements.

PROPOSED APPROACH

The proposed approach will be to protect, conserve and enhance the Borough's local nature designations, and to ensure that development avoids fragmentation of the local ecological network. Should a development impact a local nature designation, then an avoidance and mitigation plan should be submitted which includes provision for ongoing management and maintenance.

The benefit of any development on a local nature site should be shown to clearly outweigh the substantive conservation value of the site and where an impact cannot be avoided, or mitigated compensation is provided.

The Council will aim to ensure connectivity across boundaries by working with neighbouring local authorities to ensure the ecological network within the Borough connects with ecological sites outside of the Borough as best as possible.

PROPOSED POLICIES:

- A strategic policy setting out in what circumstances development could take place on a SINC.
- Setting out the mitigation hierarchy and how the impacts of any type of development can be mitigated
- Provide information on the available mapping on locally designated sites

LIMITATIONS

SINC do not have legal status, but sites are of substantive nature conservation value. Many SINC sites also host Priority Habitats and Species which are protected under the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006.

Unlike national and international designations, it is not possible to set out the management approach which landowners must take on identified SINCS.

AFFORDABLE HOUSING

LEGISLATION AND GOVERNMENT POLICY

National planning policy expects local plan policies to reflect the size, type and tenure of housing needed for different groups in the community. This includes affordable housing and the type of affordable housing required.

Government policy requires that affordable housing is not sought unless part of a scheme of at least **10** dwellings and that it should normally be provided on-site.

Government has already set out that **25%** of the affordable housing requirement should be for 'First Homes' – a discounted ownership tenure. An illustrative example is worked below.

200 dwelling scheme

30% affordable housing requirement from site of 200 dwellings = **60 dwellings**



25% of the total number of affordable homes to be provided as First Homes = **15 dwellings**



This leaves **75%** of the total number of affordable homes to be provided as shared ownership/for rent = **45 dwellings**

66% of the remaining affordable homes to be provided for rent = **30 dwellings**



33% of the remaining affordable homes to be provided as shared ownership = **15 dwellings**

LOCAL EVIDENCE AND POLICY

There are currently 1,717 households on the waiting list for an affordable rented property and it can take several years for eligible households to be provided with a suitable property. In the meantime, they will be in unsuitable or unaffordable housing.

The Council can access data from Hampshire Home Choice and Help to Buy South to provide evidence for the need for different types and sizes of affordable housing. The Council can also source data on average incomes and house prices in the borough from the Office for National Statistics. This information will help to inform policies about the amount and type of affordable housing that is needed to meet needs in the borough.

The housing affordability ratio for Havant is 10.17, meaning a Havant resident can expect a house to cost over 10 times their yearly wage.³⁶



³⁶ ONS, Housing Affordability in England and Wales, 2021 – the affordability ratio is the ratio of median house price to median gross annual workplace-based earnings by local authority district

THE PROPOSED APPROACH

The Council intends to commission further evidence to provide up to date information on the current needs for affordable housing, including for different types and tenures of affordable housing, and how they can be met in the borough.

The Council will gather and analyse evidence to explore whether and how First Homes may help meet these needs compared to other affordable ownership products as part of the mix of affordable housing to ensure the affordable housing supply help meets the needs of those who wish to purchase a property but cannot afford to compete in the open market.

PROPOSED POLICIES

- Affordable housing – this policy will ensure that affordable housing will be provided on schemes of 10+ homes, subject to viability.

LIMITATIONS TO NOTE

Affordable housing is specific types of housing for sale or rent, for those whose needs are not met by the market. This is different to the overall affordability of housing on the open market. There are certain specific types of affordable housing:

AFFORDABLE
RENTED HOUSING



The Council will also need to ensure that the policy requirements in relation to housing do not make housing development unviable and these will therefore be tested through the whole plan viability appraisal. This will have to be balanced against other priorities in the plan, including low carbon design standards and infrastructure provision. This is explained in more detail later in this discussion document and is a key area where we are looking for your views.

SOCIAL
RENTED HOUSING



STARTER HOMES



DISCOUNTED MARKET
SALES HOUSING



OTHER AFFORDABLE ROUTES TO
HOME OWNERSHIP, INCLUDING
SHARED OWNERSHIP.



HOUSING DESIGN STANDARDS AND SPECIALIST ACCOMMODATION

LEGISLATION AND GOVERNMENT POLICY

National planning policy expects local plans to reflect the size, type and tenure of housing needed for different groups in the community. This includes families with children, older people, students, people with disabilities, service families and people wishing to commission or build their own homes. There are a number of standards that the Council can bring in for new housing, including enhanced standards of accessibility. Nonetheless, these will need to be shown to be needed and viable.

The Self-build and Custom Housebuilding Act 2015 requires the Council to keep a register of individuals (and associations of individuals) seeking to acquire serviced plots of land in the borough in order to build houses for those individuals to occupy as homes.

LOCAL EVIDENCE AND POLICY

The Council has previously relied on the PfSH Strategic Housing Market Assessment (2014)³⁷ for assessing different types of housing need, although this is now out of date. The Council intends to commission further evidence to update the needs for different groups – in particular the need for different sizes and types of dwellings.

The Self and Custom Build Register establishes the current need for this type of dwelling. As of May 2022 there are 98 entries on the register for a self or custom build plot. Of these about half currently live within the borough. The Council also records the number of Community Infrastructure Levy exemptions for self and custom build dwellings, which shows how the supply currently meets this need. Between 2014 and 2019 the Council granted an average of 13 exemptions for self and custom build dwellings each year.

³⁷ <https://www.push.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2018/06/SHMA-2014-1.pdf>



THE PROPOSED APPROACH

It is essential that not only is the right amount of new housing delivered but it is of the correct type – otherwise the new homes will not address the need for housing in a genuine way. The Council will use the new evidence to set out the mix of housing that would be needed across development sites.

The pandemic and the associated lockdowns highlighted the importance of the need for new homes to be built with sufficient internal space and with access to adequate outdoor amenity space. The Council considers that including relevant policies in the Building a Better Future Plan would have a positive impact on the health and wellbeing of the residents that occupy those homes.

The Council aims to require housing development to provide high quality accommodation that meets the needs of future occupiers of those homes. The Council will be guided by the evidence and consultation feedback as to whether new standards should be introduced. These would cover some or all of:

- Minimum internal space standards
- Gardens and balconies
- Homes with enhanced accessibility
- Wheelchair accessible homes

PROPOSED POLICIES:

- High quality new homes – including any requirements for minimum internal space standards, outdoor amenity space, accessibility and adaptability standards and wheelchair accessibility standards.
- Housing mix – to ensure that the right size of property is provided to meet identified needs.
- Retirement and specialist housing – to ensure that provision is made to meet the needs of an aging population.
- Self and custom build housing – to ensure that provision is made for those who want to build or commission their own home.



LIMITATIONS TO NOTE

The Building Regulations ensure that new buildings are structurally sound and safe. They cover aspects such as accessibility. However, national policy allows the Council to exercise more control through the planning system to secure high quality development (in terms of space and accessibility standards) that meets identified needs in the area. This is subject to demonstrating the development proposed in the plan will be viable.

There are some limitations as to how this is accomplished, for example, the Council can only require the Nationally Described Space Standards³⁸ for internal space standards rather than investigating a bespoke set of standards for Havant.

The Council will also need to ensure that any standards above building regulations do not make housing development unviable and these will therefore be tested through the whole plan viability appraisal. This will have to be balanced against other priorities in the plan, including low carbon design standards and infrastructure provision. This is explained in more detail later in this discussion document and is a key area where we are looking for your views.



³⁸ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/technical-housing-standards-nationally-described-space-standard/technical-housing-standards-nationally-described-space-standard>

LANDSCAPE AND LOSS OF AGRICULTURAL LAND

LEGISLATION AND GOVERNMENT POLICY

Legislation and national guidance awards specific protections to designated landscapes. Great weight should be given to conserving and enhancing landscape and scenic beauty in National Parks and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty, which have the highest status of protection in relation to these issues.

The scale and extent of development within these designated areas should be limited. Permission should be refused for major development other than in exceptional circumstances, and where it can be demonstrated that the development is in the public interest. Development within their setting should be sensitively located and designed to avoid or minimise adverse impacts on the designated areas.

Beyond these specifically designated landscapes, the NPPF also requires development to be sympathetic to local character and history more generally, including the surrounding built environment and landscape setting.

The NPPF sets out that local plans should recognise the economic and other benefits of the best and most versatile agricultural land. Where significant development of agricultural land is demonstrated to be necessary, areas of poorer quality land should be preferred over high-quality agricultural land.

LOCAL EVIDENCE AND POLICY

Havant Borough benefits from high quality landscapes and vistas. It is ideally placed between the South Downs National Park and the Solent Coast, including the Chichester Harbour Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB). This is part of what makes the Borough an attractive place to live. The Borough's settlements have continued to grow, and development pressure remains high on the edges of and within these areas.

No part of the Borough lies within the South Downs National Park, but some potential development sites on the Borough boundary are within its setting.

The Chichester Harbour AONB covers the intertidal harbour itself, as well as parts of Eastoke, Northney, Warblington and Emsworth. The AONB extends east into Chichester District. Chichester Harbour Conservancy has produced an AONB Management Plan³⁹, which identifies the distinctive features and characteristics of the landscape and provides the framework for the management and ongoing spatial planning of Chichester Harbour AONB. The flatness of the landscape makes the AONB particularly vulnerable to visual intrusion from inappropriate development, both within or adjacent to the boundary, which can often be seen from significant distances across inlets, the main harbour channels, or open countryside.

³⁹ <https://www.conservancy.co.uk/page/management-plan/307/>

Beyond the specifically protected landscape of the AONB, the Council recognises the value of its unique landscapes such as the eastern edges of Portsdown Hill, its harbours and coastal areas, rivers and streams, remnants of ancient woodland and undeveloped open land.

THE PROPOSED APPROACH

The Building a Better Future Plan will recognise, protect and enhance designated landscapes, both through criteria-based policies for these areas and through its selection of development sites, which will avoid protected landscapes unless their development would meet the specific criteria in the NPPF associated with designated landscapes.

In selecting sites for development, other sensitive landscape features will also be mapped and acknowledged. However, given development pressures, it is likely not to be possible for the Council to make landscape an absolute constraint ('showstopper') on development. Rather, criteria policies and site allocations will set out requirements for development to minimise impacts on valued landscapes, ensure it is of the highest quality and respects its surroundings.

As is set out earlier in this discussion document, to sufficiently address the need for housing requires extensive development of both brownfield and greenfield sites. As such, it is not possible to restrict development due to the loss of agricultural land.

PROPOSED POLICIES

- A criteria-based development management policy setting out the limitations on development in the Chichester Harbour AONB
- (NB a Supplementary Planning Document⁴⁰, prepared in conjunction with the Chichester Harbour Conservancy and jointly adopted by Havant Borough Council and Chichester District Council already exists to provide detailed guidance on appropriate development).
- Site allocations policies which highlight any sensitive landscape features on or off sites and secure their protection; this will include a requirement to consider carefully any potential impact on the setting of the South Downs National Park, and to respond positively to its special qualities of, including consideration of the Dark Night Sky Reserve⁴¹;
- Mapping of the Borough's settlement boundaries and an associated policy setting the limitations on development beyond those boundaries
- A development management policy recognising the special qualities of the Borough's coastal landscape, and setting criteria for appropriate development in these areas
- A policy committing to improvements to the setting of the Hermitage Stream
- A development management policy to require woodland and tree retention, as well as tree planting (see also Climate Change)

⁴⁰ <https://www.havant.gov.uk/planning-policy/supplementary-planning-documents>

⁴¹ <https://www.southdowns.gov.uk/dark-night-skies/>

LIMITATIONS TO NOTE

Given the need for new homes and other development, and the limited supply of land, it will not be possible to protect all existing open or undeveloped areas from development, nor agricultural land due to the intrinsic benefit of its retention. National designations such as the National Park and AONB provide a high level of protection, while other landscapes, even if locally valued, do not enjoy this level of safeguarding.



INFRASTRUCTURE

NB Transport Infrastructure and Green Infrastructure are covered more specifically under their own sections in this document

LEGISLATION AND GOVERNMENT POLICY

The planning system should contribute to economic, environmental and social objectives by identifying and coordinating the provision of infrastructure.

Plans should promote a sustainable pattern of development that aligns growth and infrastructure. Strategic policies should set out an overall strategy for the pattern, scale and design quality of places, and make sufficient provision for infrastructure for transport, telecommunications, security, waste management, water supply, wastewater, flood risk and coastal change management, and the provision of minerals and energy, as well as community facilities (such as health, education and cultural infrastructure), green infrastructure and adaptation to climate change. Planning policies and decisions should support development that makes efficient use of land, taking into account the availability and capacity of infrastructure and services – both existing and proposed – as well as their potential for further improvement.

Cooperation with other plan-making authorities and relevant bodies and infrastructure providers is seen as key to successful strategic planning and timely infrastructure delivery.

Plans should also set out their expectations of developers in regard to infrastructure provision.

LOCAL EVIDENCE AND POLICY

Most infrastructure providers have their own planning regimes and publish their own development plans for their networks and areas of responsibility. Many of these, for example those of water companies, are based on the relevant regulator's funding cycles.

Both Hampshire County Council, itself a major provider of infrastructure, and Havant Borough Council regularly review the broad range of providers' plans and pull these together in the Hampshire Strategic Infrastructure Statement⁴² and Havant Infrastructure Delivery Plan⁴³ respectively. These are updated periodically.

In the past, there have been issues regarding the long-term maintenance of on-site infrastructure on development sites, or 'common parts', which need to be addressed going forward.



⁴² <https://www.hants.gov.uk/landplanningandenvironment/strategic-planning/infrastructure-planning>

⁴³ <https://cdn.havant.gov.uk/public/documents/IDP%202020.pdf>

THE PROPOSED APPROACH

Timely provision of infrastructure to support the level of development proposed is necessary to make sure that the quality of life of existing communities is maintained, and that development does not have a detrimental impact upon amenity, safety or the environment.

The most efficient way to plan for infrastructure is to make existing facilities and services more resilient to higher levels of use as population rises. This can take such forms as upgrading grass pitches to artificial pitches that are more hardwearing and can be played all year round or freeing up capacity on the roads by improving walking and cycling facilities. The Building a Better Future Plan will support such measures. However, new or expanded infrastructure will also be needed to support development as some infrastructure within the Borough is at or near capacity and so needs upgrading to support additional use. The Council will actively support efforts to expand infrastructure where it is required, by collaborative working with its partners, setting out development requirements in the Building Better Future Plan and safeguarding land through the plan where necessary.

Some infrastructure may be delivered via contributions from developers through the planning system or by the developers directly. Other provision is made by the infrastructure providers themselves by aligning their strategies and investment plans with planned growth and development, and the Council is committed to working with these providers to secure delivery of improvements.

PROPOSED POLICIES

- A strategic policy setting out the infrastructure requirements over the plan period and confirming a commitment from the Council to work with partners to bring these forward
- Land safeguarding for key projects if required
- Site allocation policies which set out specific infrastructure requirements arising from that particular development, if applicable
- Thematic development management policies on what the Council expects with regard to specific types of common infrastructure on development sites, such as drainage or open space, including their long-term management



LIMITATIONS TO NOTE

New development cannot be required to address any existing capacity issues, only the impact that development has.

In many cases, infrastructure provision is in the hands of bodies other than the Council or developers. They operate under their own rules, funding cycles and delivery regimes. Therefore, the Council is limited in its powers to require infrastructure improvements through the plan.

The planning regime does not allow councils to halt development pending improvements, say, to access to GPs, dentists or childcare. Rather such services are expected to provide for the population in their area.

With this in mind, it should be noted that it is the process of drawing up a Local Plan, as much as the content of the plan itself, that supports effective infrastructure provision. In preparing the plan, the Council engages with other bodies and providers to make them aware of the likely development pattern in the future.



EFFECTIVE TRANSPORT & COMMUNICATIONS

LEGISLATION AND GOVERNMENT POLICY

- Local Plans should
- address the potential impacts of development on transport networks
- promote walking, cycling and public transport
- take into account, avoid and mitigate adverse environmental impacts of traffic and transport infrastructure
- avoid unacceptable impact on highway safety, and avoid severe residual cumulative impacts on the road network
- ensure that patterns of movement, streets, parking and other transport considerations are integral to the design of development and contribute to making high quality places.
- Focus significant development on locations which are or can be made sustainable, through limiting the need to travel and offering a genuine choice of transport modes.
- Support the expansion of electronic communications networks, set out how high-quality digital infrastructure is expected to be delivered and upgraded over time and prioritise full fibre connections to existing and new developments

LOCAL EVIDENCE AND POLICY

The borough's development pattern of low to medium density suburban style housing estates of recent decades has contributed to the area having a heavily car reliant population. For example, around three quarters of workers who live in Havant travel to work by car⁴⁴.

Hampshire County Council are preparing a new Local Transport Plan (LTP4)⁴⁵ and a Local Cycling and Walking Investment Plan (LCWIP)⁴⁶. They represent a marked shift in approach to the local transport network towards sustainable travel, in line with the County Council's Climate Change Strategy⁴⁷.

Similarly, the Borough Council's Climate Change and Environment Strategy 2021-2026⁴⁸ includes objectives to reinforce and implement policy and initiatives for low-carbon transport; prioritise compelling options for active travel, walking and cycling, and insist on best practice for infrastructure design and paths; and ensure alternatives to fossil fuels through promoting investments in infrastructure for electric-vehicles, and green hydrogen hubs for HGVs.

⁴⁴ 2011 Census

⁴⁵ <https://www.hants.gov.uk/transport/localtransportplan>

⁴⁶ <https://www.havant.gov.uk/cycling-and-walking-infrastructure-plan>

⁴⁷ <https://www.hants.gov.uk/landplanningandenvironment/environment/climatechange>

⁴⁸ <https://www.havant.gov.uk/climate-change-and-environment>

THE PROPOSED APPROACH

The Building a Better Future Plan will reflect the emerging Local Transport Plan and the Environment and Climate Change Strategies. The development strategy will seek to focus development in locations that give residents of new development good access to shops, services and facilities.

The Building a Better Future Plan will also support higher densities in development to improve the viability of public transport. Developers will be expected to design their developments in a way that encourages people to get around on foot or bicycle for short journeys.

The Transport Assessment supporting the plan will also reflect these key strategies, seeking to focus the mitigation of new development on active travel measures initially with improvements to the highway network as a secondary consideration where necessary. However, access to the strategic network of the A27 and the A3(M) by car remains important for longer trips. The impact on planned developments on routes connecting to that network and the strategic network itself will be carefully considered, and where necessary, mitigation measures will be built into the infrastructure requirements set out in the plan.

The plan will also support infrastructure which supports a shift to low carbon transport, such as electric vehicle charging points. This will need to consider recent changes to the building regulations which introduce a need for electric vehicle charging points for the first time.

PROPOSED POLICIES

- A strategic policy setting out the key transport infrastructure requirements over the plan period
- Site allocations which maximise development in locations which have good access to shops, services and facilities;
- Development management policies setting out expected standards and requirements for access and parking in new development, with sustainable modes places at the forefront
- A development management policy to limit new accesses onto classified roads, for highways efficiency and safety reasons
- A development management policy that supports electronic communications networks and expects high speed network infrastructure to be provided as part of new development.

LIMITATIONS TO NOTE

Parts of the Borough's Transport Network suffer from congestion at peak times. New development cannot be required to address existing issues on the network, only the impact that the development itself causes. In addition, the tests in the NPPF regarding the transport impact of development set a high bar: to be unacceptable, the impact must be severe. An increase in congestion as a result of new development is inevitable and will not trigger a severe impact in and of itself.

While investment in infrastructure will make a difference, shifting behavioural patterns cannot be achieved through initiatives linked to the Local Plan alone; everyone has to play their part.

While the Council will make the accessibility by sustainable modes of travel a priority in sites selection, it must be acknowledged from the outset that site availability is limited in the borough, and it is unlikely to be possible to allocate only sites with very good access (see also the housing topics).



GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE

LEGISLATION AND GOVERNMENT POLICY

This includes all types of open spaces, which can be green (such as parks), grey (such as public spaces) and blue (such as the seafront). Together these are generally known as green infrastructure and Government intends for the spaces to be capable of delivering a wide variety of economic, health and wellbeing benefits.

The NPPF requires planning policies to protect and enhance green infrastructure and ensure that robust and up-to-date assessments for the need for this kind of infrastructure are carried out. This information should then be used to determine and inform what open space, sport and recreational provision is needed and which plans should accommodate them.

Government also sets out a particular designation of a Local Green Space, which is a green area of particular importance. The NPPF requires policies for managing development within a Local Green Space to be the same as those for green belts.

LOCAL EVIDENCE AND POLICY

The key documents which inform this topic are the Havant Borough Open Space Strategy (November 2018) and the Local Green Spaces and Destination Open Spaces of Havant Borough (July 2020). Overall these show that the need for open space in the Borough is being met.

THE PROPOSED APPROACH

The Covid-19 pandemic has highlighted the importance and community value green infrastructure provides including improvements to physical and mental wellbeing, recreational use and ecological value. Just as importantly they also form and create our landscape and built environment, enhance beauty, tranquillity adapt to climate change and boost wellbeing.

The Building a Better Future Plan will resist the loss of existing open space in the Borough where possible and development which results in the loss of this will typically be refused. Only in exceptional circumstances shall planning permission be granted provided an alternative provision of equal or better value be created to serve the same community. It will also require open space in all new developments including specific standards for play and community food growing.

PROPOSED POLICIES

- The Building a Better Future Plan should include two separate policies to cover the retention and enhancement of existing green infrastructure and open spaces, as well as the creation of new spaces in new development. This will ensure that as well as putting in measures to retain the existing provision the Borough will be increasing the amount of open spaces available, making them accessible to more people, contributing to the beauty of the Borough and helping support the Borough's initiative to reduce its impact on climate change.

LIMITATIONS TO NOTE

Smaller developments may struggle to practicably provide sufficient open space as part of the development and this would need to be assessed on an individual basis and whether contributions could instead be sought to improve/enhance another site in the Borough.



SPORTS AND RECREATION

This include both indoor and outdoor facilities. Indoor facilities include swimming pools, sports halls, health and fitness facilities, indoor bowls, squash courts, martial arts dojos and gymnastics halls. Outdoor facilities include tennis courts, bowls, multi-use games areas, skate parks, sports pitches, playing fields and children's play equipment. These lists are not exhaustive.

LEGISLATION AND GOVERNMENT POLICY

The NPPF recognises the role of sport and recreation as a fundamental part of sustainable development. It is acknowledged that access to high quality sport and recreation facilities make an important contribution to the physical and mental health and wellbeing of communities.

LOCAL EVIDENCE AND POLICY

The Havant Borough Indoor Built Sport Facilities, Playing Pitch and Open Space Strategies to need to provide a robust and up-to-date assessment of the need for open space, sport and recreation facilities in the Borough. All three strategies highlight the importance of protecting and enhancing existing sports and recreational facilities (both indoor and outdoor) in Havant Borough. Whilst the Open Space and Indoor Built Sports Facilities strategies are considered broadly up-to-date, even though they were prepared a few years ago, the Playing Pitch Strategy is in need of updating as national standards have changed since it was published.

The Indoor Built Sport Facilities Strategy sets out the need for an additional 208.59 sqm of swimming pool space (equivalent to almost 4 swimming lanes), 1.37 sports halls (equivalent of 6 Badminton Courts) and 89 fitness stations in Havant Borough. The Playing Pitch Strategy, as set out in its associated action plan, highlights how future need can be met through specific enhancements to the Borough's existing playing pitches, delivered by the Council, funded from contributions from new development.

THE PROPOSED APPROACH

In line with the NPPF and Sport England's Playing Fields Policy and Guidance Document⁴⁹, existing provision will be protected unless either a robust assessment demonstrates that the facility and/or land is surplus to requirement; replacement provision is made available of an equal or greater community benefit; or alternative sports and recreation facilities and/or use are being proposed.

The Council will resist development that results in the loss (part or whole), or reduction in accessibility, of facilities and/or land used for sports and recreation due to the important role they play in improving the physical and mental health and wellbeing of communities.

⁴⁹<https://sportengland-production-files.s3.eu-west-2.amazonaws.com/s3fs-public/playing-fields-policy-and-guidance.pdf>

PROPOSED POLICIES

- A policy to support and encourage physical activity and access to sport and recreation facilities, including protection of existing sites
- A criteria-based policy, assessing how the Council will assess any planning applications that would result in a reduction or loss of sports facilities.

LIMITATIONS TO NOTE

It is important to note that whilst the Council's position would be to resist the loss of sports provision, under law, an applicant can apply for planning permission for development on any piece of land. As such, the Council can never prevent planning permission being applied for. As a result, it is essential to have policies in place to manage applications, even when the Building a Better Future Plan would not support the principle of the proposal.

Sport England are a statutory consultee when a planning application or local plan would result in the loss of a playing pitch or other sports facility. As such, great weight must be placed on their views on the loss and whether any alternative provision would outweigh that loss.



HIGH QUALITY DESIGN

LEGISLATION AND GOVERNMENT POLICY

The NPPF devotes a whole chapter to well-designed places, setting out that the creation of high quality, beautiful and sustainable buildings and places is fundamental to what the planning and development process should achieve.

Good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, creates better places in which to live and work and helps make development acceptable to communities. Being clear about design expectations, and how these will be tested, is essential for achieving this. Flowing from this is the expectation that plans will set out a clear design vision and expectations.

All planning authorities should prepare design guides or codes consistent with the principles set out in the National Design Guide and National Model Design Code, and which reflect local character and design preferences. While not yet enacted, the Levelling Up and Regeneration Bill seeks to make changes to the planning system to strengthen the focus on good design and looks likely to introduce an express requirement for the introduction of local design codes.

LOCAL EVIDENCE AND POLICY

The Council has published a Borough Design Guide⁵⁰. Given the direction of travel in the Levelling Up and Regeneration Bill it is likely that this will need to be substantially reviewed and upgraded to a full local design code.

THE PROPOSED APPROACH

The Building a Better Future Plan will set out design expectations for development, covering not only the proposed buildings themselves, but also their context and surroundings; Good design is not only about visual appeal, but also about amenity, ease of getting around, crime prevention, and environmental considerations, and the policies in the plan will reflect this.

⁵⁰<https://www.havant.gov.uk/planning-policy/supplementary-planning-documents>

PROPOSED POLICIES

- A policy setting out in broad terms the parameters that should be considered in development to achieve well-designed buildings in their wider context, and an expectation for developers to engage with the Council early on in their design process;
- Site allocation policies which highlight any particular features on a site or its context which should be taken into consideration in design strategies;
- Possible Local Design Code to support the Building a Better Future Plan (depending on progress and detail of Levelling Up and Regeneration Bill)

LIMITATIONS TO NOTE

There are no particular limitations in relation to architectural design.



HERITAGE AND THE HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT

LEGISLATION AND GOVERNMENT POLICY

National legislation and guidance awards specific protections to heritage assets. They are considered to be an irreplaceable resource which should be conserved in a manner appropriate to their significance so they can be enjoyed for their contribution to the quality of life of existing and future generations.

Plans should set out positive strategies to conserve and encourage the enjoyment of the historic environment including those most at risk through neglect or decay.

The NPPF requires that where a proposal would lead to substantial harm or total loss, LPAs would be minded to refuse consent unless there is substantial public benefit which outweighs the harm. Where there is less than substantial harm, including to the setting, of a heritage asset, then the harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal.

LOCAL EVIDENCE AND POLICY

The Council recognises the contribution of the historic environment to the distinctive character of our landscape and townscape, and to the quality of life of current and future residents. As such, heritage assets must be conserved and, where possible, enhanced in a manner appropriate to their significance. In understanding this, new development will be expected to complement and enhance the historic environment, helping to shape modern communities by giving them a sense of history and distinct local identity.

Havant Borough has 14 conservation areas, 246 buildings of special architectural or historic interest (listed buildings), 83 buildings of a local interest, 7 scheduled monuments and 1 registered park and garden. Two of these assets have been identified as being at risk.

As part of Havant Borough Council's positive strategy for the conservation and enjoyment of the historic environment, the Council manages appropriate development and determines planning applications that affect the Borough's historic environment. The Council also continues to monitor buildings and other heritage assets at risk through neglect, decay or other threats. It will positively consider development proposals that would secure appropriate viable uses, along with the repair and maintenance of such assets.

THE PROPOSED APPROACH

The Building a Better Future Plan will seek to protect, conserve and enhance its heritage assets and their setting, both through criteria-based policies and through its development allocation selection. Development in these sensitive areas will be limited and where it does take place would have to be to the highest quality, retaining as much of the heritage as possible.

Any proposal which would affect, or has the potential to affect, a heritage asset will be required to provide a Heritage Statement in order for all potential harm caused as a result to be assessed.

Conservation character appraisals and management plans will continue to be updated where appropriate in order to ensure the conservation areas

PROPOSED POLICIES

- A policy on heritage and conservation which outlines the Council's approach to protect and safeguard the Borough's heritage assets.

LIMITATIONS TO NOTE

There is strong national policy resisting substantial harm, or loss, of designated heritage assets. However where there is harm, but it is less than substantial, the benefits, including addressing the need for housing, need to be carefully weighed up and a fully rounded decision taken on whether a site is allocated for development or not.

There are limitations to the protections that can be afforded to locally listed buildings as the Council do not own them and much of their care and maintenance relies upon the owners. By their nature, whilst they have heritage value, they are not of sufficient quality to justify being on the national list.



POLLUTION

LEGISLATION AND GOVERNMENT POLICY

Pollutants can come from a number of sources including soil, air, light, water or noise and land instability. The NPPF sets out that policies and decisions should ensure new development is appropriately located, taking into account likely effects of pollution. Additionally, that development prevents adverse effects on the existing communities and the environment.

LOCAL EVIDENCE AND POLICY

One of the major types of pollution is air pollution from vehicles, with transport-related emissions accounting for 37% of the CO2 emissions attributed to Havant⁵¹. Without continued efforts to limit emissions which contribute to poor air quality, there remains a risk that the concentration of pollutants could increase, and that national standards for limiting air quality could be breached at key locations in the Borough.

There are numerous sites within the Borough which may be affected by contamination associated with the previous use of land and which present a potential risk to human health and/or the built and natural environment.

The Hampshire Minerals and Waste Plan⁵² addresses the need for minerals and waste facilities in the Borough. As such, aside from site specific matters, this will not be addressed through the Building a Better Future Plan.

THE PROPOSED APPROACH

The approach to this in the Building a Better Future Plan will be to expect developers to submit sufficient information to establish whether a significant negative effect is likely to result from development in isolation and in combination with other development. If it is, then a mitigation strategy would be needed to ensure that there is no adverse impact on the environment.

A key part of encouraging vitality and viability in the Borough's town centres will be to encourage uses which support the evening economy, whilst focusing high quality high density residential development in these areas. Whilst new homes in these areas can contribute to the evening economy, it can cause conflicts such as noise which need to be managed in order to protect residential amenity.

⁵¹Department for Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy, UK local authority and regional greenhouse gas emissions national statistics, 2020

⁵²<https://www.hants.gov.uk/landplanningandenvironment/strategic-planning/hampshire-minerals-waste-plan>

PROPOSED POLICIES

- Protection of existing and future occupiers from projected levels of noise, odour, vibration, light, water and air pollution and a mechanism to secure suitable mitigation.
- A requirement for larger scale proposals to offset their emissions on air quality that are proportionate to the scale of development
- Where sites are at risk of land contamination, a requirement for the developer to submit an appropriate risk assessment which considers potential contamination sources and identifies deliverable mitigation solutions.

LIMITATIONS TO NOTE

Some forms of development result in pollutants but are necessary to meet the economic and social needs of the Borough. This includes industrial uses which, although needed, may be detrimental to amenity. Adverse effects can also occur as a result of the inappropriate location of new development close to sources of pollution or other amenity impacts.

The Building a Better Future Plan cannot be expected to address pre-existing environmental problems. New development must however mitigate negative effects and ensure there is no adverse impact on the environment during, and once development has taken place



YOUR PRIORITIES FOR THE BUILDING A BETTER FUTURE PLAN

This consultation document has highlighted those topics where we intend the plan to require particular features or contributions from those proposing new development. These can be part of the homes being built, such as higher standards of design. Or they can be contributions that the developer makes, such as providing a proportion of the homes as affordable housing products or financially contributing to off-site infrastructure. The preceding sections set out the proposed approach across several different topics and we would like your views on where we should particularly focus the plan.

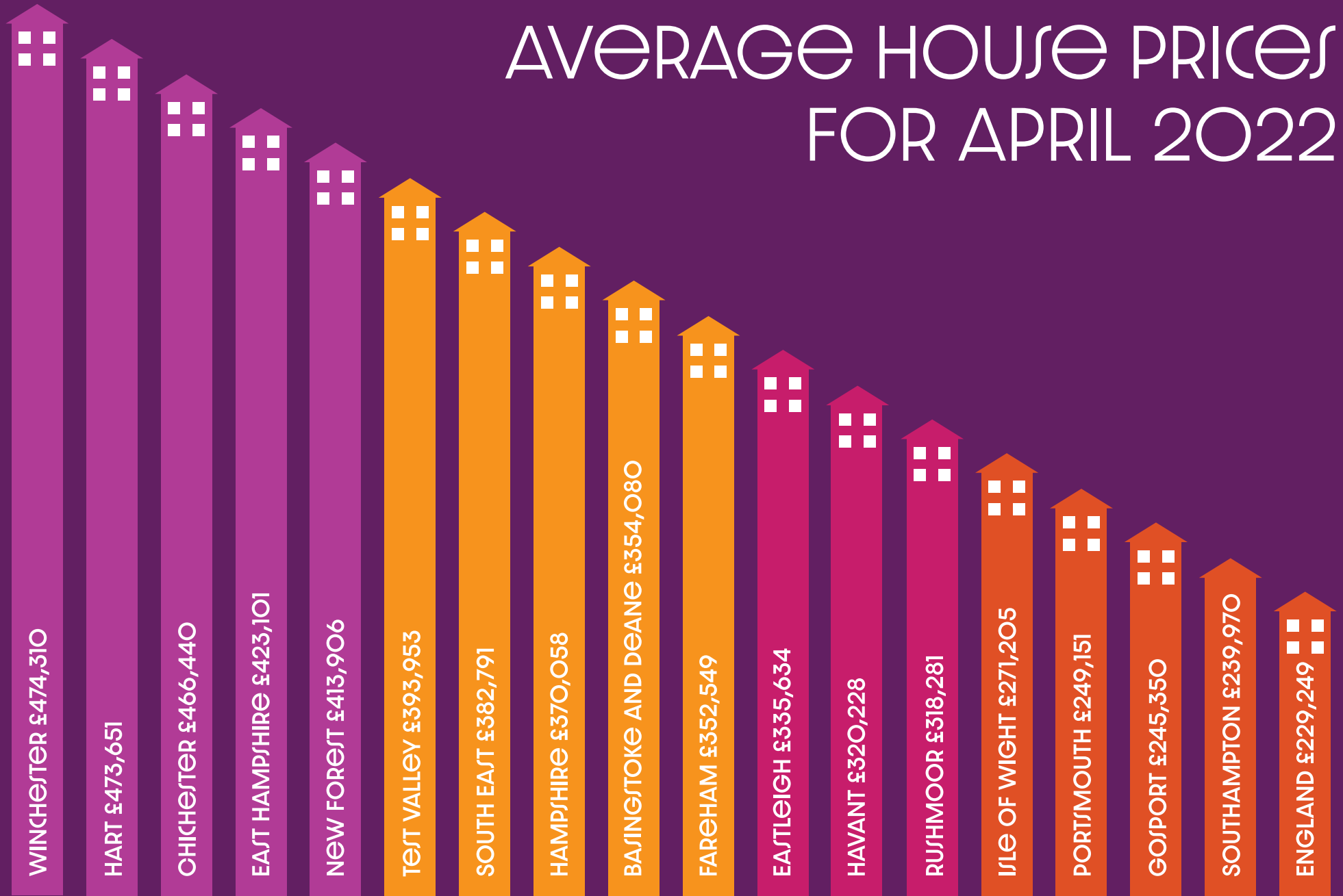
Some contributions that developers make are necessary to comply with a legal requirement, such as the contributions to the Bird Aware Solent mitigation scheme. These are set out through existing strategies, underpinned by local research, and it is not proposed to revisit this as part of the current consultation. There are also infrastructure contributions or projects that are needed to deal with the immediate needs of a site, such as new junctions into developments or a crossing to connect to the site. These need to be provided wherever necessary to make development acceptable, regardless of wider requirements set by the plan.

VIABILITY - A SIGNIFICANT LIMITATION

We live in a capitalist society and that will not change and development sites are brought forward by the private sector in large part. Even when brought forward by local authorities or other non-profit organisations, they need to be financially viable. The NPPF requires that when drawing up local plans, economic viability is considered. One of the specific tests of a local plan at examination is whether it can be delivered. If the requirements of the plan are too onerous and would make development unviable, the plan would be considered undeliverable and thus would not be found sound.

So it is necessary to consider carefully where to focus the additional gains that development can bring. The price that a new home attracts in Havant Borough is lower than in a lot of other areas nearby.

AVERAGE HOUSE PRICES FOR APRIL 2022



The cost of materials is broadly the same across the south and so this means that viability can be particularly challenging in Havant Borough compared to our neighbours.

The current extremely high increases in the cost of materials will also have an impact. The plan's viability study will need to assess whether increases in house prices match the increases in materials.

WHAT SHOULD WE FOCUS ON?

The following are broadly the areas where the Building a Better Future Plan could place greater emphasis if the viability study shows we cannot achieve all of the requirements. We would like your feedback on the relative importance to you of each of these. We will then consider your feedback when deciding how to balance them in the policies in the plan. It should be stressed that the below measures are not in any order of priority and are ideas for you to consider.

- **Affordable housing** – The Building a Better Future Plan could include a higher proportion of affordable housing or a higher proportion of hard to source properties.

- **Biodiversity net gain** – a net gain of more than the statutory 10% would further boost biodiversity, alternatively the plan could explore whether certain types of sites contribute more than others.
- **Housing design standards** – there are design features of new housing developments that would improve their overall sustainability. This includes enhanced standards of accessibility, minimum size standards for new housing and provision of private outdoor space as part of every new home.
- **Infrastructure** – this is primarily through the setting of a new Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) charging schedule which will happen alongside the development of the Building a Better Future Plan.
- **Low carbon design** – enhanced energy efficiency and provision of electric vehicle charging points mean that new development minimises its contribution to climate.



SUMMARY OF ALLOCATIONS METHODOLOGY

The flow chart below sets out the methodology we will use to identify whether an area of land is suitable for future development and whether it should be allocated in the Building a Better Future Plan.

This will apply to sites that have been included in past plans and strategies together with any sites that are suggested to us through this consultation. Any sites that have planning permission will be included in the Building a Better Future Plan as the planning permission has already established that the site should be developed.

SITE AVAILABILITY

We are at the start of the Building a Better Future Plan and as part of this consultation process we shall be conducting a new call for sites in order to ensure every effort is being made to establish what land is available in the Borough.

STRATEGIC HOUSING LAND AVAILABILITY ASSESSMENT (SHLAA)

A SHLAA will perform a high-level analysis of this land assessing whether it is potentially suitable and deliverable. It will also identify any potential yields and site constraints and will comprehensively set this out in a clear form. If the land is suitable and deliverable it will then be taken forward to undergo a Sustainability Appraisal (SA) as an identified site. Inclusion in the SHLAA does not mean the site will automatically be allocated.

SUSTAINABILITY APPRAISAL (SA)

The SA is a systematic and iterative assessment of the sites which is used to inform the preparation and development of a plan, making sure that the plan will help achieve certain environmental, economic and social objectives. The SA will assess the site for its suitability for sustainable development and whether it could be considered as a future allocation for development. As part of this, the SA provides the means of identifying and mitigating any potential adverse effects that the Building a Better Future Plan might otherwise have.

ALLOCATION WITHIN THE BUILDING A BETTER FUTURE PLAN

Only where sites are available, have potential for development AND are considered suitable for development (based on the outcome of the SA) will a site be allocated in having the future potential to be developed. In allocating the site, the Council also undertakes Habitats Regulations Assessment and an Integrated Impact Assessment to ensure that the allocation would meet the requirements of the Habitats Regulations and the Equalities Act respectively.



If you have questions about the content of the consultation, please email the Planning Policy Team at policy.design@havant.gov.uk or by calling **023 9244 6539**

Havant Borough Council, Public Service Plaza,
Civic Centre Road, Havant PO9 2AX