

Local Plan Review 2016-2036

Part One: Planning Strategy

SUSTAINABILITY APPRAISAL

FINAL VERSION

July 2020

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¹ The Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004

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1. Introduction

- 1.1 A Sustainability Appraisal (SA) is a process through which the sustainability of a plan or programme is assessed during its preparation. It tests the extent to which the plan or programme, when judged against reasonable alternatives, will help to achieve relevant sustainability objectives.

Sustainability Appraisal and Strategic Environmental Assessment

- 1.2 Under the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, SA is mandatory for Local Plans (Development Plan Documents). In preparing their plans or programmes, planning authorities must also comply with the requirements of European Directive 2001/42/EC (also known as the Strategic Environmental Assessment Directive). The requirements for the Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Directive are separate from those of a SA. However, it is possible to satisfy both requirements in a single appraisal process. Government guidance sets out how this may be done.
- 1.3 The guidance explains the difference between environmental assessments required under the SEA Directive and SA of development plans as required by the UK Government². It shows how assessment to comply with the SEA Directive can be integrated with SA best practice. Generally, SA includes a wider range of considerations, extending to social and economic effects of plans, whereas SEA is focused on the environmental effects. The SA guidance describes how it is possible to satisfy both requirements by carrying out a single appraisal process. **Throughout this document, references to SA of development plans should be taken to mean ‘SA incorporating the requirements of the SEA Directive’.**
- 1.4 There is also a requirement that development plans should be subject to Appropriate Assessment where they are likely to have a significant effect on sites identified as being of importance under the European Union Habitats Directive³, which in the UK take the form of designation as Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) and Special Protection Areas (SPAs). Potential SPAs (pSPAs), candidate SACs (cSACs), Sites of Community Importance (SCIs) and Ramsar sites should also be included in the assessment. This has been considered as part of a separate Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) process reported in an HRA report. The outcomes of the HRA are also summarised later in this SA document.
- 1.5 Key features of the SA process are:
- Collecting baseline information, including identifying issues of significance to an area
 - Identifying SA objectives
 - Identifying various policy options
 - Predicting the effects of the plan and reasonable alternatives to the plan
 - Consulting others on the plan policies and the SA
 - Monitoring the effects of implementing the plan or policies.
- 1.6 There are two main outputs from the SA process – a Scoping Report, and a Sustainability Appraisal Report. The Sustainability Appraisal Report must also meet the requirement for an Environmental Report under the SEA Directive, in accordance with Government Guidance on Strategic Environmental Assessment and Sustainability Appraisal. It accompanies Development Plan Documents when these are submitted to the Secretary of State.
- 1.7 The SA process and report is compiled in accordance with the relevant Regulations.⁴

² Planning Practice Guidance: Strategic Environmental Assessment and Sustainability Appraisal (updated March 2014)

³ Directive 92/43/EEC on the Conservation of Natural Habitats and of Wild Fauna and Flora

⁴ The Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004

2. Non-Technical Summary

About the Local Plan

- 2.1 The Local Plan sets out a strategy and policies for the use, development or protection of land and buildings in the Plan Area for the period 2016 to 2036 and covers the parts of New Forest District outside of the National Park.
- 2.2 The Local Plan document forms part of the statutory development plan for the Plan Area (together with any Neighbourhood Plans and the Hampshire County Council Minerals and Waste Local Plan). The policies of the statutory development plan are the basis for deciding planning applications for development.

Two stage Local Plan Review

- 2.3 The Local Plan review is being undertaken in two parts.
- 2.4 Local Plan Review Part One: Planning Strategy sets out strategic policies, including strategic site allocations capable of accommodating 100 or more homes. It replaces and updates parts of the adopted 2009 Core Strategy, and a small number of the more strategic policies in the Local Plan Part 2: Sites and Development Management adopted 2014.
- 2.5 The remaining policies of the adopted 2009 Core Strategy and 2014 Local Plan Part 2 are either saved for continued use pending review as part of the Local Plan Review 2016-2036 Part Two, or are deleted, as set out in the Local Plan Review document. Deleted policies will no longer be applied. Saved policies of the 2009 Core Strategy and 2014 Local Plan Part 2 that remain part of the planning strategy for the Plan Area are duplicated in the Local Plan document for ease of reference.
- 2.6 Local Plan Review 2016-2036 Part Two will commence after the Local Plan Review Part One is completed. This will focus mainly on matters of policy detail and allocations for smaller sites, and the review of the remaining saved planning policies including site allocations. Saved policies remain in force until they are updated or deleted (unless they become out of date for other reasons, for example a change in national guidance or local circumstances).

What is Sustainability Appraisal?

- 2.7 Sustainability Appraisal (SA) is a process through which the sustainability of a plan or programme is assessed during its preparation. It tests the extent to which the plan or programme, when judged against reasonable alternatives, will help to achieve relevant sustainability objectives.
- 2.8 Key features of the SA process are:
 - Collecting baseline information, including identifying issues of significance to an area
 - Identifying SA objectives
 - Identifying various policy options
 - Predicting the effects of the plan and reasonable alternatives to the plan
 - Consulting others on the plan policies and the SA
 - Monitoring the effects of implementing the plan or policies.
- 2.9 There are two main outputs from the SA process – a Scoping Report, and a Sustainability Appraisal Report. The Sustainability Appraisal Report must also meet the requirement for an Environmental Report under the SEA Directive, in accordance with Government Guidance on Strategic Environmental Assessment and Sustainability Appraisal. It accompanies Development Plan Documents when these are submitted to the Secretary of State.

SA Methodology

Stage A: Setting the context and objectives, establishing the baseline and deciding on the scope

- 2.10 NFDC prepared and consulted on a Scoping Report for the Local Plan Review in 2015. The framework of SA objectives provides a benchmark against which the sustainability of the Local Plan is tested. SA objectives are separate from Local Plan objectives, though the two can overlap. Local Plan objectives may not always balance social, economic and environmental objectives. SA objectives are informed by social, economic and environmental issues and by the requirements of legislation and policy. They help identify any imbalances or conflicts between Local Plan objectives.
- 2.11 Criteria have been developed in the form of questions to guide use of the SA objectives. Indicators have also been developed so that the significant effects identified by the SA can be monitored once the Local Plan is implemented.

Identification and review of other relevant policies, plans, programmes, strategies and initiatives which may influence the content of the Local Plan

- 2.12 The Local Plan is not prepared in isolation; rather it is greatly influenced by other policies, plans and programmes. It needs to be consistent with international and national guidance and strategic planning policies (whilst avoiding any repetition of higher level policy) and should contribute to the goals of a wide range of other programmes and strategies. It must also conform to the environmental protection legislation and sustainability objectives that have been established at the international, European and national levels.
- 2.13 A review was undertaken of other plans, policies and programmes that are considered to be relevant to the Local Plan at the international, national, regional and local levels. The conclusions drawn from this review, alongside a review of baseline data, trends and issues, helped to inform the development of a set of SA objectives against which the Local Plan would be appraised (known as the SA framework).
- 2.14 There are a number of key policy documents which are considered to be of particular importance to the development of the Local Plan Review detailed in the SA Scoping Report. It is important that the review of plans, policies and programmes is updated at regular intervals throughout the SA process in order to ensure that it remains up-to-date as several years may pass between the initial scoping stage and the adoption of the plan.

Gathering baseline information about the environmental, social and economic characteristics of New Forest District

- 2.15 Baseline data provides the context for the assessment of sustainability and the basis for identifying trends, predicting effects and monitoring outcomes. The requirements for baseline data vary widely, but it must be relevant to the key environmental, social and economic issues, be sensitive to change and ideally have sufficient records to identify trends.
- 2.16 Annex 1(f) of the SEA Directive requires data to be gathered on the following topics: *biodiversity, population, human health, flora, fauna, soil, water, air, climatic factors, material assets, cultural heritage including architectural and archaeological heritage, landscape and the inter-relationship between the above factors*. Additional sustainability topics were also included in NFDC's SA framework, covering broader socio-economic issues such as housing, access to services, crime and safety, and education and employment.
- 2.17 The baseline information for New Forest District is described in **Chapter 5**, and detailed maps presenting baseline information as it relates to sites are provided in that document. Again, it is important that the baseline information is updated throughout the SA process in order to ensure

that it remains current, and it has therefore been updated by NFDC during the preparation of the Scoping Report.

Identification of the key sustainability issues facing New Forest District

- 2.18 Drawing on the review of plans, policies and programmes and the baseline data, the key sustainability issues for New Forest District were highlighted in the SA Scoping Report (including environmental concerns, as required by the SEA Directive). These issues are presented in **Chapter 7** of this report.

Development of a framework of SA objectives against which the Local Plan will be appraised

- 2.19 Development of a SA framework is not a requirement of the SEA Directive. However, it provides a recognised way in which the likely sustainability effects of a plan can be clearly described, analysed and compared. A SA framework comprises a series of SA objectives and supporting criteria that are used to appraise the policies and proposals within a plan.
- 2.20 The SA framework used for the previous DPD was reviewed and updated in 2016 and the changes made were consulted on with the Environment Agency, Natural England and Historic England as part of an updated Scoping Report (2016).
- 2.21 Detailed comments were received from the Environment Agency during that consultation in relation to the revised SA framework, and some changes were made in relation to those comments, as was set out in the updated Scoping Report (2016). The final updated version of the SA framework has now been used for the appraisal of the Local Plan Review (see **Chapter 6**).

Stage B: Developing and refining alternatives and assessing effects

- 2.22 The production of the Local Plan Proposed Submission Document has followed a long period of evidence gathering and consultation.
- 2.23 An earlier version of the Local Plan, the Initial Proposals consultation document, was produced in July 2016 and the initial SA scores for all land within the plan area was subject to an interim SA. The Interim SA documentation was made available for consultation with the statutory consultees and the general public alongside the DPD. The evidence that was gathered during the preparation of the Initial Proposals document has been drawn upon, and targeted consultation has taken place with statutory bodies since then to test the emerging policy approaches and options.
- 2.24 The outcomes of the 2016 consultation, including comments and submissions received in relation to particular sites, have helped to shape the content of the Proposed Submission Local Plan Review. This process is described in detail below.

Appraisal of Local Plan objectives

- 2.25 The objectives of the Local Plan set the context for the development of options. Once these objectives were established they were tested against the SA objectives (see **Chapter 6** and **Table 6.3**)

Appraisal of Local Plan options and alternatives

- 2.26 There were three main types of options/alternatives that were considered in the preparation of the Local Plan:
- Alternative overall spatial strategies including the need to consider green belt land;
 - Alternative policy approaches to be included in strategic policies;
 - Alternative sites (or allocations) for different types of development.

- 2.27 The SEA Directive requires ‘reasonable alternatives’ to be taken into account, and so not every possible alternative was considered. In any event, the number of options needed to be kept manageable and focused on those aspects where real choices had to be made. One option that was normally considered was the ‘do-nothing’ option (i.e. what would happen without implementation of the policy or proposal).
- 2.28 The strengths and weaknesses of each policy option were recorded and commentary provided on how improvements could be made for positive effects and reducing (mitigating) significant negative effects. Those assessments are set out in full in **Appendix 5**.
- 2.29 Preferred options were prepared taking into account stakeholder comments, and the findings of the SA. Assessments of the policy options are recorded in **Appendix 5**. An appraisal of the preferred option (draft policy) was also undertaken, using the SA objectives and criteria in the SA Framework. To do this, the effects of the options were predicted (i.e. what the effect will be on a given SA objective) and assessed (i.e. how significant that effect will be). Consideration was given to measures that could be introduced to mitigate any significant adverse effects on sustainability and maximise benefits (see **Chapter 13**).
- 2.30 Appraisals were focused on the higher level strategic effects of the option as a whole. The SA objectives and criteria were used to identify whether there is likely to be:

++	Significant positive impact
+	Positive impact
?i	Uncertain / Depends on implementation
+/-	Mixed
-	Negative impact
--	Significant negative impact
0	No effect

- 2.31 In some instances it was not possible to quantify the effects, especially given that the Local Plan will be only one influence on what actually happens on the ground. Therefore, the reasoning for judgements (especially subjective ones) is explained, and the assumptions underlying the judgements set out. This makes the appraisal process as transparent as possible.
- 2.32 The significance of an impact can vary in different contexts. Factors that will be taken into account are:
- The current state of the environment, economy, or social factors that will be affected, and their sensitivity to change (e.g. whether thresholds are close to being exceeded such as transport capacity or water resources, proximity to designated sites, effects on more deprived communities, etc.)
 - The extent and duration of the effect (e.g. the geographical scale or size of the population likely to be affected, and how long the effect will last).
- 2.33 The SA looks for positive effects (i.e. the achievement of SA objectives, including improving conditions that are currently poor) as well as identifying negative effects. Cumulative effects (e.g. the combined effects of a number of different types of development) or secondary/synergistic effects (e.g. where one effect has a ‘knock-on’ effect on something else) are also considered.
- Strategic policies**
- 2.34 The Initial Proposals consultation (2016) set out the councils initial thoughts on a number of strategic policy matters. Since that consultation those matters were formed into policy approaches and subject to SA (see **Chapter 10**).
- 2.35 The findings of the appraisal of the policies are summarised in **Chapters 10 and 11** of this report and the related appraisal schedules can be found in **Appendices 5 and 6**. Reasonable

alternatives/options to the policies included in the Local Plan were also considered and subject to SA. This information is also included in those appendices, where the appraisal of each reasonable alternative is presented above the appraisal of the proposed submission policy that has been included in the Proposed Submission document.

Potential Sites for Residential and Employment Development

- 2.36 A significant number of potential residential and employment development sites (over 200 in total) were put forward during the initial evidence gathering phase through the 2015 call for sites and the 2016 Initial Proposals consultation, mostly by landowners and developers.
- 2.37 The council received 215 sites under the call for sites in 2015 plus further submissions under the brownfield call for sites in 2017. 25 were received under the initial proposals consultation (2016) though some had already been received in the previous rounds of site calls.
- 2.38 Employment land submissions were more modest, with three sites submitted at Salisbury Road, Totton, (Junction 2 on the M27), Dibden Bay (under ABP ownership), and Ower Nurseries, Totton.
- 2.39 All of the submissions under the call for sites were initially assessed with regards to whether they met the critical criteria set out in the SA framework and whether they were of an appropriate size for meeting the requirements of the Local Plan. Sites that did not meet the critical criteria were not considered to be reasonable alternatives, except in exceptional circumstances.

Stage C: Preparing the Sustainability Appraisal Report

- 2.40 This SA report has been produced to detail the process undertaken and results of the appraisal. This includes an overall assessment of the sustainability effects of the Local Plan on each SA objective. Those parts of the SA Report that meet the specific requirements of an 'Environmental Report' under the SEA Directive have been identified (see **Table 4.1**).

Stage D: Consultation on the Publication Local Plan and SA Report

- 2.41 The SA report will be included for consultation during the statutory six-week proposed submission public participation stage of the Local Plan. The consultation process will comply with the Statement of Community Involvement and requirements of the SEA Directive. A non-technical summary of the report is made available as part of this report. Following publication, any changes made to the Local Plan as a consequence of the public consultation, which are likely to have significant effects and which have not previously been appraised may require further appraisal work and the SA Report will be amended to reflect the findings.
- 2.42 The SA report will be included in the documents submitted to the Secretary of State for Public Examination.

Stage E: Monitoring and Implementation of the Local Plan

- 2.43 The SA Report sets out recommendations for monitoring the significant effects, including any significant environmental effects, arising from the implementation of the Local Plan, using the indicators in the SA Framework. These will be reported in the Local Plan Monitoring Report which is updated when required.

Site appraisal process

- 2.44 The Council has carried out a comprehensive Sustainability Appraisal of all land in the district outside of the defined towns and villages to identify all potentially suitable locations for housing development. Land in the main settlements was excluded because there are few opportunities for strategic scale housing development within built up areas, and the future housing contribution of smaller scale development within existing towns and villages is also likely to be limited.

- 2.45 The appraisal has taken into account a wide range of factors such as access to facilities, landscape sensitivity and constraints such as flood risk, coastal erosion, protected habitats and industrial hazards
- 2.46 The SA Sites Assessment has been split into a number of stages which together capture the information needed to appraise and score each site. Every piece of land in the plan area was assessed under this SA process so that the Council could be certain that all land has been assessed consistently to come to a robust position on the sustainability of sites.

Stage 1 – Defining land parcels

- 2.47 The Plan Area, outside defined settlements, was divided into coherent land parcels (around 600 in all) for sustainability assessment of potential for development. Parcel boundaries were defined using a combination of natural boundaries, landscape features, environmental constraints (e.g. flood risk), and the boundaries of sites considered in previous Local Plan reviews (where applicable).

Stage 2 - Critical Criteria

- 2.48 Early in the process 'critical criteria' were identified: these are circumstances where land is unsuitable in principle for development. The Council defined the following as critical criteria:
- Environment Agency flood risk zones 2 or 3, or land which has critical drainage problems (additionally, later stages of the SA Site Assessment will incorporate Strategic Flood Risk Assessment findings on any local level flood risks). The overall aim is to steer new development to Flood Zone 1 and away from areas with a higher probability of flooding on-site or likely to cause consequential flooding elsewhere.
 - Areas at risk of coastal erosion (in particular the Climate Change Management Areas that are set out in the adopted Local Plan Part 2: Sites & Development Management (2014).
 - Military exclusion zones, in particular the inner and outer blast zones relating to Marchwood military port activities. They exclude development within defined areas adjacent to military explosive storage areas.
 - Health and Safety Executive consultation zones (especially the Fawley Oil Refinery inner consultation zone and to a lesser degree the middle consultation zone, which impose restrictions on development that would be in the vicinity of major hazard installations and major hazard pipelines).
 - Internationally significant nature conservation sites (specifically land parcels lying within or mostly within sites of international nature conservation interest - Special Protection Areas (SPA), Special Areas of Conservation, Ramsar sites - or within national Sites of Special Scientific Interest). These have been established as especially sensitive locations for development and are therefore screened out.
- 2.49 Land parcels that are wholly or mostly subject to any of the above critical criteria were not assessed further. By their nature these sites are subject to risks or impacts which cannot be adequately mitigated and therefore should be avoided (see **Appendix 3 Sites screened out under Critical Criteria**, for a full list of these sites). Just over 100 sites were classified as critical criteria failures and this equates to around 20% of the whole plan area.

Stage 3 – Call for sites

- 2.50 In 2015 New Forest District Council launched a 'call for sites' as part of its Local Plan Review Strategic Land Availability Assessment. During the call for sites landowners and other parties were invited to put forward land and sites which they wished to be considered for development. The call for sites provided an opportunity for land to be considered for a range of possible uses

including housing. For land that was considered available, the assessment also asked promoters to indicate that the land was available and deliverable within the plan period. The housing potential of land not submitted in the call for sites has been assessed in exactly the same way.

Stage 4 – Desktop assessment

2.51 A desktop assessment was carried out of all the remaining land parcels not affected by critical criteria against the SA sustainability objectives (around 500 parcels were assessed). The ten SA objectives each have a number of SA **appraisal criteria** covering different aspects of the broader objective. The appraisal criteria in turn have one or more specific SA **appraisal questions** (see **Chapter 8**). Not all of the objectives, appraisal criteria or appraisal questions are relevant to site selection. Those not relevant were screened out. Those most relevant to the suitability of a site for development in principle were given more weight in making an overall judgement. These include but are not limited to:

2.52

- Accessibility and proximity to facilities and services;
- Potential for significant ecological impact;
- Scope to avoid or mitigate the impact of development including ability to provide accessible recreational natural green space on suitable land on or adjoining the site.
- Landscape capacity and landscape sensitivity assessment based on site visits and fieldwork.

2.53 The tables in **Appendix 2** provides a commentary for each SA objective setting out the SA appraisal questions, the basis for assessment rating, the relevance and applied weighting of individual SA criterion to strategic housing site selection and brief explanatory notes.

Stage 5 – Landscape assessment

2.54 A Landscape Sensitivity and Capacity Study⁵ was undertaken including site visits and fieldwork drawing on previous Landscape Character Assessments. This forms part of the evidence base for the identification of potential sites for new residential development in the local plan area. The aim of this study is to assess the landscape sensitivity and the capacity of the landscape to absorb development without detrimental impact, focusing in particular on edge-of-settlement locations. The assessed areas are based on landscape features and do not reflect ownership or current use. The study also provides a general indication of potential landscape enhancement or mitigation that may be required if development should come forward.

Stage 6 - Green Belt study

2.55 The Council commissioned an independent study of land in the Green Belt in terms of whether it still meets the five purposes of Green Belt that are set out in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)⁶. The study result for each SA polygon is noted in the SA site assessment for locations situated in the Green Belt.

2.56 This is a change from the Interim SA assessment where Green Belt status was deliberately not factored into the overall assessment conclusion about the potential sustainability of land for development. This was because the 2016 Initial Proposals public consultation consulted on three options for releasing land for development from the Green Belt in otherwise potentially sustainable locations

⁵ Available here: www.nfdc.gov.uk/localplan2016

⁶ New Forest District Green Belt Study, by Land Use Consultants (July 2016)

Stage 7 – Site specific sense check

- 2.57 It was important that checks were made on the existing land use, any local plan allocations or sites with planning permission. Where existing housing allocations adjoined a site a judgement was made as to whether that allocation might be better considered or potentially subsumed as part of a strategic site option (as opposed to leaving it as a stand-alone allocation). Where existing uses were for residential, a judgement was made as to whether that use is likely to remain within the plan period to 2036. Where an existing use was judged likely to remain, the sites were screened out.

Stage 8 – Pre-consultation with infrastructure providers

- 2.58 Once the Council had completed enough of the SA site assessment to give *preliminary* results for potential sites, an informal consultation was carried out with infrastructure providers on possible critical infrastructure constraints. The following were consulted:
- Water utility companies (in relation to water supply and waste water treatment).
 - Environment Agency and Hampshire County Council (with regard to capacity constraints or deficiencies in surface and/or ground water drainage)
 - Electric utility companies (on whether there would be sufficient overall electricity supply, and connection issues relating to existing electricity supply)
 - Gas utility companies (about the existence of mains gas connections in each area)
 - Telecommunication firms (asking whether the potential sites were unlikely to have mobile coverage to the latest speeds, and likely access to fibre optic enabled connections)
 - Hampshire County Council (on the likely sufficiency of primary and secondary school places)
 - Highways England and HCC Highways (about the sufficiency of highway capacity to meet likely demand from proposed housing, taking into account any committed investment)
 - Public transport bodies and firms (regarding the capacity on the existing bus routes to meet likely demand from proposed housing, taking into account any committed investment)
 - NHS West Hampshire Clinical Commissioning Group (on whether there would be sufficient hospital, surgery and dentist capacity to meet likely demand from proposed housing, and any other healthcare needs that are likely to be necessary to make the proposed development acceptable in planning terms).

- 2.59 The responses informed the SA site appraisals as appropriate.

Stage 9 – Incorporate relevant facts, evidence and consultation feedback

- 2.60 Following a period of public consultation (Initial Proposals consultation, 2016) and further correspondence with statutory bodies and utility providers the council appraised the responses⁷. This feedback was used to update the SA site appraisals (where needed) and to inform decisions regarding strategic sites and policy approaches. In some cases new evidence came to light which required the council to undertake further technical work (e.g. air quality and flood risk), in order to confirm the deliverability or otherwise of proposed development sites.
- 2.61 The potential release of land from the Green Belt was a key question for the 2016 Initial Proposals public consultation. The SA to that point had assigned no sustainability weighting to the status of land as Green Belt for the purposes of assessing whether land parcels in Green Belt are potentially sustainable locations for housing development, Green Belt status notwithstanding. The interim SA Site Assessment initially recorded the extent to which each land parcel within the Green Belt contributes to the five purposes of Green Belt, as set out in the Green Belt Study conclusions
- 2.62 Responses received to the Initial Proposals consultation in 2016 confirmed that Green Belt was highly valued by local residents.

⁷ Public responses to Initial Proposals were published in the summary document – “Statement of Consultation (Regulation 18) “

- 2.63 The Initial Proposals consultation also proposed new potential sites or site extensions not in the Green Belt which the SA assessed as reasonable alternatives alongside potential Green Belt allocation sites.
- 2.64 For potential sites within the Green Belt, subsequent work with site promoters on potential masterplans also identified opportunities to focus development on weaker performing Green Belt supported by open space and recreational mitigation land on adjoining land in ‘stronger’ Green Belt.
- 2.65 The Council judged that it could meet its Objectively Assessed Need (OAN)⁸ for housing provided that some weak to moderately performing Green Belt land was released from the Green Belt and allocated for housing development. The council considered this to be the right balance between national policy objectives for protecting the Green Belt, and for delivering sufficient housing. On this specific basis the ‘exceptional circumstances’ test for the release of Green Belt land for development through the Local Plan review was considered to be met.
- 2.66 There is no longer a need to consider the release of land in stronger Green Belt, thus there are no longer ‘exceptional circumstances’ to justify releasing stronger Green Belt sites for development, and no stronger Green Belt sites are proposed to be allocated in the Local Plan. This was due to the combination of:
- A revised, lower OAN requirement.
 - The allocation for housing development of an additional large strategic housing site not in the Green Belt at Burgate, north of Fordingbridge.
 - Extensions to other proposed sites, either to include additional land not in the Green Belt, or to use land retained in the Green Belt to provide supporting open space including for habitat mitigation. This enables the developable part of the site to be used more efficiently.
 - Additional capacity on smaller sites based on an analysis of potential including public calls for sites and local assessments for emerging Neighbourhood Plans.
- 2.67 It is important to note that up until this point the appraisals of the land parcels gave a ‘policy off’ assessment of the intrinsic merits of developing each parcel. Stages 10 and onwards represent the parts where the SA appraisal process looked at how the development will be deliverable and made acceptable on the ground given the specific needs and any significant effects identified (i.e. ‘policy on’) using a combination of strategic policies and site-specific policies.

Stage 10 – Land availability confirmation

- 2.68 The Local Plan process included a number of milestones at which availability of land was tested. A formal Call for Sites which took place in October 2015 was the first stage, and this has been followed by the Initial Proposals consultation (July 2016) and a further call for sites consultation (brownfield land only) in November 2016. Together these have provided the evidence we needed in relation to the availability of land and the likely timescales of delivery.

Stage 11 – Incorporate Strategic Flood Risk Assessment findings

- 2.69 The Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA) identifies any local level flood risk, and provides a comprehensive up to date evidence base to take account of the latest flood risk information. The Level 1 SFRA was carried out for the whole plan area and models the sources of flooding and the extent of flood risk. It also provides an assessment of the potential impact of climate change on flood risk and critical drainage areas and recommendations on potential need for Surface Water Management Plans. A comprehensive set of maps display the flood risk information.

⁸ Justin Gardner Consulting report 2017

- 2.70 Given that significant areas of the district are at high risk of flooding from tidal, fluvial and surface water sources, a Level 2 SFRA has also been carried out for some of the proposed development sites to satisfy the Sequential and, where necessary, Exception Tests in accordance with the NPPF.
- 2.71 The output from the **Level 1 SFRA** and **Level 2 SFRA** work has been used to score sites in this SA.
- 2.71 Additional data were derived from the SFRA outputs so that the sequential approach could be verified in the Local Plan.

Stage 12 – Detailed assessments of infrastructure requirements

- 2.73 More detailed assessments of infrastructure requirements have incorporated feedback from including infrastructure providers, through direct approaches and by Regulation 18 public consultation⁹.
- 2.74 Hampshire County Council is one of the key providers of a number of important services in New Forest District. These include: education; fire and rescue; waste management; library services; and highways and transport.
- 2.75 Utility companies (water and electric) were also consulted at an early stage in relation to water supply capacity, water quality, sewage treatment, and gas and electric supply.
- 2.76 Highways England is responsible for operating, maintaining and improving the strategic road network in England on behalf of the Secretary of State for Transport. In the New Forest District Local Plan area, Highways England is responsible for the A31, M27 and A36 and it was approached at various points to ascertain the likely constraints and opportunities that development could bring.

Stage 13 – Open space needs assessment

- 2.77 An open space (formal and informal) needs assessment has been produced which updates the councils evidence base and gives an indication of whether open space requirements may affect site capacity. Quantitative requirements have been established and are set against open space policy requirements. This allowed the council to see which strategic sites require new provision of open space as part of their development frameworks.

Stage 14 – Viability appraisal

- 2.78 In order to understand the viability of development in the district, in particular for residential and housing development in its various forms including market, affordable, private rental etc the council commissioned a study to provide the required background evidence. It advises on the viability of various forms and combinations of affordable provision and undertakes a site specific viability assessment of the strategic sites in the Local Plan. The study assesses the individual and cumulative viability implications of policy standards from policies in the adopted and emerging local plans and supporting documents. In addition it applies sensitivity testing on key assumptions and draws out any implications.

Stage 15 - Findings from site specific technical studies by site promoters

- 2.79 As part of the process of appraising strategic sites, the council wrote to site promoters at various stages to request copies of site technical studies and master plan proposals. The majority of promoters provided documents that aided policy officers in assessing constraints and opportunities on each site. Concept masterplans for each strategic housing site proposal helped

⁹ Details of this can be found in the Infrastructure Delivery Plan

to guide SA appraisals for individual land parcels, identify mitigation proposals, and to guide policy content for strategic sites. Technical studies identify key factors such as the landscape and ecological considerations (including habitat recreational mitigation), the main arrangements for site access and circulation, presence of flood risk, and mineral potential.

- 2.80 Sites were appraised on their own merits to allow for consistent and comparable appraisal and the council then used available studies to firm up the policy approach regarding elements such as mitigation.

Appraisal of site selection and alternatives

- 2.77 A full assessment of all land outside of settlement boundaries to ensure that the Council could be certain that all land has been assessed consistently to come to a robust appraisal of the sustainability of sites.
- 2.78 As described in **Chapter 8** every site was scored on an equal basis with careful judgements on their relationship with adjoining land parcels. Developing with adjoining land sometimes afforded the opportunity to improve the sustainability score (e.g. to provide recreational mitigation natural green space). In this way the strategic sites emerged – sometimes as standalone parcels of land, other times as a combination of land parcels which taken as a whole were scored as sustainable in SA terms.
- 2.79 Full SA site appraisals for each parcel of land are available on the councils SA webpage¹⁰. Overall ratings were applied as follows:

Score colour	Overall site conclusion	Notes	Number of SA polygons
	Highly sustainable location	Sites that are allocated for housing in the adopted Local Plan but where construction had not yet commenced at the time of the assessment	2
	Sustainable location	These sites passed the SA stages of appraisal and were assessed as suitable for consideration. They exhibited positive or acceptable impacts on most of the SA objectives.	5
	Acceptable location with no major issues	These sites were assessed as suitable for consideration. They exhibited some negative impacts on SA objectives but they were deemed acceptable – either because mitigation measures appear viable or technical work demonstrated that they were acceptable.	65
	Significant sustainability issues – in combination appear to make site unsuitable for housing	These sites only passed some of the SA stages of appraisal. A number of the objectives were scored adversely, some with significant adverse effects.	29
	Unsustainable location – development would be unacceptably harmful (and mitigation not deemed possible)	These sites only passed the early stages SA appraisal. In most cases a good number of the objectives and criteria were scored adversely, many of them for highly weighted objectives. In some instances the objectives were mostly scored as acceptable but the site was assessed as unsustainable due to single issues e.g. site in existing viable use as a residential plot.	411
x	Critical Criteria Failures	Screened out under the critical criteria.	104

- 2.80 With regard to finding alternative options, it has always been clear to New Forest District Council that the requirements of the NPPF in relation to boosting the supply of housing would require a significant uplift in housing delivery. This led to the early decision to assess all land across the plan area (outside the settlement boundaries) in order to identify any land that was suitable (i.e. sustainable) for development. Those sites scored as 'red' – *Unsustainable location*

¹⁰ <http://maps.newforest.gov.uk/publicmap8/Map.aspx?MapName=StrategicLandAssessment>

were screened out early on in the SA process and have only been reconsidered where robust technical evidence demonstrated that the SA conclusion should change.

- 2.81 Consequently the potential to find ‘alternatives’ with regard to site selection was very limited - all sites deemed sustainable were considered for development – save for the decision on Green Belt which has a clear impact on housing delivery and the targets to be adopted.

Green Belt scenarios

- 2.82 The independent review of the green belt has informed the options that were available to the council in meeting its housing need and Chapter 9 sets out a sustainability appraisal assessment of these three consultation (housing delivery) scenarios against the 10 Sustainability Objectives.
- 2.84 Scenario One: Protect and retain as Green Belt all land currently in Green Belt.
- Identified capacity for 8,980 homes (around 800 homes on sites of 10 or more homes, around 1,000 homes small developments of up to 9 homes, 2,700 from commitments and small sites, 3,100 homes on new sites outside the Green Belt, and 1,380 homes on Fawley Power Station site).
 - As a result 100% of the Green Belt would be retained, and 86% of housing needs would be met, a shortfall of 1,440 homes (assessed against the 2017 OAN).
- 2.85 Scenario Two: Protect and retain as Green Belt land in Green Belt that performs strongly or relatively strongly as Green Belt.
- Release for development Green Belt land that performs moderately or weakly as Green Belt, if it is also a sustainable location for housing development.
 - Identified capacity for 10,500 homes (around 800 homes on sites of 10 or more homes, around 1,000 homes small developments of up to 9 homes, 2,700 from commitments and small sites, 3,100 homes on new sites outside the Green Belt, 1,380 homes on Fawley Power Station site, and 1,525 homes on sustainable sites in Green Belt that perform weakly or moderately as Green Belt).
 - As a result 97% of the Green Belt would be retained, and 100% of housing needs would be met (assessed against the 2017 OAN).
- 2.86 Scenario Three: Release all sustainable locations for housing development from Green Belt
- Identified capacity for 12,855 homes (around 800 homes on sites of 10 or more homes, around 1,000 homes small developments of up to 9 homes, 2,700 from commitments and small sites, 3,100 homes on new sites outside the Green Belt, 1,380 homes on Fawley Power Station site, 1,525 homes on sustainable sites in Green Belt that perform weakly or moderately as Green Belt, and 2,330 homes on land that performs more strongly as Green Belt).
 - As a result 94% of the Green Belt would be retained, and 122% of housing needs would be met (assessed against the 2017 OAN).
- 2.87 **Table 9.1** assesses the three Green Belt consultation scenarios using our 10 SA objectives, setting out a conclusion for each relevant objective and commenting on the extent to which Green Belt is relevant and significant.

Consideration of Green Belt scenarios for site selection

- 2.88 The choices we have made about the release of Green Belt land involve a trade-off between the significant social and economic benefits of providing and if possible fully meeting housing needs, and the potential for significant harm to the environment and important landscapes.
- 2.89 The social and economic benefits also included some important consequential effects of providing additional housing. More affordable housing could also be provided including more starter homes. The local economy would benefit in terms of general demand for goods and services. The locally resident working age population (which is projected to fall by 2,200) would be larger than it otherwise would be and in principle better able to meet the needs of the local economy without the need for longer distance commuting and its harmful environmental consequences.
- 2.90 The environmental and landscape consequences needed to be weighed in the balance. There are two points to note:-
- 2.91 **First**, the general status of land as Green Belt (rather than other undesignated countryside) has no direct bearing on the level of harm to the environment or landscape that might arise from its release for development. This is because Green Belt is not designated on the basis of environmental or landscape quality or sensitivity. The impacts and the sustainability balance will vary from site to site and this has been assessed in more detail though the SA framework.
- 2.92 **Second**, whilst the Green Belt status of land has no specific bearing on the potential for environmental and landscape harm to be realised, in the context of this District the use of Green Belt land would enable higher levels of housing growth. Therefore decisions about release of Green Belt land bring into play the potential for greater harmful environmental and landscape impacts of higher levels of housing development if the sites – as in our case – are on green field land. The most significant potential impacts are:
- The potentially harmful impact on sensitive and high quality landscapes, and in particular on the purposes and landscape of the New Forest National Park that may arise from increased development on its periphery.
 - The potentially higher impacts on the protected habitats and species, and in particular on the New Forest SPA and SAC, that arise may from increased recreational pressures likely with higher levels of housing growth.
- 2.93 Looking at the three scenarios in turn:
- **Scenario 1** whilst giving maximum protection to Green Belt is likely to give rise to significantly adverse social effects in that a significant proportion of housing needs would not be met, with related adverse but less severe consequences for the local economy and labour supply. This scenario has less potential for environmental harm to landscape and biodiversity, although all the proposed sites have been selected to avoid development in the most sensitive locations.
 - **Scenario 2** improves significantly upon scenario 1 by meeting housing needs in full and supporting the economy. Potential for environmental harm to landscape and biodiversity is similar to scenario 1, as the release of weak to moderately performing Green Belt sites does not introduce significantly more development near to the National Park or other more sensitive areas. It also enables more homes to be provided in locations more accessible to opportunities and facilities.
 - **Scenario 3** performs well in excess of meeting housing need, with associated benefits in terms of economic objectives. However this scenario has the most potential for environmental harm to landscape and biodiversity, including some large sites close to or bordering the National Park, although all the proposed sites have been selected to avoid development in the most sensitive locations. Residual impacts would require more extensive mitigation and buffering assuming which significant harm to the environment could be avoided.

- 2.94 The extent to which potential harm to the landscape and to habitats and species actually occurs would depend to an extent on how site proposals are developed. There is significant scope to mitigate potentially adverse effects. Local Plan policies including site specific policies have an important role in helping to ensure effective mitigation is achieved. With good quality site master planning and landscaping and the provision of attractive areas as recreational mitigation it is possible that additional housing development could achieve net benefits in landscape and environmental terms.

Appraisal of strategic policies and alternatives

- 2.95 The Local Plan sets out site-specific policies for strategic development sites within New Forest District.
- 2.96 The strategic policies that are included within the Local Plan have been appraised against the SA framework (set out in **Appendix 4**), with a description of the projected position in relation to the SA questions with no policy change/intervention. The appraisal asked what effect would the proposed policy option have relative to the 'no change' position (++ /- - etc) and why. It is important to note that a positive rating for policies is for a relative improvement, whereas for site selection it was against an absolute standard. The assumptions/judgements that were made in evaluation of the option and how any adverse effects could be avoided or mitigated are also set out in full in **Appendix 4**.
- 2.97 The detailed appraisal matrices for each policy can be seen in full in **Appendix 5** along with appraisals of the reasonable alternatives to each policy.

SA Objective 1: MEETING HOUSING NEEDS

- 2.98 A number of the policies are expected to have positive effects associated with this objective as several of the policies allow for the development of new housing, including affordable housing and specialist accommodation for the elderly. In particular, **significant positive effects** are identified in relation to Policy STR5: Meeting our Housing Needs which sets out housing targets by settlement, and Policies HOU1-HOU5 as these policies identify a means to help to safeguard residential accommodation for groups in particular need or particular housing needs/types as identified in the evidence base.
- 2.99 However, a small number of **minor negative effects** have also been identified where policies may be seen as potentially restrictive to residential development (either directly or indirectly); for example Policy ENV2: The South West Hampshire Green Belt and Policy CCC1: Safe and healthy communities which protects areas that might otherwise have been made available for housing development.

SA Objective 2: ACCESSIBLE OPPORTUNITIES, FACILITIES AND SERVICES

- 2.100 The majority of the Local Plan policies are likely to have positive effects on this objective. In particular, significant positive effects are identified in relation to Policy STR7: Strategic transport proposals, Policy STR8: Community service and infrastructure development, Policy CCC2: Safe and sustainable travel, and Policy STR34: Developer contributions. These will deliver the improvements to access and the delivery of new facilities at various locations around the plan area

SA Objective 3: SAFE AND HEALTHY ENVIRONMENTS

- 2.101 A large number of the policies are not relevant to this objective; however **significant positive effects** are associated with Policy HOU4: Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople (facilitating the provision of sites that deliver safe and healthy environments for those with a travelling lifestyle) and Policy CCC1: Safe and Healthy Communities, which

provides protection from development within areas at risk of coastal erosion, areas at risk of fluvial and coastal flooding, contaminated land, and various hazard zones.

SA Objective 4: A THRIVING ECONOMY

- 2.102 Most of the development management policies are likely to have an impact on the delivery of this objective. **Most of the likely effects identified are positive**; however there are uncertain impacts associated with some as they will depend on implementation / mitigation to achieve an acceptable impact. Policy HOU3: Residential accommodation for older people will provide registered care homes that bring employment opportunities throughout the lifetime of the development, and Policy ECON1: Employment Land and Development will support local businesses, and encourage and support appropriate employment development. **Uncertain impacts** are associated with Policy STR7: Strategic Transport Proposals, Policy HOU4: Gypsies, travellers and travelling showpeople (this will depend on the requirements of individual applicants, but could include elements of employment opportunity), and Policy CCC2: Safe and sustainable travel.

SA Objective 5: PROTECTING BIODIVERSITY AND WILDLIFE

- 2.103 Many of the identified effects on this objective are **uncertain / dependent on implementation**, and a few having positive impacts associated with proposals which should help to relieve pressure on sensitive areas.
- 2.104 **Significant positive effects** are identified for Policy ENV1: Mitigating the Impact of Development on International Nature Conservation Sites, which sets a strong framework for the delivery of mitigation measures designed to prevent adverse effects on the integrity of international nature conservation sites. Other **positive effects** are identified for policy approaches that support the aims of Policy ENV1, in relation to locating new development (Policy STR3) and criteria relating to transport and infrastructure schemes (Policies STR7 and STR8, and IMPL1).
- 2.105 However, **uncertain impacts** are likely in relation to a number of policies – mostly with regard to development where schemes are yet to be submitted/determined, or the requisite mitigation measures are yet to be submitted by promoters. Strategic policies and Site policies seek to mitigate this by ensuring that the required measures are set out clearly for each development site.

SA Objective 6: ACCESSIBLE GREEN SPACE, COAST AND WATER BODIES

- 2.106 None of the policies will have a significant impact on the delivery of this objective; however where likely effects have been identified, all are positive. **Minor positive effects** are expected to result from policies which aim to protect and enhance green space, public open space, and the coast (e.g. Policy ENV1: Mitigating the Impacts of Development, and Policy ENV3: Design quality and Local Distinctiveness).
- 2.107 **Uncertain impacts** are associated with the delivery of this objective with regard to some of the policies - these are mostly housing policies which deal with meeting housing need, types, size, and rural exception sites. How they deliver this objective will depend on implementation and in particular the merits of the landscape and the final layout, density and design.

SA Objective 7: PROTECTING LANDSCAPE AND TOWNSCAPE

- 2.108 The majority of strategic policies have no effect or are dependent on implementation. **Positive effects** on the objective are assessed for Policy ENV4: Landscape character and quality, and policies relating to the location of the location of housing which prevents significantly adverse impacts on the landscape and green belt (Policy STR2: Protection of the Countryside etc, and Policy STR3: The Strategy for Locating New Development).

However, **uncertain or mixed effects** have been identified in relation to a number of policies for this objective, in particular Policy STR5: Meeting Housing Need, and Policy HOU1: Housing type, size and choice where mixed effects have been identified in relation to Green Belt; some allocated sites include some weak to moderate Green Belt although development may provide some landscape enhancement.

SA Objective 8: CONSERVING HERITAGE

- 2.109 None of the policies will have a significant impact on the delivery of this objective; however **where likely effects have been identified, all are positive**. Policy STR1: Achieving Sustainable Development, Policy STR2: Protection of the Countryside etc, Policy STR7: Strategic Transport Priorities, and Policy ENV4: Landscape character and quality, all provide positive criteria for supporting development that protects or enhances the heritage or character of the Plan Area (in support of saved policy DM1).
- 2.110 However, **uncertain impacts** are likely in relation to a number of policies – mostly with regard to development where schemes are yet to be submitted/determined. Detailed considerations in regard to heritage assets are determined at the planning application stage.

SA Objective 9: SUSTAINABLE NATURAL RESOURCES

- 2.111 The majority have no effect or are dependent on implementation. **Positive effects** on the objective are assessed for Policy STR1: Achieving Sustainable Development (which supports developments that contribute to the economy), Policy STR7: Strategic Transport Proposals (which Policy ensures that major projects can be achieved without an unacceptable impact on the local environment) and Policies ECON1 – ECON3 which relate to the retention of employment sites, some of which are involved in the processing of natural resources such as minerals.
- 2.112 However, **uncertain effects** are likely in relation to a number of policies which are dependent on implementation where schemes are yet to be promoted, or the requisite mitigation measures are yet to be submitted by promoters. In some cases the management of an adverse impact (e.g. water quality in the Avon area) is yet to be agreed by the relevant statutory body and/or infrastructure providers. Strategic policies and site policies seek to mitigate adverse effects by ensuring that the required measures are set out clearly for each development site.
- 2.113 **Mixed effects** are identified for Policy STR6: Sustainable Economic Growth provides for small new employment land provision in Ringwood and Totton in locations that have very good access to the strategic road network. But new employment provision as part of mixed-use residential-led strategic site allocations will result in the loss of some medium quality agricultural land, and will likely result in an increase in waste generation. However, the policy encourages the use of brownfield land and redundant buildings which will have a positive effect on the objective and provides for new employment development as part of a comprehensive mixed use redevelopment of the former Fawley Power Station site.

SA Objective 10: MANAGING CLIMATE CHANGE

- 2.114 In general, the development management policies are likely to have a positive impact on climate change mitigation. **Positive effects** on the objective are assessed for a number of policies. Policy STR1: Achieving Sustainable Development (which all new development needs to ensure that development is accessible by sustainable transport modes. Locating new development in sustainable locations helps to minimise the need to travel and reduce greenhouse gas emissions). Policy STR7: Strategic Transport Proposals ensures that major projects can be achieved without an unacceptable impact on the local environment, Policy STR8: Community service and infrastructure development (which encourages alternative

modes of transport), and Policy ENV3: Design quality and local distinctiveness, where development should incorporate design measures that improve resource efficiency and climate change resilience, such as grey water recycling, natural heating and cooling and the use of Suds. In addition, Policies ECON1 and ECON2 primarily support employment development within built-up areas where there are greater alternative modes of transport (buses, trains, cycling, walking) available which should provide jobs close to where people live and will minimise the need to travel by private car.

- 2.115 However, potential **mixed impacts** from Policies STR5 and STR6 arise due to parts of some sites being within Flood Zones 2 and 3 (which can be mitigated to be safe and help resolve flood risks elsewhere). Nonetheless locating new development in sustainable locations identified in the policy helps to minimise the need to travel, and reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

Summary of Effects (strategic policies)

2.116 The likely effects of the strategic policies are summarised below by SA objective (see also Chapter 10 and Table 10.1). It should be noted that 'saved' policies from the previous Local Plan Part 1: Core Strategy and the Local Plan Part 2: Sites and Development Management have already been subject to Sustainability Appraisal and therefore are not covered by this policy appraisal.

Strategic policy appraisals summary table (excludes 'saved' policies)

Policy	SA Objectives												
	Housing	Accessible facilities	Safe & Healthy environments	Economy	Biodiversity & Wildlife	Accessible spaces	Landscape & Townscape	Green Belt	Heritage	Natural resources	Contribution to climate change	Flood risk	
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7a	7b	8	9	10a	10b	
STR1 - Sustainable Development	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	
STR2 - Countryside, National Park and AONB	+/-	0	0	0	0	+	+	0	+	0	0	0	
STR3 - Strategy for locating new development	0	0	0	+	+	+	+	+	0	0	0	0	
STR4 - Settlement hierarchy	0	+	0	+	0	0	?i	0	0	0	0	0	
STR5 - Meeting housing need	++	+	?i	+	?i	?i	?i	+/-	?i	?i	+	+/-	
STR6 - Sustainable economic growth	0	+	0	++	0	0	?i	0	0	+/-	+	+/-	
STR7 - Strategic transport proposals	0	++	+	?i	+	+	+	+	+	++	+	++	
STR8 - Community services, infrastructure and facilities	+	++	+	+	+	+	+	+	?i	?i	+	+	
ENV1 - Mitigating impact of development on international nature conservation sites	+	0	0	0	++	+	0	0	0	0	0	0	
ENV2 - South west Hampshire Green Belt	-	0	0	0	?i	0	0	+	0	0	0	0	
ENV3 - Design quality and local distinctiveness	0	0	+	0	0	+	?i	0	0	0	+	0	
ENV4 - Landscape character and quality	0	0	0	0	0	0	++	0	+	0	0	0	
HOU1 - Housing type, size and choice	+	0	0	+	?i	?i	0	+/-	0	?i	0	?i	
HOU2 - Affordable housing	++	0	0	+	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
HOU3 - Residential accommodation for older people	+	+	+	++	0	0	?i	0	0	0	0	0	
HOU4 - Gypsies, travellers and travelling showpeople	++	+	++	?i	0	0	++	++	+	0	0	0	
HOU5 - Rural Housing Exception Sites and Community Led Housing Schemes	++	+	0	+	?i	?i	?i	?i	?i	0	?i	?i	
ECON1 - Employment land and development	0	+	+	++	?i	0	?i	0	?i	+	+	0	
ECON2 - Retention of employment sites and consideration of alternative uses	+	+	0	+	0	0	+	0	0	+	0	0	
ECON3 - Marchwood Port	0	0	0	+	0	0	?i	0	0	+	+	0	
ECON4 - Port development at Dibden Bay	0	0	0	+	?i	0	?i	0	0	?i	?i	0	
ECON5 - Retail development and other main town centre uses	0	+	0	+	0	0	?i	0	?i	0	0	0	
ECON6 - Primary, secondary and local shopping frontages	0	+	0	+	0	0	0	0	?i	0	0	0	
CCC1 - Safe and healthy communities	-	0	++	0	+	0	+	0	?i	0	0	0	
CCC2 - Safe and sustainable travel	0	+	+	?i	?i	?i	?i	?i	?i	+	?i	+	
IMPL1 - Developer contributions	?i	++	+	+	+	+	?i	?i	?i	?i	?i	?i	
IMPL2 - Development standards	?i	+	+	0	+	0	0	0	?i	+	+	0	
IMPL3 - Monitoring	?i	?i	?i	?i	?i	?i	?i	?i	?i	?i	?i	?i	

Appraisal of site-specific policies

- 2.117 The Local Plan Proposed Submission document sets out site-specific proposals for development within New Forest District. These include allocations and/or policies for residential and employment development.
- 2.118 The sustainability implications of developing each site for the purposes specified in the Local Plan, and of implementing the proposed boundary changes, have been appraised against the SA framework, with a rating being attributed to each headline objective. As described in **Chapter 6**, the sites proposed for residential were also scored against each of the detailed sub-questions for the headline objectives (these detailed criteria are set out in **Appendix 1**).
- 2.119 The appraisal of the sites that have been allocated for residential against each headline SA objective are set out in **Appendix 6**. **Chapter 9** explains how the council considered all reasonable alternatives to the sites allocated for residential and these were also subject to SA assessment.

SA Objective 1: MEETING HOUSING NEEDS

- 2.120 Without exception all the Local Plan site-specific policies are likely to have a **significant positive impact** on this objective. They will deliver a sizeable number of homes, with good levels of affordable housing provision when taking viability into account.

SA Objective 2: ACCESSIBLE OPPORTUNITIES, FACILITIES AND SERVICES

- 2.121 The majority of the site-specific policies are likely to have positive impacts on this objective. Except for the SS4 the former Fawley Power Station site, they are located adjacent to existing settlements and therefore have access to a range of existing facilities. Policy SS4 sets out the delivery of a mixed use development for 10,000 sqm of community, retail leisure and service uses on site as well as 10ha of land for business and industrial uses. This is a **significant positive impact** for the site and the local area.

SA Objective 3: SAFE AND HEALTHY ENVIRONMENTS

- 2.122 All the site-specific policies have been judged to have a positive impact on this objective by requiring highway and other access improvements / enhancements, and clearly demonstrating how they will mitigate for the presence of activities generating pollutions (e.g. odour, contaminated land etc). Each site-specific policy identifies specific considerations to the locality and sets out criteria to address those issues.

SA Objective 4: A THRIVING ECONOMY

- 2.123 The majority of the site-specific policies are likely to have **positive impacts** on this objective. Except for the SS4 Fawley site, they are likely to benefit the economy in relation to construction jobs and the subsequent spending within the local economy from new homeowners.

SA Objective 5: PROTECTING BIODIVERSITY AND WILDLIFE

- 2.124 Without exception all the Local Plan site-specific policies are likely to have a **significant positive impact** on this objective. Each development must provide full mitigation land to avoid adverse impacts from recreational pressures. In addition this will involve the enhancement of biodiversity through the identified and enhancement of natural green

spaces and networks. Each site policy sets out the master planning objectives that each scheme must comply with, according to the specific natural features and local nature conservation sensitivities.

SA Objective 6: ACCESSIBLE GREEN SPACE, COAST AND WATER BODIES

- 2.125 All the site-specific policies have been judged to have a **positive impact** on this objective. All the sites will have to provide public open space and children's play. In most cases this will enhance the existing local open space provision and help to further protect / enhance natural features such as water bodies through the provision of recreational natural green space within each site. This will also deliver positive outcomes for local residents.

SA Objective 7: PROTECTING LANDSCAPE AND TOWNSCAPE

- 2.126 A number of the site-specific policies are likely to have **positive effects** associated with the landscape/townscape element of this objective (7a). This is the case where the policy specifically identifies landscape features or elements that will require addressing by site master plans. Where the policies are silent on those specific points there are **uncertain effects** associated with the site; the final effect on this objective would only become clear during the implementation phase through the planning application stage. With regard to Green Belt (7b), those sites that are outside the green belt will have **no effect** on this element of the objective, whilst those that are within the green belt are deemed to have **mixed impacts**; they have the potential to have an adverse impact on the purposes of green belt but also having the opportunity to enhance the purpose of green belt through design/urban edge treatment. Again much of the detail could only be judged at the planning application stage.

SA Objective 8: CONSERVING HERITAGE

- 2.127 The majority of the site-specific policies have **no effect** on this objective due to the lack of heritage features in the vicinity. However for sites SS3 (North of Marchwood), SS4 (Fawley Power Station), SS11 (SW of New Milton), and SS14 (East of Ringwood), there are heritage features adjoining or within the setting of the site which would need to be conserved and enhanced. At this stage there is not enough information to make a conclusive judgement but Saved Policy DM1 sets out how development must identify and appraise impacts on the historic environment and heritage assets. The implementation requirements therefore remain uncertain until the development stage.

SA Objective 9: SUSTAINABLE NATURAL RESOURCES

- 2.128 The majority of site-specific policies have **uncertain impacts** associated with this objective. For example some of the sites contain potential mineral resources which will require further investigation, and others are dependent on the implementation of sewer network improvements.
- 2.129 The one clear exception to this is the SS4 Fawley former power station site – this is previously developed land and will have some degree of contamination, which redevelopment of the site will remediate so that the land can be reused for a beneficial use. This is a **significant positive impact**.

SA Objective 10: MANAGING CLIMATE CHANGE

- 2.130 All the site-specific policies have been judged to have a **positive impact** on this objective. With regard to minimising contributions to climate change (10a) the sites are likely to have **positive impacts** due to being located in a sustainable and accessible location which will help to minimise the need to travel, and reduce greenhouse gas emissions. In relation to

mitigating and adapting to flood risk (10b) the strategic site policies can be made safe through measures set out in the Level 2 SFRA.

Summary of Effects

- 2.131 The likely effects of the site-specific policies are summarised below by SA objective (see **Chapter 12** and **Table 12.1**). It should be noted that ‘saved’ site policies from the previous Local Plan Part 1: Core Strategy and the Local Plan Part 2: Sites and Development Management have already been subject to Sustainability Appraisal and therefore are not covered by this policy appraisal.

Site-specific policy appraisals summary table (excludes ‘saved’ policies)

Strategic Site		SA Objectives											
		Housing	Accessible facilities	Safe & Healthy	Economy	Biodiversity & Wildlife	Accessible spaces	Landscape / Townscape	Green Belt	Heritage	Natural resources	Contribution to climate change	Flood risk
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7a	7b	8	9	10a	10b
1	Land to the North of Totton	++	+	+	+	++	+	?i	0	+	?i	+	?i
2	Land south of Bury Road, Marchwood	++	+	+	+	++	+	?i	0	0	++	+	?i
3	Land at Cork's Farm, Marchwood	++	+	+	+	++	+	+	0	?i	?i	+	?i
4	The former Fawley Power Station (mixed-use)	++	++	+	++	++	+	?i	0	?i	++	+	?i
5	Land at Milford Road, Lymington	++	+	+	+	++	+	?i	+/-	0	?i	+	+
6	Land to the east of Lower Pennington Lane, Lymington	++	+	+	+	++	+	?i	+/-	0	?i	+	+
7	Land north of Manor Road, Milford-on-Sea	++	+	+	+	++	+	?i	+/-	0	?i	+	++
8	Land at Hordle Lane, Hordle	++	+	+	+	++	+	+	+/-	0	?i	+	+
9	Land east of Everton Road, Hordle	++	+	+	+	++	+	+	+/-	0	0	+	++
10	Land to the east of Brockhills Lane, New Milton	++	+	+	+	++	+	+	+/-	0	?i	+	+
11	Land to the south of Gore Road, New Milton	++	+	+	+	++	+	+	+/-	?i	?i	+	+
12	Land to the south of Derritt Lane, Bransgore	++	+	+	+	++	+	+	+/-	0	?i	+	?i
13	Land at Moortown Lane, Ringwood	++	+	+	+	++	+	+	+/-	0	?i	+	?i
14	Land to the north of Hightown Road, Ringwood	++	+	+	+	++	+	+	0	?i	0	+	?i
15	Land at Snails Lane, Ringwood	++	+	+	+	++	+	+	0	0	0	+	?i
16	Land to the north of Station Road, Ashford	++	+	+	+	++	+	+	0	0	?i	+	?i
17	Land at Whitsbury Road, Fordingbridge	++	+	+	+	++	+	+	0	0	?i	+	?i
18	Land at Burgate, Fordingbridge	++	+	+	+	++	+	+	0	+	?i	+	+/-

Summary of Significant Effects

2.132 The SA and HRA identified a number of significant adverse effects (including HRA outputs summarised in **Chapter 12**). The table below summarises those impacts.

Summary of likely significant effects

Policy or site for which potential significant negative effects have been identified	SA objectives where potential significant adverse effects	Development identified	Summary of potentially significant effects
Policy STR3: The strategy for locating new development	5. Protecting Biodiversity and Wildlife 6. Accessible Green Space, Coast and Water Bodies 7. Protecting Landscape and Townscape 9. Sustainable Natural Resources 10. Managing Climate Change	6,000 homes via strategic allocations SS1 – SS18, including 1,340 homes at former Fawley Power Station	Direct loss or physical damage to European sites
Policy STR4: The settlement hierarchy			Loss or damage to offsite supporting habitat
Policy STR5: Meeting our housing needs (strategic allocations only)			Urban edge effects
Policy site allocations			Changes in air quality
Policy STR6: Sustainable economic growth	4. A Thriving Economy 5. Protecting Biodiversity and Wildlife	18 hectares of employment land within the residential-led mixed-use strategic site allocations at Totton (SS1), Fawley (SS4), East Ringwood (SS14)	Traffic collision risk Recreation pressure on international nature conservation sites Changes in water quantity
Policy ECON3: Marchwood Port	4. A Thriving Economy 5. Protecting Biodiversity and Wildlife	Port and port-related uses at Marchwood port, including commercial, economic and local employment generating purposes	Changes in water quality

Mitigation

2.133 It is a requirement of the SEA Regulations that the plan considers measures to prevent and reduce significant adverse effects on the environment. The potential negative effects identified will be mitigated through a combination of the strategic policies and site-specific policies. **Chapter 12** sets out the likely significant effects (see **Table 12.1**) and **Chapter 13** sets out the mitigation measures that were recommended in the Habitat Regulations Assessment (HRA).

Conclusions and recommendations of the HRA

2.134 The HRA screening of the Cabinet draft of the Proposed Submission Local Plan Part 1, alone and in combination with other relevant plans and projects, was unable to rule the following types of likely significant effect on European sites:

- Direct loss or physical damage to European sites;
- Loss or damage to offsite supporting habitat;
- Urban edge effects;

- Changes in air quality;
 - Traffic collision risk;
 - Recreation pressure;
 - Changes in water quantity; and
 - Changes in water quality.
- 2.135 An Appropriate Assessment was carried to determine whether any of these types of effect would result in adverse effects on the integrity of a European site.
- 2.136 The HRA has confirmed that adverse effects on the integrity of the European nature conservation sites in the form of potential **urban edge effects, changes in air quality, traffic collision risk, water quantity** from proposed development can be ruled out for the Local Plan Part 1 both alone and in combination.
- 2.137 The HRA further concludes that policies in the Local Plan adequately mitigate the **loss or damage to offsite supporting habitat for qualifying bird populations**, and that reliance can be placed on the mitigation provided by Policy ENV1, the New Forest (outside of the National Park) Recreational Mitigation Strategy (Review 1), and the Solent Recreation Mitigation Strategy to adequately mitigate **potential recreational pressure** from development proposed by the Local Plan Part 1 and that likely significant effects due to recreation pressure can be ruled out both alone and in combination.
- 2.138 In some cases it has not yet been possible to rule out the potential for adverse effects on integrity, and in these cases recommendations have been made on how these could be ruled out by inclusion of appropriate safeguards within the emerging Local Plan Part 1 policies. The results of the Appropriate Assessment are summarised in **Table 13.1** with notes on how the council will respond in the Local Plan.

Summary of draft HRA findings and recommendations

Adverse effects on integrity not ruled out	Recommendation	NFDC action
<p>Direct loss or physical damage to Solent and Southampton Water SPA and Ramsar site.</p>	<p>Policy ECON3: Marchwood Port includes text stating that any proposal will need to demonstrate via a project level HRA that it will not have an adverse effect on the integrity of any European sites, including on the adjacent Solent and Southampton Water SPA and Ramsar site.</p>	<p>Policy ECON3 updated to reflect this point.</p>
<p>Loss or damage to offsite supporting habitat for qualifying bird populations of the Avon Valley SPA and Ramsar site; Dorset Heathlands SPA; New Forest SPA; Solent and Southampton Water SPA and Ramsar site.</p>	<p>HRA screening identified that the Local Plan Part 1 allocates a number of development sites in areas where certain qualifying SPA and Ramsar bird species may make use of offsite habitat for foraging, roosting and loafing.</p> <p>Local Plan Part 1 allocation policies for SS2, SS4, SS5, SS 6, SS12, SS13 and SS 15 include a requirement to undertake site-specific bird surveys to confirm their contribution to in-combination loss of supporting habitat for SPA/Ramsar qualifying bird populations and, if necessary, to inform design of appropriate mitigation as part of site-specific development and masterplanning. If required, site specific mitigation must be deliverable and capable of being implemented successfully.</p>	<p>Incorporated into the supporting text of the site policies listed.</p> <p>Monitoring requirement are also addressed in the councils Recreational Mitigation Strategy for European Sites (Review 1) Supplementary Planning Document.</p>

Adverse effects on integrity not ruled out	Recommendation	NFDC action
<p>Water quality: capacity in sewer and WwTW infrastructure – effects on any hydrologically connected European sites, including the Solent and Southampton Water and Avon Valley European sites from these allocations</p>	<p>Local Plan Part 1 allocation policies SS 1, SS2, SS 3, SS 4, SS 7, SS 11, SS 15 include a requirement for proposers of development to provide a connection to the nearest point of adequate capacity in the sewerage network, as advised by the service provider, and/or to work cooperatively with the service provider to deliver a suitable sewer connection to the nearest WwTW with adequate capacity.</p>	<p>Incorporated into the supporting text of the site policies listed.</p> <p>The Infrastructure Delivery Plan also sets out the requirements for this element.</p>
<p>Water quality: effects of treated wastewater discharges on Solent and Isle of Wight Lagoons SAC, Solent Maritime SAC, Solent and Dorset Coast pSPA, Solent and Southampton Water SPA, and Solent and Southampton Water Ramsar site</p>	<p>Local Plan Part 1 includes a commitment to continue partnership working with the other PUSH authorities, Natural England, the Environment Agency, and the water companies to procure and analyse further evidence and to secure timely mitigation if emerging evidence indicates it is needed.</p> <p>In advance of further information becoming available via Integrated Water Management Strategy (IWMS) partnership working, Local Plan Part 1 includes a requirement for a nutrient budget to be calculated for development proposals for more than 200 houses and for all EIA developments and that they achieve nutrient neutrality.</p>	<p>The Local Plan will address this through continued working with other authorities and bodies.</p>
<p>Water quality effects on the River Avon SAC and Avon Valley SPA and Ramsar site</p>	<p>Strategic allocation policies for sites draining to WwTWs that discharge to the Hampshire Avon (SS 13, SS 14, SS 15, SS 16, SS 17, SS 18) identify the potential impacts from phosphate discharges on the River Avon SAC and Avon Valley SPA and Ramsar site and require the approach to mitigation set out in Policy ENV1.</p>	<p>Incorporated into the supporting text of the site policies listed.</p> <p>A Memorandum of Understanding has been signed between the relevant cross-boundary authorities on how this issue will be addressed going forward.</p>

Implementation and Monitoring

- 2.139 SEA/SA legislation and guidance requires that the significant effects of the policies in the Local Plan that have been identified through the SA are be monitored as the plan is implemented, in order to assist in decision-making. It is also incumbent on this planning authority to adhere to mitigation requirement under the Habitats Regulations and related national policies for elements such as recreational impacts, effects on air quality, and phosphate levels (Avon Downlands part of the district only).
- 2.140 An Annual Monitoring Report (AMR) will report on the extent to which policies and proposals are being implemented in accordance with the objectives of the Plan. NFDC has updated the framework for monitoring, as originally set for the previous Core Strategy (2009). It includes revised indicators and targets (where appropriate) based on the ten objectives of the Local Plan Review. Indicators which will be used to monitor effects are set out alongside each SA objective in **Chapter 14** and **Table 14.1**.

Conclusions

- 2.142 The Local Plan 2016-2036 (Part 1: Planning Strategy) Proposed Submission plan has been subject to a detailed appraisal against the SA objectives. The policy approaches and site allocations within the Local Plan have been chosen by a combination of political and planning considerations, but they reflect options that are judged to perform positively against the SA objectives, and therefore represent a sustainable approach.
- 2.143 The Local Plan proposes the development of around 10,500 dwellings and 18ha of employment land by 2036. As a result of the scale of development proposed to meet objectively assessed need, and that a significant proportion will be on greenfield land (with elements on designated Green Belt), the SA has identified the potential for adverse effects on a number of the environmental objectives including biodiversity, landscape and climate change. However, the Local Plan also includes strategic and development management policies that will help to protect and enhance the economic, social and environmental conditions of the District. Together with site-specific policies these will mitigate the potential significant negative effects of the overall scale and distribution of development proposed.
- 2.144 The vast majority of the growth planned will be delivered within and adjacent to the existing urban areas of the District, ensuring that new residents are in close proximity to the District's centres of employment, education, health and open space.

Strategic policies

- 2.145 The strategic policies will have **positive effects** on most SA objectives, but in particular on Objective 2 (Accessible Opportunities, facilities and Services), Objective 3 (Safe and Healthy Environments) Objective 4 (A Thriving Economy), and Objective 10a (Managing Climate Change - To minimise contributions to climate change) as the policies will help to achieve high quality development that provides beneficial access to services and promote economic opportunities to local people.
- 2.146 Some **negative effects** have been identified. In particular on Objective 5 (Protecting Biodiversity and Wildlife), Objective 7 (Protecting Landscape and Townscape), and objective 10b (Managing Climate Change) due to the potentially adverse impact of development on internally designated nature conservation sites, landscape impacts on greenfield sites, and adverse contributions to climate change. But it is judged that these are outweighed by the positive effects identified and/or can be dealt with through mitigation measures.

Strategic site policies

- 2.147 Where **significant effects**, either positive or negative, have been identified, they have been clearly marked and explained throughout this report. Proposed mitigation, where possible, has also been described for addressing significant negative effects (chapter 13).
- 2.148 The site-specific policies will have mainly **positive effects** on the SA objectives, in particular on Objective 1 (Meeting housing need), Objective 5 (Protecting Biodiversity and Wildlife) and Objective 10b (Managing Climate Change) due to policies that allocate land for development to meet local community needs with a mix of dwellings types and affordability. The strategic site policies also address adverse effects raised in the HRA through the delivery of land to mitigate recreational impacts on the integrity of international nature conservation sites. The SA therefore concludes that these sites are considered sustainable.

- 2.149 Some **mixed effects** have been identified. In particular on Objective 7 (Landscape and Townscape) due to the effect of sites (SS5-SS13) that are located in the Green Belt and also related townscape impacts. The site-specific policies address these issues through concept plans and the criteria set out for each strategic site that will mitigate the issues identified.

3. Local Plan Part One: Planning Strategy

About the Local Plan

- 3.1 The Local Plan sets out a strategy and policies for the use, development or protection of land and buildings in the Plan Area for the period 2016 to 2036 and covers the parts of New Forest District outside of the National Park.
- 3.2 The Local Plan document forms part of the statutory development plan for the Plan Area (together with any Neighbourhood Plans and the Hampshire County Council Minerals and Waste Local Plan). The policies of the statutory development plan are the basis for deciding planning applications for development.

Two stage Local Plan Review

- 3.3 The Local Plan review is being undertaken in two parts.
- 3.4 Local Plan Review Part One: Planning Strategy sets out strategic policies, including strategic site allocations capable of accommodating 100 or more homes. It replaces and updates parts of the adopted 2009 Core Strategy, and a small number of the more strategic policies in the Local Plan Part 2: Sites and Development Management adopted 2014.
- 3.5 The remaining policies of the adopted 2009 Core Strategy and 2014 Local Plan Part 2 are either saved for continued use pending review as part of the Local Plan Review 2016-2036 Part Two, or are deleted, as set out in the Local Plan Review document. Deleted policies will no longer be applied. Saved policies of the 2009 Core Strategy and 2014 Local Plan Part 2 that remain part of the planning strategy for the Plan Area are duplicated in the Local Plan document for ease of reference.
- 3.6 Local Plan Review 2016-2036 Part Two will commence after the Local Plan Review Part One is completed. This will focus mainly on matters of policy detail and allocations for smaller sites, and the review of the remaining saved planning policies including site allocations. Saved policies remain in force until they are updated or deleted (unless they become out of date for other reasons, for example a change in national guidance or local circumstances).

Relationship to Neighbourhood Plans

- 3.7 The Local Plan Part One provides the strategic context for Neighbourhood Planning. Neighbourhood Plans must be in general conformity with the Local Plan. Where Neighbourhood Plans are being prepared the Local Plan Part Two will be tailored so as not to duplicate work communities have committed to undertake, whilst ensuring that all necessary matters are addressed in a consistent and timely manner.

Supporting documents

- 3.8 The following companion documents support the policies set out in Local Plan 2016 Part One:

Infrastructure Delivery Plan SPD sets out the infrastructure, services and facilities required to enable new development to take place, how it will be delivered and by whom;

Development Contributions SPD making clear what contributions are expected for development proposals;

Masterplanning SPD for setting out key considerations on strategic sites;

Recreational Mitigation Strategy SPD which mitigates potential recreational pressure from development proposed by the Local Plan Part 1;

Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) sets a charge per square meter on development to help pay for infrastructure and mitigation on a defined list of projects or categories of infrastructure.

4. Sustainability Appraisal Methodology

- 4.1 The purpose of Sustainability Appraisal is to promote sustainable development through the better integration of sustainability considerations into the preparation and adoption of plans. It should be viewed as an integral part of good plan making, involving ongoing iterations to identify and report on the likely significant effects of the emerging plan and the extent to which sustainable development is likely to be achieved through its implementation.

Meeting the Requirements of the SEA Regulations

- 4.2 **Table 4.1** sets out how the requirements of the SEA Regulations are addressed in this report.

Table 4.1: Addressing the requirements of the SEA Regulations¹¹

SEA Regulations requirements	Where covered in this SA report?
Information for environmental reports	
1. An outline of the contents and main objectives of the plan or programme, and of its relationship with other relevant plans and programmes.	Chapters 1 and 3 and Appendix **
2. The relevant aspects of the current state of the environment and the likely evolution thereof without implementation of the plan or programme.	Chapters 5 and 7
3. The environmental characteristics of areas likely to be significantly affected.	Chapter 5 and 7
4. Any existing environmental problems which are relevant to the plan or programme including, in particular, those relating to any areas of a particular environmental importance, such as areas designated pursuant to Council Directive 79/409/EEC on the conservation of wild birds(1) and the Habitats Directive.	Chapter 5 and 7
5. The environmental protection objectives, established at international, Community or Member State level, which are relevant to the plan or programme and the way those objectives and any environmental considerations have been taken into account during its preparation.	Chapter 4 and SA Scoping Report
6. The likely significant effects on the environment, including short, medium and long-term effects, permanent and temporary effects, positive and negative effects, and secondary, cumulative and synergistic effects, on issues such as biodiversity, population, human health, fauna, flora, soil, water, air, climatic factors, material assets, cultural heritage including architectural and archaeological heritage, landscape and the inter-relationship between these issues.	Chapters 8 - 12
7. The measures envisaged to prevent, reduce and as fully as possible offset any significant adverse effects on the environment of implementing the plan or programme.	Chapter 13
8. An outline of the reasons for selecting the alternatives dealt with, and a description of how the assessment was undertaken including any difficulties (such as technical deficiencies or lack of know-how) encountered in compiling the required information.	Chapters 8-12 and Appendices 4 - 6*
9. A description of the measures envisaged concerning monitoring in accordance with regulation 17.	Chapter 14

¹¹ The Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004

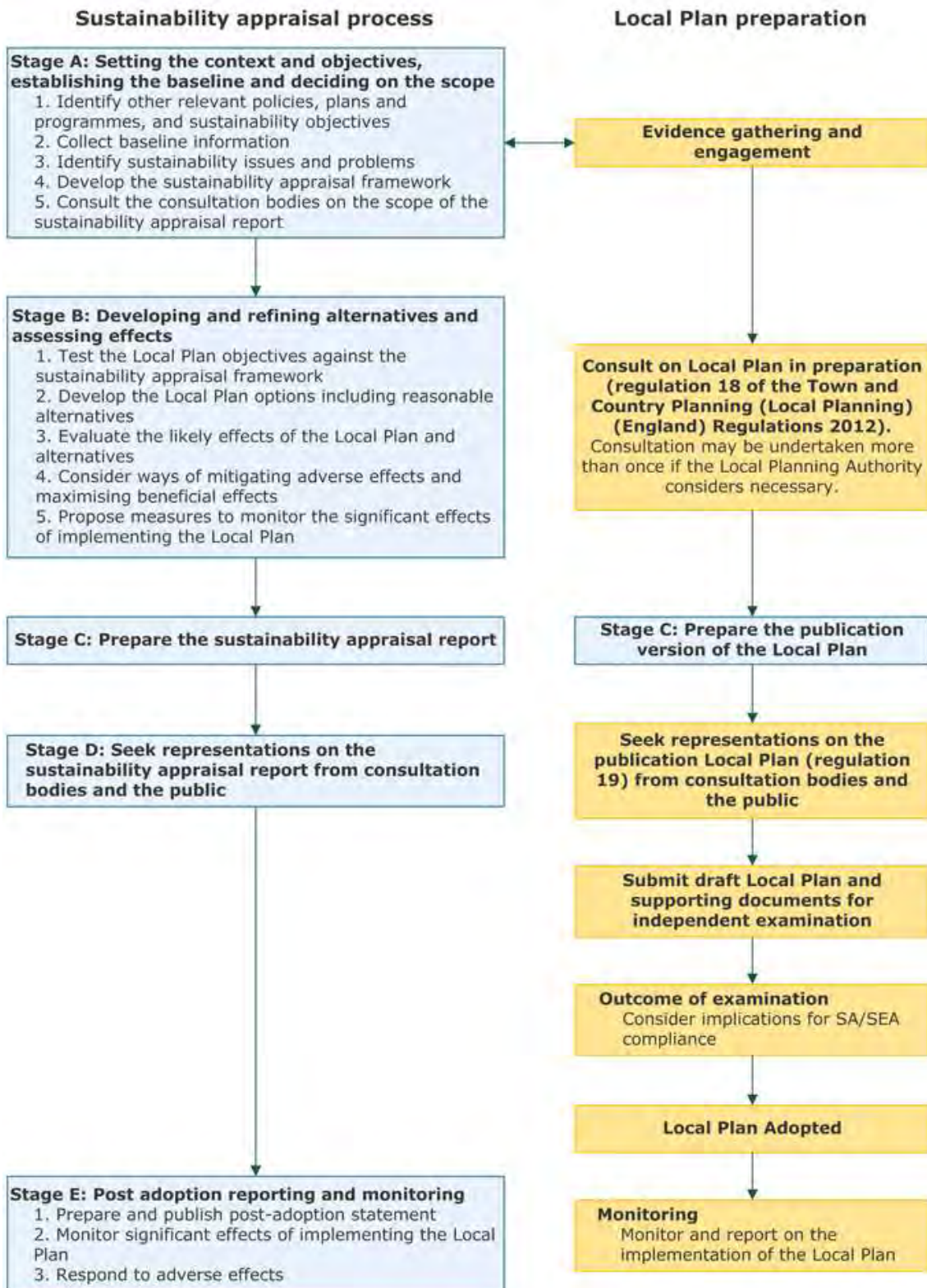
10. A non-technical summary of the information provided under paragraphs 1 to 9 above.	Chapter 2
Consultation procedures	
To consult the consultation bodies on the scope and level of detail of the information included in the environmental report (Reg.12(5))	The statutory consultation bodies have been consulted on the SA Scoping Report and are to be consulted on the main SA report in line with the stages set out in Chapter 4 and at subsequent stages.
To consult the consultation bodies and the public on the environmental report after its preparation (Reg.13(1-5))	The Report will be subject to consultation in line with the stages set out in Chapter 4 and in accordance with the Council's Statement of Community Involvement (SCI).
To consult another Member State where the plan or programme is likely to have significant effects on the environment of that Member State (Reg.14)	Not relevant.
Taking the environmental report and the results of consultations into account in decision-making	
After adoption, make a copy of the plan or programme and its environmental report available for inspection and include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a statement of how environmental considerations have been integrated into the plan/programme; • how the environmental report and responses to consultations have been taken into account; • the reasons for choosing the plan or programme over other reasonable alternatives considered; and • the measures in place to monitor the significant environmental effects of implementing the plan or programme (Reg.16) 	To be addressed later in the SA process.
Monitor the significant environmental effects of the implementation of the plan or programme (Reg.17)	To be addressed later in the SA process.

Objectives and Structure of the SA Report

Sustainability Appraisal method

4.3 There are five stages to the process which is set out in government guidance and reproduced in **Figure 4.1** below.

Figure 4.1: Sustainability Appraisal process



Source: National Planning Practice Guidance

Stage A: Setting the context and objectives, establishing the baseline and deciding on the scope

- 4.4 NFDC prepared and consulted on a Scoping Report for the Local Plan Review in 2015. The framework of SA objectives provides a benchmark against which the sustainability of the Local Plan is tested. SA objectives are separate from Local Plan objectives, though the two can overlap. Local Plan objectives may not always balance social, economic and environmental objectives. SA objectives are informed by social, economic and environmental issues and by the requirements of legislation and policy. They help identify any imbalances or conflicts between Local Plan objectives.
- 4.5 Criteria have been developed in the form of questions to guide use of the SA objectives. Indicators have also been developed so that the significant effects identified by the SA can be monitored once the Local Plan is implemented.

Identification and review of other relevant policies, plans, programmes, strategies and initiatives which may influence the content of the Local Plan

- 4.6 The Local Plan is not prepared in isolation; rather it is greatly influenced by other policies, plans and programmes. It needs to be consistent with international and national guidance and strategic planning policies (whilst avoiding any repetition of higher level policy) and should contribute to the goals of a wide range of other programmes and strategies. It must also conform to the environmental protection legislation and sustainability objectives that have been established at the international, European and national levels.
- 4.7 A review was undertaken of other plans, policies and programmes that are considered to be relevant to the Local Plan at the international, national, regional and local levels. The conclusions drawn from this review, alongside a review of baseline data, trends and issues, helped to inform the development of a set of SA objectives against which the Local Plan would be appraised (known as the SA framework).
- 4.8 There are a number of key policy documents which are considered to be of particular importance to the development of the Local Plan Review detailed in the SA Scoping Report (key ones are replicated below in Table 4.2) It is important that the review of plans, policies and programmes is updated at regular intervals throughout the SA process in order to ensure that it remains up-to-date as several years may pass between the initial scoping stage and the adoption of the plan.

Table 4.2 Key policy documents informing the Local Plan

Policy document:	Published by:
National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)	Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government
National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG)	Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government
Transforming Solent	Solent Local Economic Partnership (LEP)
Working for a Smarter Future the Enterprise M3 Strategic Economic Plan - 2014-2020	Enterprise M3 (LEP)
Spatial Position Statement (2016)	Partnership for Urban South Hampshire
Local Plan Part 1: Core Strategy (2009)	New Forest District Council
Local Plan Part 2: Sites and Development Management (2014)	New Forest District Council

Gathering baseline information about the environmental, social and economic characteristics of New Forest District

- 4.9 Baseline data provides the context for the assessment of sustainability and the basis for identifying trends, predicting effects and monitoring outcomes. The requirements for baseline data vary widely, but it must be relevant to the key environmental, social and economic issues, be sensitive to change and ideally have sufficient records to identify trends.
- 4.10 Annex 1(f) of the SEA Directive requires data to be gathered on the following topics: *biodiversity, population, human health, flora, fauna, soil, water, air, climatic factors, material assets, cultural heritage including architectural and archaeological heritage, landscape and the inter-relationship between the above factors*. Additional sustainability topics were also included in NFDC’s SA framework, covering broader socio-economic issues such as housing, access to services, crime and safety, and education and employment.
- 4.11 The baseline information for New Forest District is described in **Chapter 5**, and detailed maps presenting baseline information as it relates to sites are provided in that document. Again, it is important that the baseline information is updated throughout the SA process in order to ensure that it remains current, and it has therefore been updated by NFDC during the preparation of the Scoping Report.

Identification of the key sustainability issues facing New Forest District

- 4.12 Drawing on the review of plans, policies and programmes and the baseline data, the key sustainability issues for New Forest District were highlighted in the SA Scoping Report (including environmental concerns, as required by the SEA Directive). These issues are presented in **Chapter 7** of this report.

Development of a framework of SA objectives against which the Local Plan will be appraised

- 4.13 Development of an SA framework is not a requirement of the SEA Directive. However, it provides a recognised way in which the likely sustainability effects of a plan can be clearly described, analysed and compared. An SA framework comprises a series of SA objectives and supporting criteria that are used to appraise the policies and proposals within a plan.
- 4.14 The SA framework used for the previous DPD was reviewed and updated in 2016 and the changes made were consulted on with the Environment Agency, Natural England and Historic England as part of an updated Scoping Report (2016).
- 4.15 Detailed comments were received from the Environment Agency during that consultation in relation to the revised SA framework, and some changes were made in relation to those comments, as was set out in the updated Scoping Report (2016). The final updated version of the SA framework has now been used for the appraisal of the Local Plan Review (see **Chapter 6**).

Stage B: Developing and refining alternatives and assessing effects

- 4.16 The production of the Local Plan Proposed Submission Document has followed a long period of evidence gathering and consultation.
- 4.17 An earlier version of the Local Plan, the Initial Proposals consultation document, was produced in July 2016 and the initial SA scores for all land within the plan area was subject to an interim SA. The Interim SA documentation was made available for consultation with the statutory consultees and the general public alongside the DPD. The evidence that was gathered during the preparation of the Initial Proposals document has been drawn upon, and targeted consultation has taken place with statutory bodies since then to test the emerging policy approaches and options.

4.18 The outcomes of the 2016 consultation, including comments and submissions received in relation to particular sites, have helped to shape the content of the Proposed Submission Local Plan Review. This process is described in detail below.

Appraisal of Local Plan objectives

4.19 The objectives of the Local Plan set the context for the development of options. Once these objectives were established they were tested against the SA objectives (see **Chapter 6** and Table 6.3)

Appraisal of Local Plan options and alternatives

4.20 There were three main types of options/alternatives that were considered in the preparation of the Local Plan:

- Alternative overall spatial strategies including the need to consider green belt land;
- Alternative policy approaches to be included in strategic policies;
- Alternative sites (or allocations) for different types of development.

4.21 The SEA Directive requires ‘reasonable alternatives’ to be taken into account, and so not every possible alternative was considered. In any event, the number of options needed to be kept manageable and focused on those aspects where real choices had to be made. One option that was normally considered was the ‘do-nothing’ option (i.e. what would happen without implementation of the policy or proposal).

4.22 The strengths and weaknesses of each policy option were recorded and commentary provided on how improvements could be made for positive effects and reducing (mitigating) significant negative effects. Those assessments are set out in full in **Appendix 5**.

4.23 Preferred options were prepared taking into account stakeholder comments, and the findings of the SA. Assessments of the policy options are recorded in **Appendix 5**. An appraisal of the preferred option (draft policy) was also undertaken, using the SA objectives and criteria in the SA Framework. To do this, the effects of the options were predicted (i.e. what the effect will be on a given SA objective) and assessed (i.e. how significant that effect will be). Consideration was given to measures that could be introduced to mitigate any significant adverse effects on sustainability and maximise benefits (see **Chapter 13**).

4.24 Appraisals were focused on the higher level strategic effects of the option as a whole. The SA objectives and criteria were used to identify whether there is likely to be:

++	Significant positive impact
+	Positive impact
?i	Uncertain / Depends on implementation
+/-	Mixed
-	Negative impact
--	Significant negative impact
0	No effect

4.25 In some instances it was not possible to quantify the effects, especially given that the Local Plan will be only one influence on what actually happens on the ground. Therefore, the reasoning for judgements (especially subjective ones) is explained, and the assumptions underlying the judgements set out. This makes the appraisal process as transparent as possible.

4.26 The significance of an impact can vary in different contexts. Factors that will be taken into account are:

- The current state of the environment, economy, or social factors that will be affected, and their sensitivity to change (e.g. whether thresholds are close to being exceeded such as

transport capacity or water resources, proximity to designated sites, effects on more deprived communities, etc.)

- The extent and duration of the effect (e.g. the geographical scale or size of the population likely to be affected, and how long the effect will last).

- 4.27 The SA looks for positive effects (i.e. the achievement of SA objectives, including improving conditions that are currently poor) as well as identifying negative effects. Cumulative effects (e.g. the combined effects of a number of different types of development) or secondary/synergistic effects (e.g. where one effect has a 'knock-on' effect on something else) are also considered.

Strategic policies

- 4.28 The Initial Proposals consultation (2016) set out the councils initial thoughts on a number of strategic policy matters. Since that consultation those matters were formed into policy approaches and subject to SA (see **Chapter 10**).
- 4.29 The 53 policies that were set out in the Proposed Submission Document below. It should be noted that the final adopted policy numbers below differ from those set out in the original Proposed Submission.

Strategic policies:

Policy STR1	Achieving sustainable development
Policy STR2	Protection of the countryside, Cranborne Chase Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and the setting of the New Forest National Park
Policy STR3	The strategy for locating new development
Policy STR4	The settlement hierarchy
Policy STR5	Meeting our housing needs
Policy STR6	Sustainable economic growth
Policy STR7	Strategic transport proposals
Policy STR8	Community services and infrastructure
Saved Policy DM2	Nature Conservation, biodiversity and geodiversity
Policy ENV1	Mitigating the impact of development on International Nature Conservation sites
Saved Policy DM1	Heritage and conservation
Policy ENV2	The South West Hampshire Green Belt
Policy ENV3	Design quality and local distinctiveness
Policy ENV4	Landscape character and quality
Saved Policy CS7	Open space, sport and recreation
Policy HOU1	Housing type, size and choice
Policy HOU2	Affordable housing
Policy HOU3	Residential accommodation for older people
Policy HOU4	Gypsies, travellers and travelling showpeople
Policy HOU5	Rural Housing Exception Sites and Community Led Housing Schemes
Policy ECON1	Employment land and development
Policy ECON2	Retention of employment sites and consideration of alternative uses
Policy ECON3	Marchwood Port
Policy ECON4	Port development at Dibden Bay
Policy ECON5	Retail development and other main town centre uses
Policy ECON6	Primary, secondary and local shopping frontages
Saved Policy CS19	Tourism
Saved Policy CS21	Rural economy
Policy CCC1	Safe and healthy communities
Saved Policy DM6	Coastal change management areas
Policy CCC2	Safe and sustainable travel
Saved Policy DM26	Development generating significant freight movements
Saved Policy DM4	Renewable and low carbon energy generation
Policy IMPL1	Developer contributions

Policy IMPL2	Development standards
Policy IMPL3	Monitoring

Site-specific policies:

Policy SS1	Land to the north of Totton
Policy SS2	Land to the south of Bury Road, Marchwood
Policy SS3	Land at Corks Farm, Marchwood
Policy SS4	The former Fawley Power Station (mixed-use)
Policy SS5	Land at Milford Road, Lymington
Policy SS6	Land to the east of Lower Pennington Lane, Lymington
Policy SS7	Land north of Manor Road, Milford-on-Sea
Policy SS8	Land at Hordle Lane, Hordle
Policy SS9	Land east of Everton Road, Hordle
Policy SS10	Land to the east of Brockhills Lane, New Milton
Policy SS11	Land to the south of Gore Road, New Milton
Policy SS12	Land to the south of Derritt Lane, Bransgore
Policy SS13	Land at Moortown Road, Ringwood
Policy SS14	Land to the north of Hightown Road, Ringwood
Policy SS15	Land at Snails Lane, Ringwood
Policy SS16	Land to the north of Station Road, Ashford
Policy SS17	Land at Whitsbury Road, Fordingbridge
Policy SS18	Land at Burgate, Fordingbridge

- 4.30 The findings of the appraisal of the policies are summarised in **Chapters 10 and 11** of this report and the related appraisal schedules can be found in **Appendices 5 and 6**. Reasonable alternatives/options to the policies included in the Local Plan were also considered and subject to SA. This information is also included in those appendices, where the appraisal of each reasonable alternative is presented above the appraisal of the proposed submission policy that has been included in the Proposed Submission document.

Potential Sites for Residential and Employment Development

- 4.31 A significant number of potential residential and employment development sites (over 200 in total) were put forward during the initial evidence gathering phase through the 2015 call for sites and the 2016 Initial Proposals consultation, mostly by landowners and developers. The call for sites has remained open since 2015 and the council has accepted submissions from promoters since that time.
- 4.32 Employment land submissions were more modest, with three sites submitted at Salisbury Road, Totton, (Junction 2 on the M27), Dibden Bay (under ABP ownership), and Shelley Nurseries, Totton.
- 4.33 All of the submissions under the call for sites were initially assessed with regards to whether they met the critical criteria set out in the SA framework and whether they were of an appropriate size for meeting the requirements of the Local Plan. Sites that did not meet the critical criteria were not considered to be reasonable alternatives, except in exceptional circumstances.

Stage C: Preparing the Sustainability Appraisal Report

- 4.34 This SA report has been produced to detail the process undertaken and results of the appraisal. This includes an overall assessment of the sustainability effects of the Local Plan on each SA objective. Those parts of the SA Report that meet the specific requirements of an 'Environmental Report' under the SEA Directive have been identified (see Table 4.1).

Stage D: Consultation on the Publication Local Plan and SA Report

- 4.35 The SA report will be included for consultation during the statutory six-week proposed submission public participation stage of the Local Plan. The consultation process will comply with the Statement of Community Involvement and requirements of the SEA Directive. A non-

technical summary of the report is made available as part of this report. Following publication, any changes made to the Local Plan as a consequence of the public consultation, which are likely to have significant effects and which have not previously been appraised may require further appraisal work and the SA Report will be amended to reflect the findings.

- 4.36 The SA report will be included in the documents submitted to the Secretary of State for Public Examination.

Stage E: Monitoring and Implementation of the Local Plan

- 4.37 The SA Report sets out recommendations for monitoring the significant effects, including any significant environmental effects, arising from the implementation of the Local Plan, using the indicators in the SA Framework. These will be reported in the Local Plan Monitoring Report which is updated when required.

5. Baseline characteristics

Introduction

- 5.1 Annex 1 of the SEA Directive requires a description to be provided of “*the environmental characteristics of areas likely to be significantly affected [by the plan]*”. This chapter provides a general description of the spatial characteristics of the District and the Plan Area.
- 5.2 The SEA Directive requires a description of the relevant aspects of the current state of the environment and the likely evolution without implementation of the Plan. Also, the environmental characteristics of areas likely to be significantly affected by a plan or programme should be described. In particular, it requires a description of environmental issues relating to areas of particular environmental importance, such as those designated under the Birds and Habitats Directives. For this report and for the purposes of sustainability appraisal (SA) this has been extended to include economic and social issues. The characterisation is therefore divided into three broad themes:
- Environmental characteristics
 - Economic characteristics
 - Social characteristics
- 5.3 The aim is not to present all issues relevant to the character of the Plan Area but to draw out those that are particularly significant and relevant to the preparation of the Local Plan and the Sustainability Appraisal (SA) process.
- 5.4 The divisions between all these themes are somewhat arbitrary as they are closely linked. Transport is a particular example of this arbitrary distinction. It has environmental impacts in terms of noise, land take, congestion and emissions; social effects such as social exclusion for those without access to a car and poor access to public transport whilst also providing access to work, education, facilities and services; and economic impacts such as enabling access to markets, customers and the workforce, but also resulting in congestion, which itself has costs to business. It also has obvious cross boundary impacts. These links are identified where possible in the text, and in the issues identified.
- 5.5 Key issues which have been identified as part of this exercise have fed into the SA framework. The relationship between the key issues and the SA objectives is set out in Table 6.2.

New Forest District and the Plan Area – general overview

Location

- 5.6 New Forest District lies on the south coast between the Southampton-Portsmouth and Bournemouth-Poole conurbations. To the west, the District extends to the county boundary with Dorset and Wiltshire and includes the Avon Valley and the Western Downlands. To the east the District is bounded by the River Test and Southampton Water, and to the south by the western Solent and Christchurch Bay. The New Forest National Park lies at the centre of the District. The Plan Area covers the eastern, southern and western parts of the District outside the National Park (see Figure 5.1).

Area

- 5.7 New Forest District is 75,100 hectares in area. Around two-thirds of the District is within the National Park and 90% of the Park is within the District. The Plan Area is 24,520 hectares.

Landscape

- 5.8 While the very high quality of the landscape of the New Forest National Park dominates the District, outside of the National Park are other areas of high landscape quality including part of the Cranborne Chase Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, and the valleys of the rivers Avon and Test.

Green Belt

- 5.9 Parts of the countryside in the south and west of the District lie within the South West Hampshire Green Belt.

Nature conservation

- 5.10 Very substantial areas of the District, including its coastline, are covered by statutory nature conservation designations, a large proportion of which include European and international designations. Outside these, there are also many sites that are covered by local nature conservation designations (Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation – SINCs). There are also priority habitats and species, not all of which will be within designated sites.

Transport

- 5.11 The main roads through the District are the A31, M27, A35, A36, A326, A337, A338 and the A354. A network of smaller roads and lanes cross the District and a feature of the National Park is the network of unfenced roads.
- 5.12 In terms of public transport, there are bus services to most settlements of varying degrees of frequency. The main line railway from London to Bournemouth also crosses the District with stations in a number of settlements, and there are branch lines to Fawley (not passenger) and Lymington. There are ferry terminals at Lymington and Hythe. The Lymington ferry provides a popular crossing to the Isle of Wight, particularly for tourists. There is a military port at Marchwood and wharves at Marchwood and Fawley Oil Refinery. The international airports at Southampton and Bournemouth lie east and west of the District respectively.

Economy

- 5.13 The district looks to the Southampton employment market in the east, the Bournemouth/ Poole employment market to the west and, to a lesser extent, Salisbury in the north-west, where many of the district's residents work. The petro-chemical complex at Fawley is the largest single employer, but the local economy is characterised mainly by a variety of small to medium sized manufacturing, service and tourism-related businesses. Marine-related business forms an important sector in parts of the district. There is a large number of small businesses and a higher rate of self-employment than national, regional or county rates. The District consistently has unemployment levels below the county and national rates. There are however pockets of higher unemployment in parts of the Waterside and coastal towns. Local income levels are relatively low whilst house prices are high. The high quality environment and attractiveness as a retirement location serve to maintain relatively high property prices, resulting in issues of affordability.

Recreation and amenity

- 5.14 The area offers a very attractive and varied environment and a wide range of outdoor recreation opportunities including informal countryside and coastal recreation. The New Forest National Park is a popular recreational destination and attracts visitors into the area, including from well beyond the district's boundary.

Geographical sub-areas

- 5.15 The geography of the Plan Area provides for three different sub-areas with distinct characteristics (see Figure 5.1).

The eastern sub-area: Totton and the Waterside

- 5.16 Totton and the Waterside lies between the National Park and Southampton Water. Much of the area is intensively developed with some 69,400 people living in the settlements of Totton and Eling, Marchwood, Hythe and Dibden, Hardley, Holbury, Blackfield, Langley and Fawley (see Table 5.1). The area falls within the Southampton housing and economic market areas and has strong ties with the city. The A326 is the main access route linking the settlements with Southampton and the M27 and suffers congestion at peak times. The area has substantial employment sites in Totton and Marchwood and includes the Fawley Refinery. Totton has a large town centre and there is a smaller centre at Hythe. Both of these settlements also have out-of-centre supermarkets. A number of local centres serve the other

settlements. Most of the coast and the lower Test Valley are subject to national and international nature conservation designations. Open areas between the main settlements help to maintain their separate identities.

The southern sub-area: Southern Coastal Area

5.17 Located between the National Park and the Solent is the Southern Coastal Area. Around 51,700 people live in the towns of Lymington and New Milton, and the villages of Milford-on-Sea, Hordle and Everton (Table 5.1). The area is a popular retirement area. There are employment estates at Lymington and New Milton and both have large town centres. There is a village centre in Milford-on-Sea, and local centres elsewhere. Lymington is a popular sailing centre and an attractive visitor destination. The A337 links the main settlements with Christchurch to the west. Access to the north and east is through the National Park, with some routes along unfenced forest roads. Much of the coast is of national nature conservation importance with a small area of international importance east of Milford. The cliffs at Barton on Sea are of international geological importance. This area contains the South-West Hampshire Green Belt which tightly surrounds all the settlements and adjoins the South-East Dorset Green Belt to the west.

The western sub-area: Avon Valley and Western Downlands

5.18 This sub-area lies to the west of the National Park. Around 27,000 people live in the main settlements of Bransgore, Ringwood, Fordingbridge (Table 5.1), Ashford, Sandleheath and the downland villages of Damerham, Martin, Rockbourne and Whitsbury. The A338 runs between Christchurch, through Ringwood and Fordingbridge, to Salisbury. Ringwood has a large town centre and there is a smaller centre in Fordingbridge. There is a small village centre in Bransgore. Ringwood contains some sizable employment estates within the town and at Blashford. There are small settlements in the Avon Valley including Sopley, Ellingham, Harbridge, Ibsley and Breamore. To the north-west of Fordingbridge lies the Cranborne Chase Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) which covers 6,750 hectares of the Plan Area and includes the downland villages. The sub-area is divided between two housing market areas: the south including Ringwood and Bransgore looks towards Bournemouth/Christchurch; while Fordingbridge and the north-west have strong links with Salisbury and Wiltshire.

Figure 5.1: Map of sub-areas



5.19 Where possible, data are presented on the basis of these sub-areas and/or the Plan Area. However, some data are only available at District level and for some indicators the District will

be the appropriate geography to use. For example, a District-wide perspective (or wider) will be an appropriate geography within which to consider nature conservation and biodiversity issues, given the extent of designated areas and their influence over the planning context for the area.

Population and household characteristics

- 5.20 The population of the whole District is around 178,000¹². Around 150,000 (85%) reside within the Plan Area. Table 4.1 provides totals for the main towns and villages within the Plan Area.

Table 5.1: Populations of main settlements: 2014 estimates

Town/village within Plan Area	Population
Totton	28,900
New Milton and Barton on Sea	25,600
Hythe and Dibden	20,300
Lymington	15,700
Fawley, including Blackfield and Holbury	14,200
Ringwood	14,100
Fordingbridge	6,200
Marchwood	6,000
Hordle and Everton	5,700
Milford-on-Sea	4,700
Bransgore	4,300

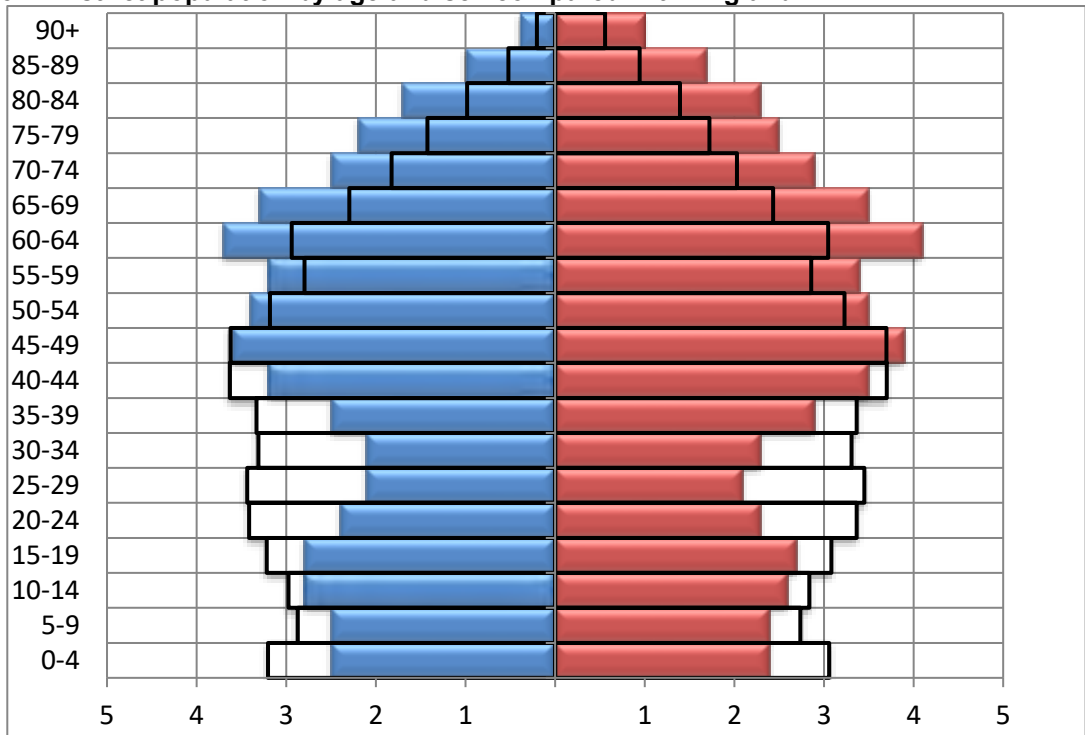
Source: HCC 2013-based Small Area Population Forecasts

Population structure

- 5.21 Around 85,700 (48%) are male and 92,400 (52%) are female. Figure 5.2 shows the population age and sex structure of the population. This is overlaid with the structure for England which illustrates the “top-heavy” morphology of the District’s population. One-third of the District population is aged 60 or over (33%) compared with less than one-quarter of the regional and national populations (23%). The median age is 47 compared with 40 and 39 for the South East region and England respectively. Consequently, the younger age groups are under-represented in the District, especially between the ages of 15 and 39. These groups tend to leave the area to obtain further or higher education, employment and housing.

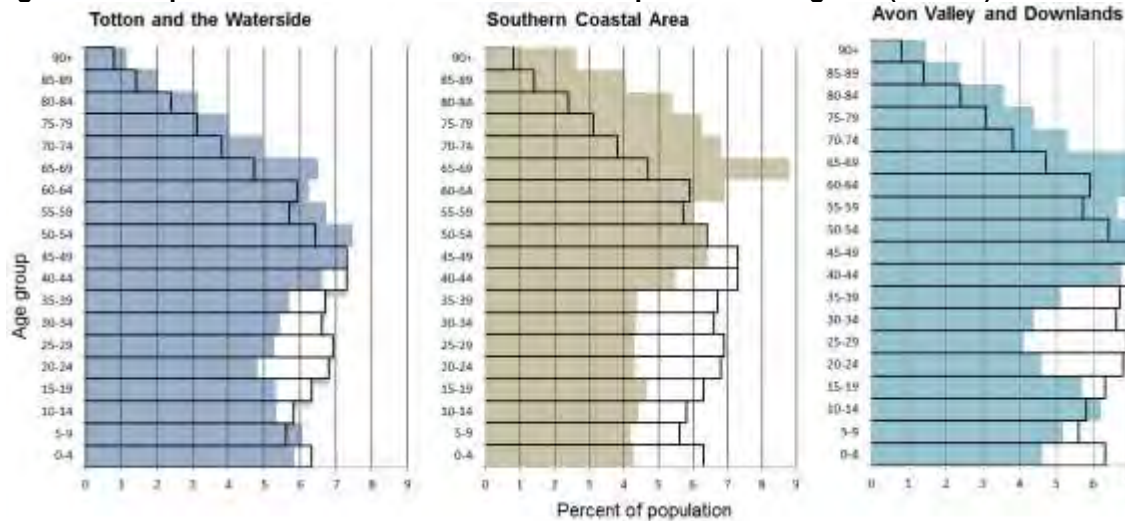
¹² 2013 mid-year population estimates

Figure 5.2: District population by age and sex compared with England*



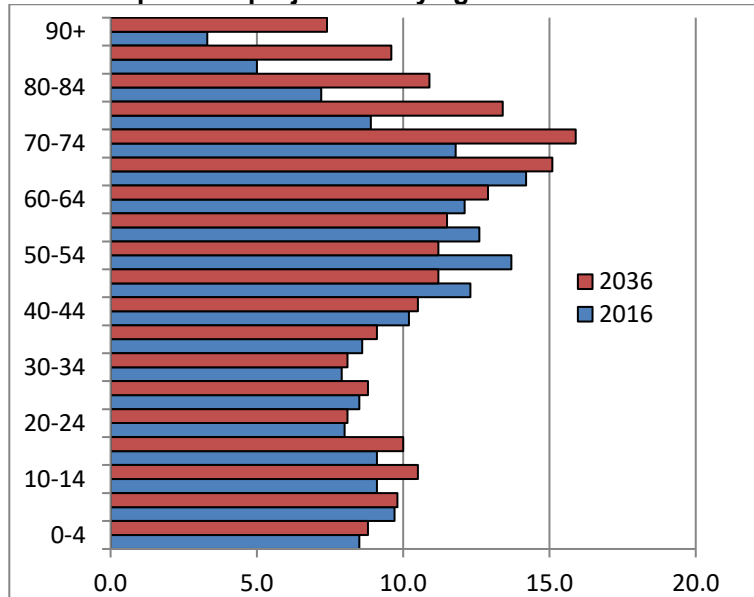
*Population structure of England is shown in outline. Blue (left) = males, red (right) = females.
Source: 2011 Census

Figure 5.3: Population structure for sub-areas compared with England (outline)



- 5.24 The population structure for the different sub-areas (Figure 5.3) reveals the extent of the ageing population in all areas, but particularly in the Southern Coastal and Avon Valley and Downlands. The population begins to age, compared with the national profile, around the 50-54 cohort in the Waterside and Avon Valley areas, but later in the Coastal area where it is around 60-64. There is a marked peak in the Southern Coastal area in the 65-69 cohort indicating the popularity of the area for retirement. Totton and the Waterside has a younger age profile with a notable peak in the 5-9 cohort. The Avon Valley has a slightly later peak amongst the 10-14 cohort. All areas see a significant deficit amongst the 15-44 cohorts compared with the national profile.
- 5.25 The percentage of retirees in the District as a whole, at 20%, is much higher than the regional and national figures (c.14%). Changes to the statutory retirement age will mean that people in employment will retire later, but it is clear that people move to the area for retirement, so the proportion of retirees is likely to grow despite changes to the statutory retirement age.

Figure 5.4: Population projections by age structure 2016 and 2036 (whole District)

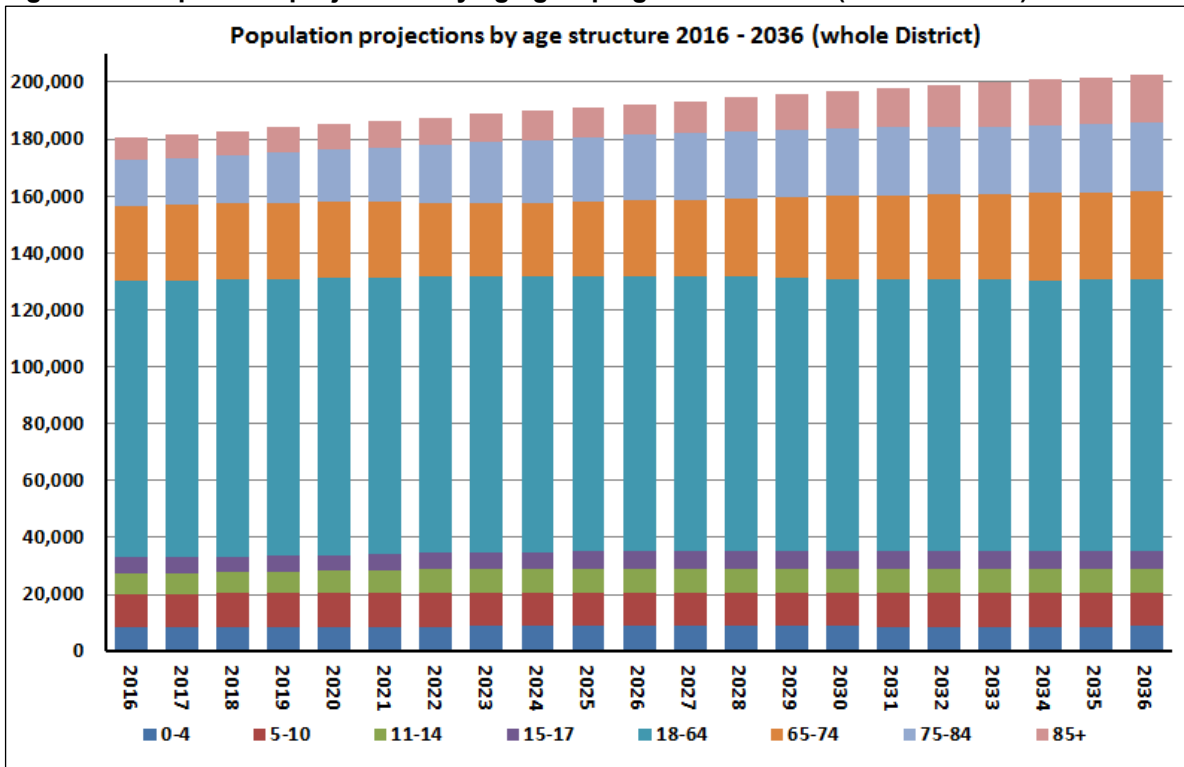


- 5.26 Figures 5.4 and 5.5 show the forecast age structure of the District at 2036¹³. Over the period 2016 to 2036 the national projections forecast overall growth of 21,930 in the District population (12%). However, the 65+ age group alone is forecast to grow by 21,724 (43% growth), meaning

¹³ 2014-based Subnational Population Projections for Local Authorities in England

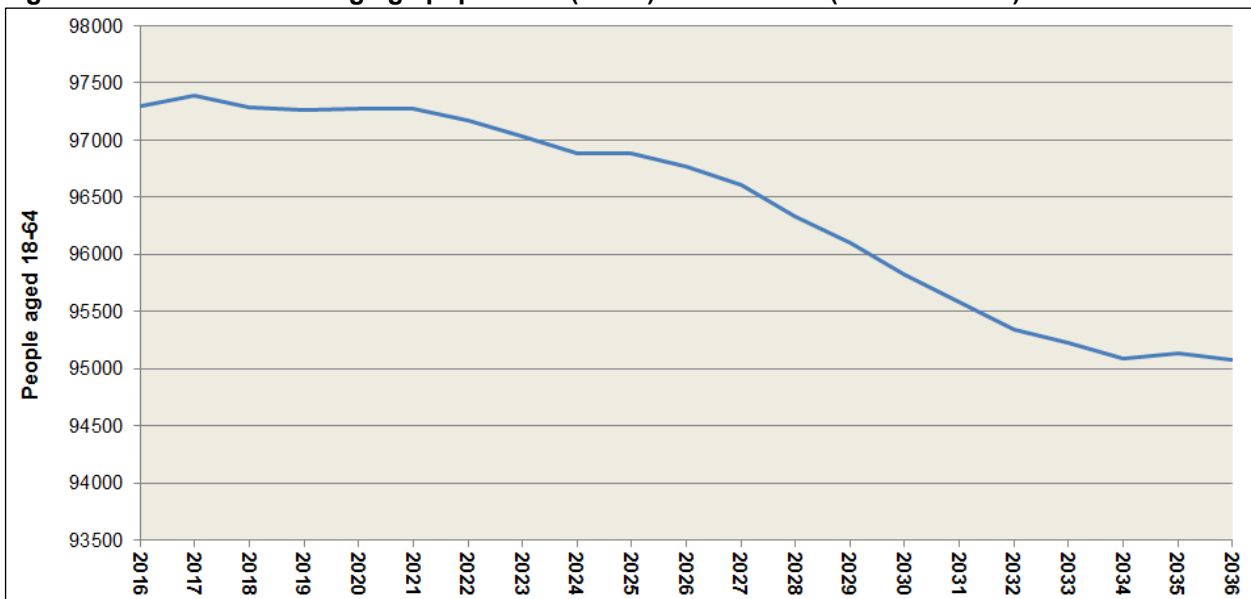
that all the population growth is accounted for by this sector, which will make up 36% of the population by 2036 (currently 28%).

Figure 5.5: Population projections by age groupings 2016 to 2036 (whole District)



5.27 Updated national projections show that the percentage of the population aged 18-64 in the District is forecast to fall from 53.8% in 2016 to 46.9% in 2036¹⁴. Figure 5.6 shows the forecast for the working age population over the period. This is well below the 2036 forecast for England of 56%¹⁵. The gap between the District and national percentages for working age population is set to widen over this period. There are clear implications of this for economic activity rates and provision of social care which are considered later in this report.

Figure 5.6: Forecast working age population (18-64) 2016 to 2036 (whole District)



¹⁴ 2014 based ONS Subnational Population Projections

¹⁵ 2014 based ONS Subnational Population Projections

Ethnicity

5.28 The 2011 Census shows that 94.9% of the District population categorised themselves as White British (English/Welsh/Scottish/Northern Irish/British) and 5.1% from another ethnic group. The District is much less ethnically diverse than the rest of England which recorded 20.2% from other ethnic groups (Figure 5.7). Figure 5.8 shows the ethnicity of the minority ethnic groups in New Forest District.

Figure 5.7: Ethnicity in New Forest District compared with England

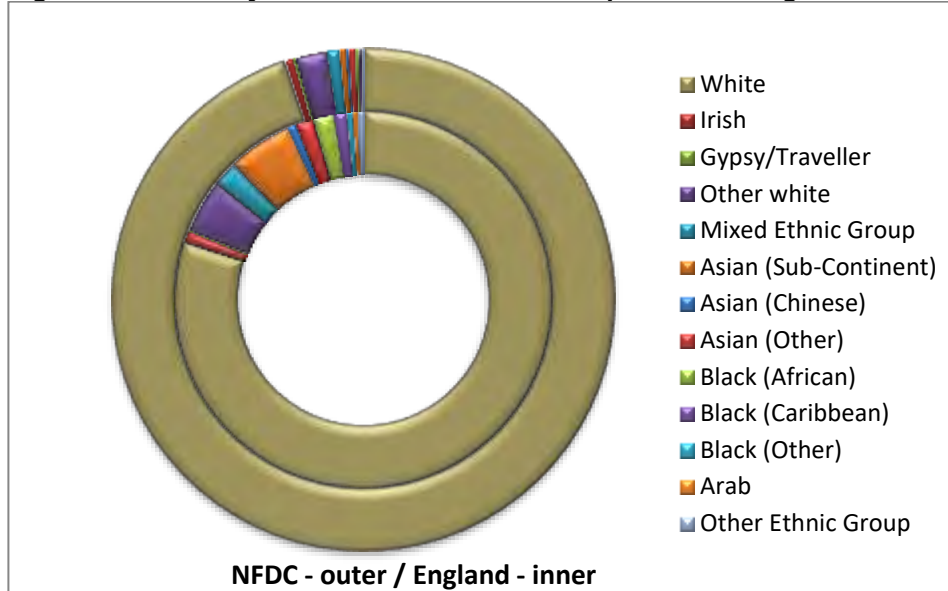
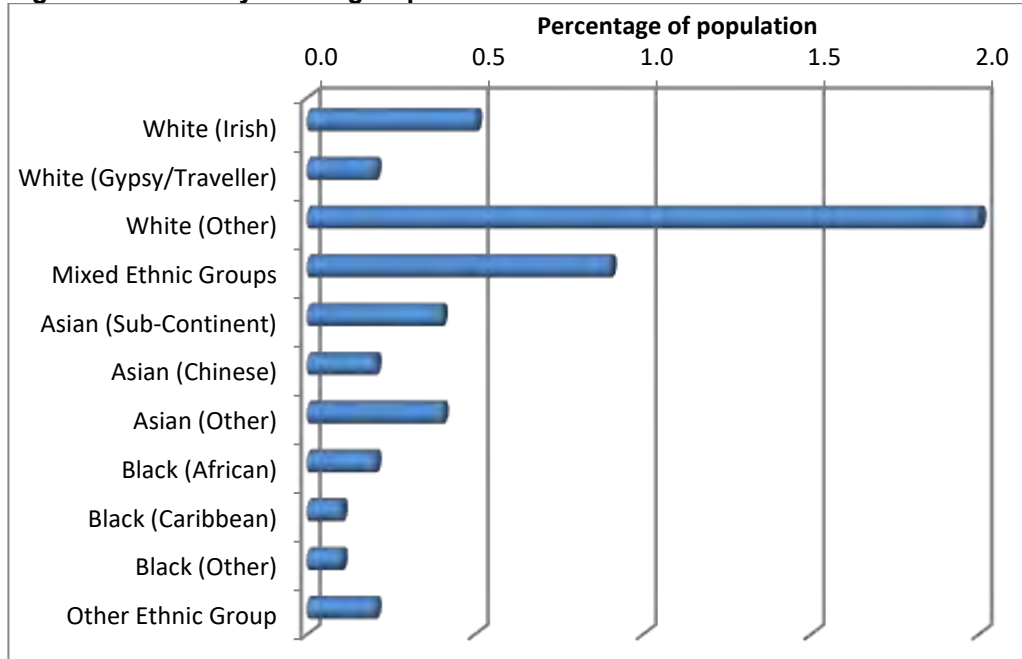


Figure 5.8: Minority ethnic groups in New Forest District



5.29 The District has a higher proportion of gypsies and travellers (0.2%) than nationally (0.1%) and there are historic links between gypsies and the New Forest area. National policy requires that the specific accommodation needs of gypsies and travellers are assessed and provision made to meet those needs¹⁶. It introduced a new definition of gypsies and travellers to exclude, for

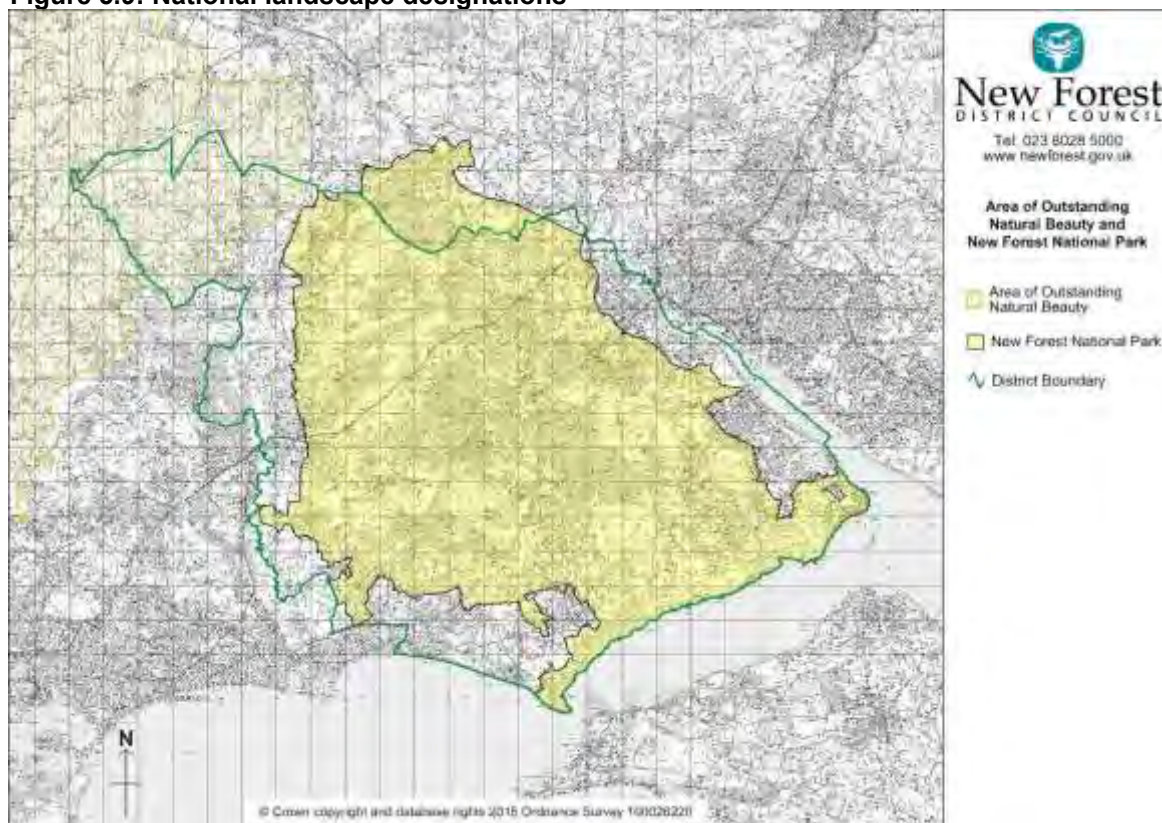
¹⁶ Planning Policy for Traveller Sites 2015

the purposes of assessing needs, those gypsies and travellers who have permanently ceased travelling.

Environmental Characteristics

Landscape

- 5.30 The District includes large areas nationally designated for their landscape qualities. Part of the Cranborne Chase Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) lies within the Plan Area (Fig.4.9). This includes the chalk downland landscapes in the north-west of the District and extends west into Wiltshire. Around 6% of the AONB lies within the District. The AONB Management Plan sets out the special qualities of this area as follows:
- A peaceful, tranquil, deeply rural area; largely ‘unspoilt’ and maintained as a living agricultural landscape;
 - The scale of the landscape is often grand and dramatic with the ‘intensity’ of landscape character almost palpable;
 - The open downland offers wide expansive skies, dominant skylines, dramatic escarpments and panoramic views;
 - Unity of the underlying chalk expressed in the distinctive and sometimes dramatically sculpted landforms, open vistas, escarpments and coombes;
 - A rich land use history with many ancient hilltop forts and barrows;
 - Overlain by a woodland mosaic - including the eye-catching hill-top copses, veteran parkland trees and avenues, extensive areas of wooded downland and ancient forest together with more recent game coverts;
 - Three major river valleys with their individual distinctiveness;
 - Distinctive settlement pattern along the valleys and vales, and small Medieval villages along the scarp spring line;
 - Local vernacular building styles include the patterns of knapped flint, brick, cob, clunch clay tiles and straw thatch;
 - Strong sense of place and local distinctiveness represented by the use of local building materials and small-scale vernacular features such as the sunken lanes and distinctive black and white signposts;
 - Strong sense of remoteness;
 - Expanse of dark night skies.

Figure 5.9: National landscape designations

5.31 The New Forest National Park adjoins the Plan Area in the east, south and west (Fig.5.9). The Environment Act 1995 places a duty on authorities adjoining a National Park to have regard to National Park purposes in undertaking their statutory duties. Consequently, the landscape setting and characteristics of the National Park, amongst other things, are an important influence within the Plan Area. The key qualities of the National Park are set out in the New Forest National Park Management Plan and summarised below:

- The New Forest's outstanding natural beauty - the National Park encompasses a wide variety of different landscapes, from the woodlands and rolling heathland in the centre of the Forest, to the flat and wild coastline and the farmed landscape of small fields, hedgerows and narrow lanes;
- An extraordinary diversity of plants and animals - the mosaic of lowland heath, mire, ancient pasture woodland and Forest lawns that forms the Open Forest is unique in Britain and Europe. In addition the Solent coastline comprises extensive areas of mudflats, salt marsh and shingle, backed in places by low cliffs;
- A unique historic, cultural and archaeological heritage - from royal hunting ground, to ship-building, salt making and 500 years of military coastal defence;
- An historic commoning system - over the centuries commoning has largely been responsible for shaping the distinctive landscapes and habitats of the Open Forest;
- The iconic New Forest pony - together with donkeys, pigs and cattle roaming free;
- Tranquillity - in the midst of the busy, built up south of England;
- Wonderful opportunities for quiet recreation, learning and discovery - in one of the last extensive gentle landscapes in the south including unmatched open access on foot and horseback;
- A healthy environment - fresh air, clean water, local produce and a sense of 'wildness';
- Strong and distinctive local communities - with a real pride in and sense of identity with their local area.

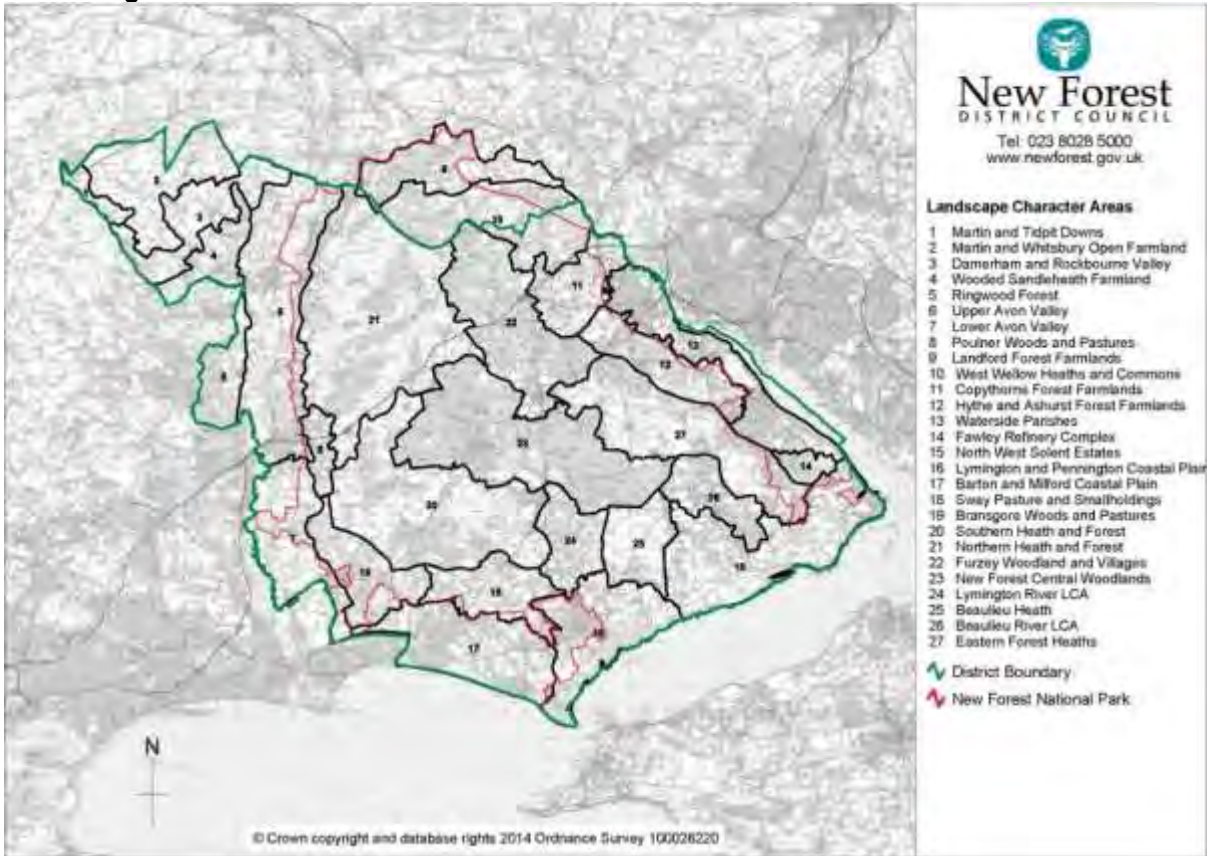
- 5.32 **New Forest District Landscape Character Assessment**
The sub-areas of the Plan Area coincide substantially with the following landscape character areas set out in Table 5.3 below, as defined in the New Forest District Landscape Character Assessment (Figures 5.10 and 5.11 show the character areas and types).

Table 5.3: Landscape Character Areas within the Plan Area

Character Area	Summary of key characteristics
Martin and Tidpit Downs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rolling hills Open chalk grassland Largely unwooded with scrub and few hedges No settlement A wealth of archaeological remains Panoramic views over chalk farmland Views to the horizon with ridgelines
Martin and Whitsbury Open Farmland	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Undulating with large geometric fields Large scale expansive landscape Communication routes follow valleys A landscape of historical importance with barrows, ditches and hill forts Village of Martin
Damerham and Rockbourne Valleys	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mixture of woodland and farmland punctuated by narrow chalk valleys • Structure of ancient woodland, tree belts and hedgerows • Water meadows and lines of poplars and willows marking the watercourses • Linear ancient valley settlements of Damerham, Rockbourne and Whitsbury • Restricted views • Historic activity visible in the landscape
- Wooded Sandleheath Farmland	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deciduous copses, pasture, water meadows and built development • Areas of open water and water meadows • Leafy lanes through woodland • Village of Sandleheath
Ringwood Forest	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wooded ridge on the edge of the Avon Valley leading to undulating area of former heath • Copses, tree belts, wooded water courses, pasture on valley side contrasts with forest core • Straight lines of communication • Domination of 19th and 20th century forestry • High recreational value
Upper Avon Valley	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Broad meandering valley of the River Avon enclosed by steep wooded ridge in the east • Large areas of unimproved grassland and open water meadows • Settlements of Ringwood and Fordingbridge • Main A338 runs length of the valley with minor east-west crossings • Lakes resulting from gravel extraction are important for wildlife and recreation • Distant views to steep wooded slopes
Lower Avon Valley	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Broad flat plain containing meandering River Avon • Grazing watermeadows • Mixed farmland divided by hedgerows or tree belts • Grid pattern of lanes • Small hamlets of Avon, Bisterne and Kingston • Long views and big skies

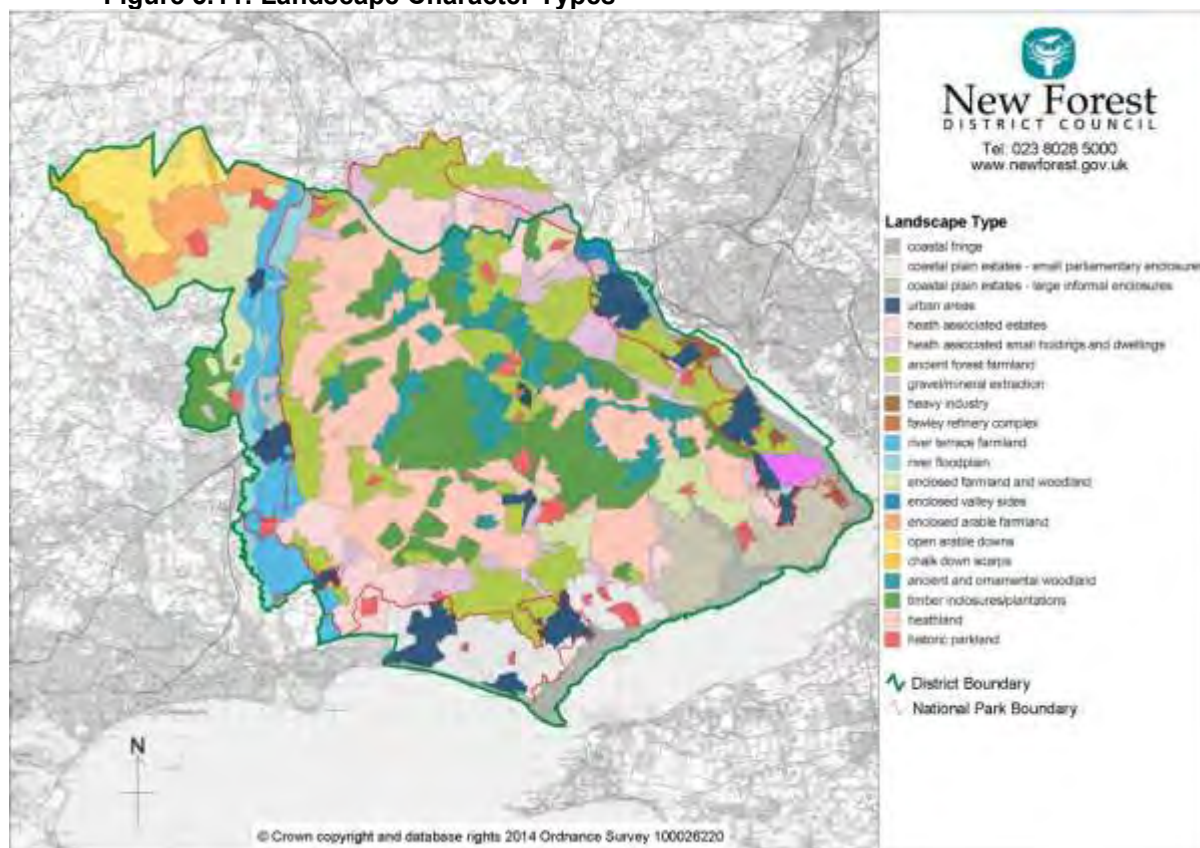
Waterside Parishes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Flat or gently undulating on the western edge of Southampton Water • Well-wooded, enclosed landscape • Open coastal edge with salt marshes, mud and expansive views to Southampton • Major infrastructure including the A326 which runs along the western edge of the area, tall chimneys and pylons • High density development, small historic settlement cores
Fawley Refinery Complex	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Large scale industrial structures, stacks and flares, visible over long distances, on the western edge of Southampton Water • Former parkland • A326 and B3053 form the western and southern boundaries • Tree screen obscures near views
Barton and Milford Coastal Plain	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Undulating wooded estate land overlooking Christchurch Bay • Exposed coast with eroding cliffs and narrow beaches • Large scale fields with hedgerows, fences and blocks of woodland • Wooded valleys along Avon Water and Danes Stream • Settlements of New Milton, Barton on Sea and Milford-on-Sea and Lymington • Golf courses, caravan holiday parks

Figure 5.10: Character Areas



5.34 Landscape Character Areas (LCAs) 1-3 and parts of 4 are within the Cranborne Chase Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. This area differs in character from the rest of the District, being part of a much larger area of chalk downland.

Figure 5.11: Landscape Character Types



5.35 The Avon Valley LCAs extend into the National Park. Table 5.4 shows LCAs in the Plan Area that extend into the New Forest National Park and are therefore closely related to the National Park in character.

Table 5.4: Landscape Character Areas within both the Plan Area and the National Park

Character Area	Summary of key characteristics
West Wellow heaths and commons (Shelley Common)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Remnant heathland commons and pasture woods with ancient oak and beech pollards, farmland and woodland on the northern edge of the forest • Unenclosed grazed heathland commons and recently enclosed former commons • Long views limited by domed topography and encroaching scrub
Copythorne Forest Farmlands (Loperwood, Hillstreet, Wade Hill)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Small scale irregular fields with hedgerows, trees and areas of ancient deciduous woodlands • Leafy lanes with pockets of linear development • Major roads M27, A36, A326, A336, A31 pass through the area • Views are short to field boundaries and woodland edges
Hythe and Ashurst Forest Farmlands (Frost Lane)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Farmland on the edge of the forest heaths with large copses • Small-medium scale pastures with hedgerows • Leafy lanes • Views are short to field boundaries and woodland edges
Lymington and Pennington Coastal Plain (north of Lymington and part of Lower Pennington)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Medium-large regular fields divided by ditch and bank hedge boundaries and post and wire fences

5.36 The District also includes parts of the coast at Christchurch Bay and Southampton Water. Christchurch Bay is characterised by low, crumbling cliffs and pebble beaches, whereas the

undeveloped parts of the coast of Southampton Water are bordered mainly by saltmarshes and mudflats.

- 5.37 Natural England has produced national character area profiles which outline the landscape character of different areas and explain how that character has arisen and is changing (see Table 5.5). The District is covered by several character areas: South Hampshire Lowlands; New Forest; Dorset Heaths; and Dorset Downs and Cranborne Chase¹⁷.

Table 5.5: National Character Areas within New Forest District

National Character Area	Summary of key characteristics
South Hampshire Lowlands	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Well-wooded landscape including extensive tracts of ancient semi-natural woodland • A patchwork of small, intimate and irregular fields often bounded by hedges of mixed species • Well managed farmland including a mosaic of semi-natural habitats • Chalk rivers flowing through wide lush river valleys to their estuaries in Southampton Water • Rural character influenced by urbanisation and urban fringe
New Forest	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The core of the New Forest; an entirely uncultivated mixture of extensive, open rolling heaths and valley mires, inclosures of broadleaf and coniferous plantation woodland, and large tracts of unenclosed ancient semi-natural mature oak woodland pasture • Enclosed 'back-up' farmland and dispersed farmsteads, villages and hamlets around the fringes of the open forest • Commoners' stock which graze and is responsible for the persistence of this ancient landscape • An undeveloped open, marshy coastal strip with shingle beaches and spits, backed by low crumbling cliffs, with views across the Solent to the Isle of Wight, Bournemouth and the distant Purbeck coast • The broad floodplain of the lower Avon Valley, the meandering wide main river crossed by elegant stone bridges, ditches and braided streams. Gravel extraction has left several large open water bodies • The quiet wooded tidal estuary and creeks of the Beaulieu River with the conserved features of the timber shipbuilding industry • Distant skyline views of the chimneys, cranes and structures of the oil refinery, power station, incinerator and docks of Southampton Water • Large areas of post-war suburban housing and holiday developments along cliff tops • The 'Waterside' is an urbanised and industrialised strip, east of the A326 trunk road, including the Southampton Water and Test Estuary shoreline of salt marsh and mudflats • An arable belt, along and inland of the coast, of large well managed enclosure fields with neat low hedges. A further similar strip of arable land with smaller fields extends between the western escarpment of the New Forest and the Avon water meadows
Dorset Heaths	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extensive tracts of semi-natural lowland heathland supporting a suite of characteristic species • Extensive conifer plantations • Wild remote-feeling heathland landscape providing opportunities for informal recreation and 'escape'

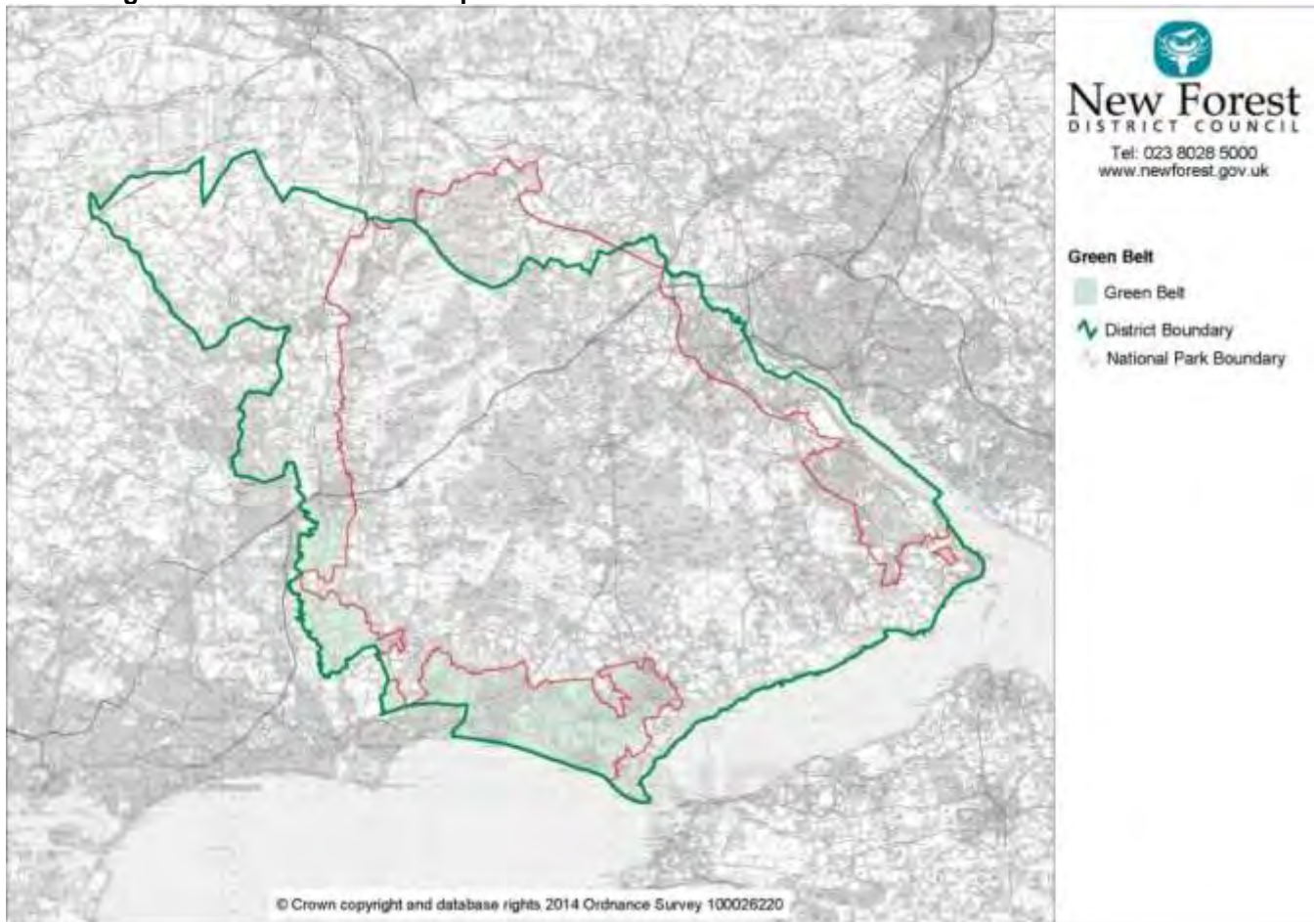
¹⁷ [Natural England Landscape Character Areas](#)

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Small villages and hamlets where sense of a strong vernacular architecture has been maintained • Pastoral river valleys
Dorset Downs and Cranborne Chase	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prominent north and east facing scarp slope Plateau and long, gentle dip slope dissected by combes, dry valleys and river valleys • Extensive, though highly fragmented, suite of relict semi-natural chalk downland habitats • Large areas of Ancient Semi-Natural Woodland alongside visually important plantations, clumps and windbreaks • Extensive suite of prehistoric heritage assets, including barrows, hill forts, track ways and earthworks • Winterbournes and chalk rivers, typically shallow, clean and highly biodiverse and often a feature of linear villages within the valleys • Tranquillity and low levels of light pollution • Farming land use patterns in a landscape dominated by agriculture

Green Belt

- 5.38 The South West Hampshire Green Belt extends south from Ringwood covering those parts of the lower Avon Valley outside the National Park, and through the coastal towns area from New Milton to Lymington (Figure 5.12). The inner boundary of the Green Belt is drawn tightly around the settlements of Bransgore, New Milton, Hordle, Everton, Milford and Lymington. Apart from the allocations made in the Local Plan Part 2 (2014) and an area of land south-east of Ringwood, no further land has been excluded from the Green Belt around these settlements with the intention of safeguarding for longer term development needs.
- 5.39 The South West Hampshire Green Belt was confirmed in the South West Hampshire Structure Plan 1982, although the intention to designate a Green Belt in the area dated well before this and similar restrictive policies had been applied in the area. The purposes of the Green Belt designation were to:
- conserve and protect the countryside and coastline;
 - protect the separate physical identity of individual settlements;
 - protect the unique character of the New Forest;
 - protect the New Forest and adjoining areas, including the coast, as a buffer between the growing conurbations of South Hampshire and South East Dorset.
- 5.40 At the time of its approval, the main purpose of the South West Hampshire Green Belt was seen as ‘limiting the spread of urban development to assist in the conservation of the New Forest and its surrounding countryside and coast’¹⁸. At the time of National Park designation Green Belt was removed from the area covered by the National Park. The remaining Green Belt in the Plan Area adjoins the South East Dorset Green Belt around the Bournemouth/Poole/Christchurch conurbation.

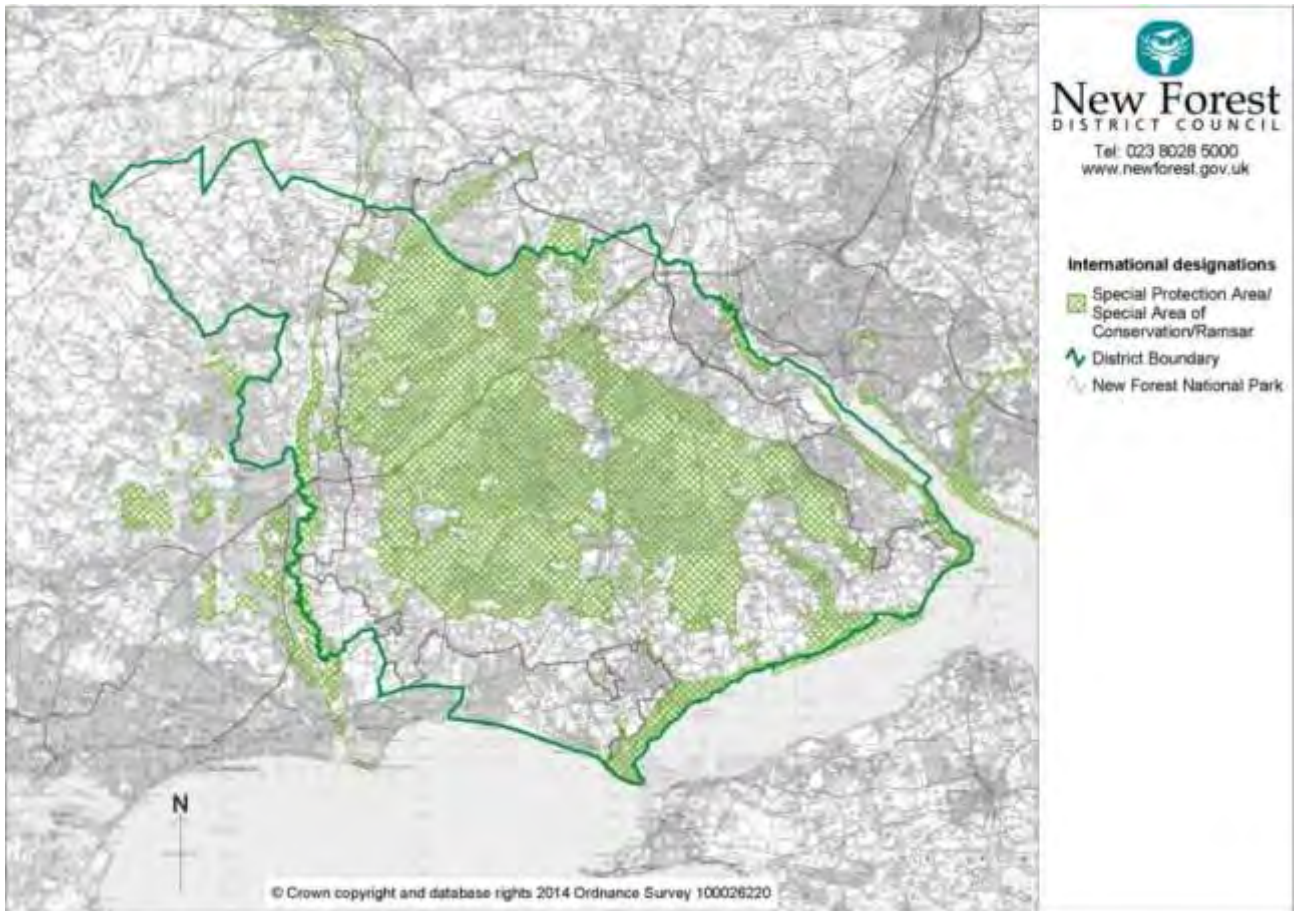
¹⁸ South West Hampshire Structure Plan 1982 (para.9.12)

Figure 5.12: South West Hampshire Green Belt

Nature conservation and biodiversity

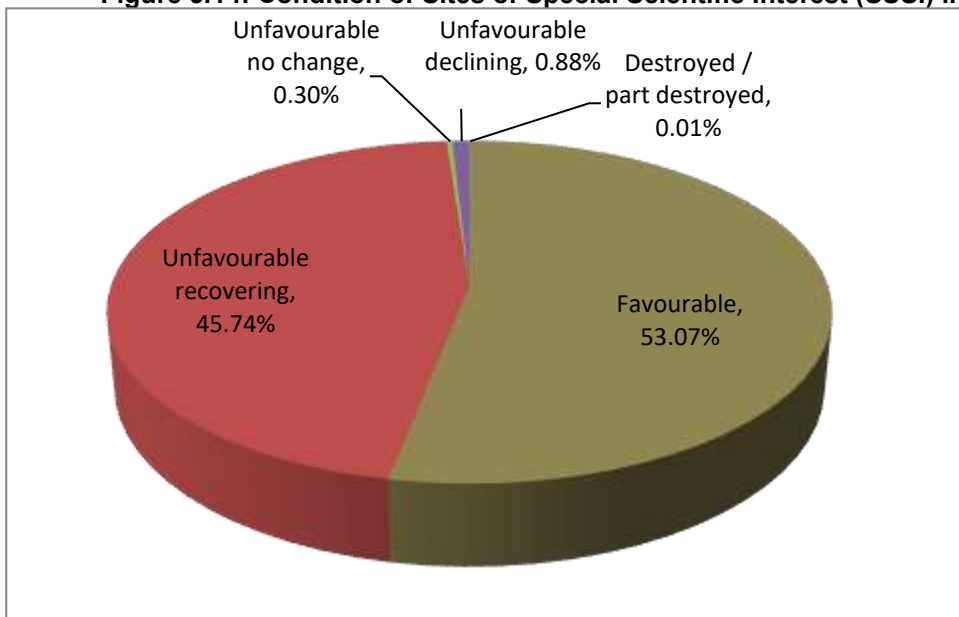
- 5.41 The Plan Area contains substantial areas of nature conservation value including international Ramsar sites, European Special Protection Areas (SPA) and Special Areas of Conservation (SAC), national Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), and locally designated Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINC). The rivers Avon and Test are both SSSIs, and the river Avon and lower Test Valley are also included in SACs. Parts of the valleys, including Blashford Lakes north of Ringwood, are SSSIs, SPAs and Ramsar sites. The majority of the Waterside coastal marshes and mudflats are designated as SSSIs and within a SPA and Ramsar site. The coastal cliffs of Christchurch Bay are in a designated SSSI, predominantly for their geological interest (fossils). In the Western Downlands, the Martin Down SSSI is also a National Nature reserve.
- 5.42 Proximity of the New Forest SPA/SAC and Ramsar sites, which cover more than 29,000 hectares, has a significant influence on the Plan Area. Also, parts of the Dorset Heaths SPA/Ramsar are within 5km of the Plan Area. Figure 5.13 shows the extent of international designations in the District.

Figure 5.13: International nature conservation designations



5.43 In 2014, 98% of the SSSI units within the District, including the National Park, were in a favourable or recovering condition. Figure 5.14 shows the condition of SSSIs¹⁹.

Figure 5.14: Condition of Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) in New Forest District 2014

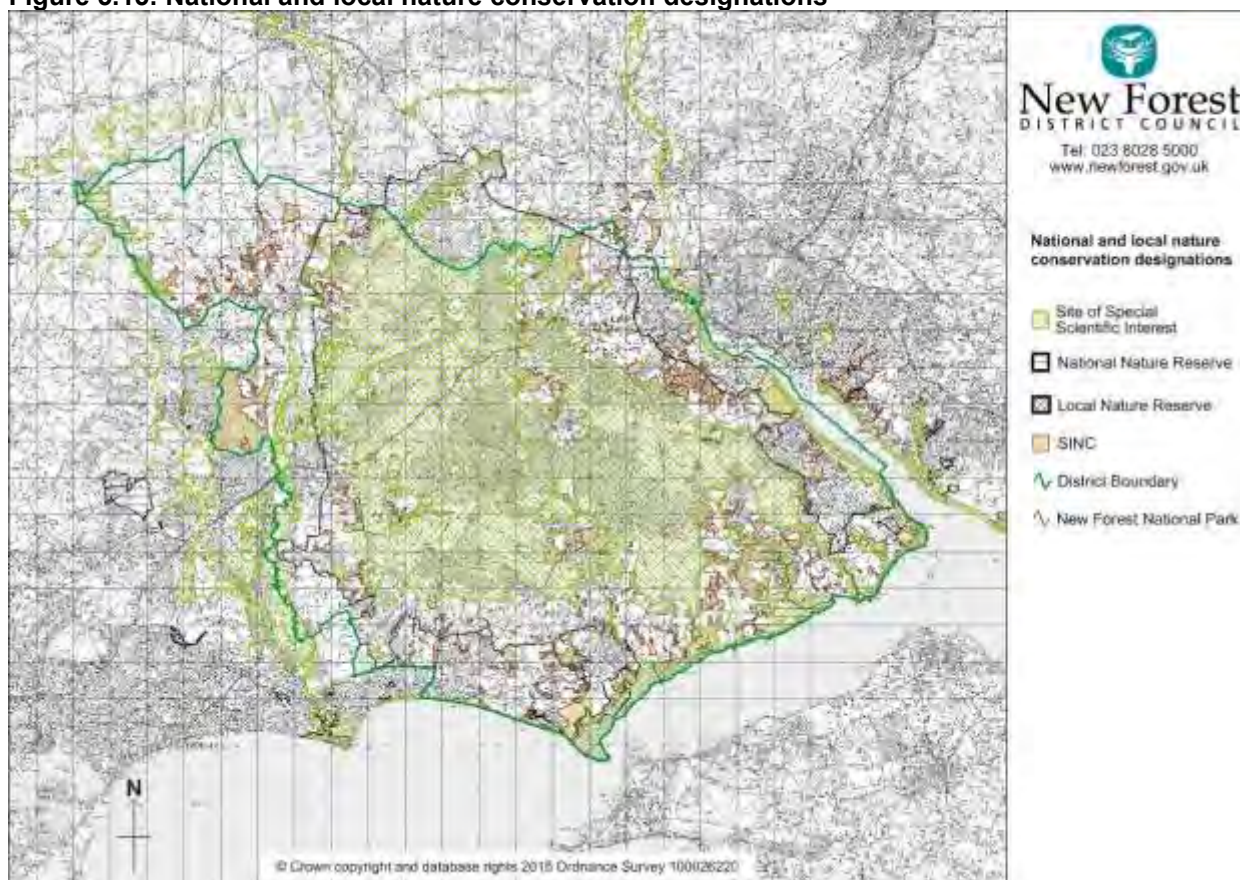


Source: Natural England

¹⁹ [Natural England Sites of Special Scientific Interest](#)

5.44 There are also substantial areas identified as being of local nature conservation importance by means of designation as Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINCs). Figure 5.15 shows the extent of national and local nature conservation designations in the District.

5.45 **Figure 5.15: National and local nature conservation designations**



5.46 Pressures on the areas designated as being of nature conservation value include those arising from human activity (recreation, development and various forms of pollution including noise and light), and from climate change. These can result in habitat loss and fragmentation, disturbance to wildlife, introduction of non-native species, increased flood risk etc. Coast defences can affect geological and nature conservation interests, e.g. by limiting the erosion processes that expose the fossils for which the Christchurch Bay cliffs are designated, and through coastal 'squeeze' where defences prevent coastal marshes from retreating inland.

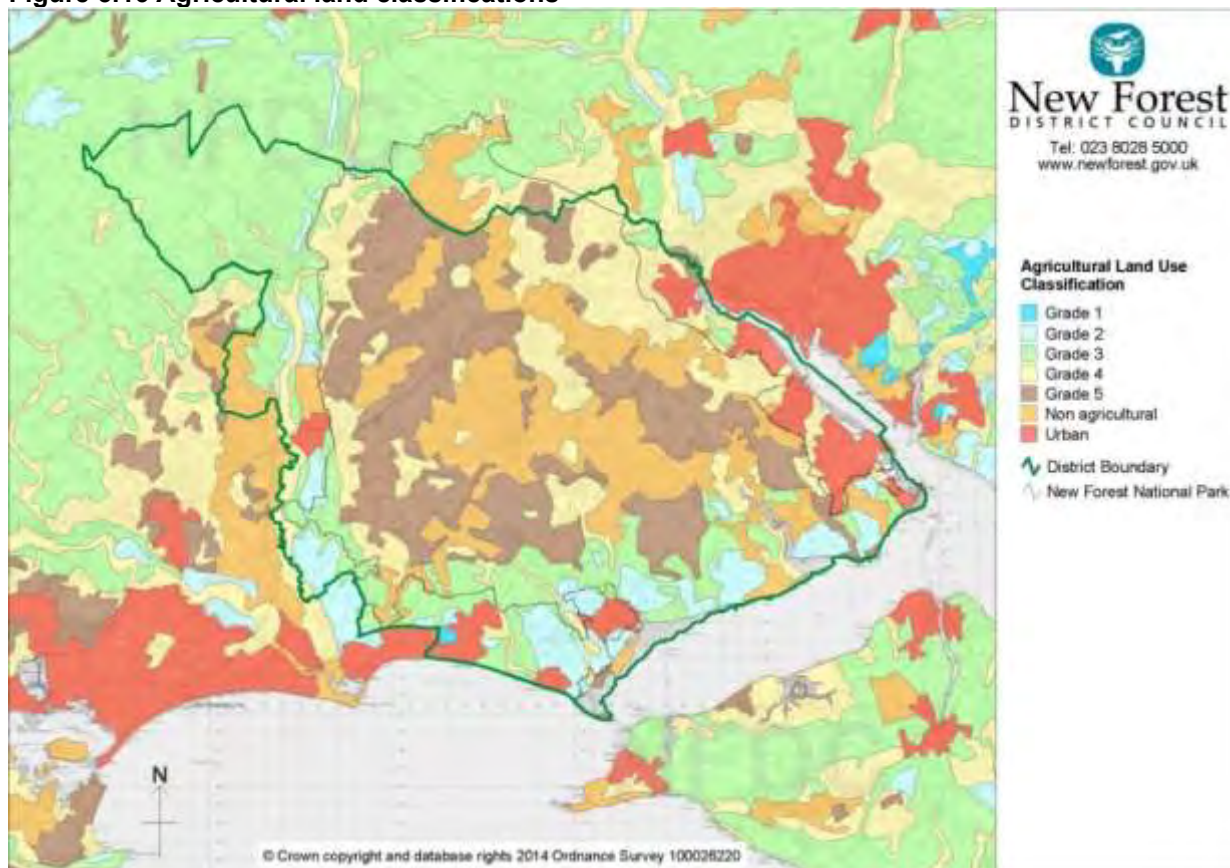
5.47 Under the Habitats Regulations there is a requirement to mitigate the impacts of new development upon the European designations²⁰. While available evidence is inconclusive, the Habitats Regulations Assessment of the previous Local Plan concluded that, adopting the precautionary approach, potentially harmful recreational impacts on the New Forest SAC/SPA/Ramsar site (New Forest European sites) and the Solent and Southampton Water SPA/Ramsar site/Solent and Isle of Wight Lagoons SAC/Solent Maritime SAC (Solent Coastal European sites) arising from planned residential development, need to be addressed. To enable the planned residential development to proceed, the Habitats Regulations require that appropriate mitigation measures are in place to ensure that the proposed development can take place without a harmful impact on the integrity of protected sites.

²⁰ The conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010

- 5.48 In 2014 the Council adopted a Mitigation Strategy for European Sites Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) which has established the regime for providing Suitable Accessible Natural Green Space (SANGS) and collecting financial contributions from new development towards such provision and other mitigation requirements. This Strategy was formulated to address mitigation requirements in the context of an overall strategy of development restraint. The continued appropriateness of this strategy for mitigation will need to be reviewed in the context of the levels of development proposed within a new planning strategy.
- 5.49 The Council is also part of the Solent Recreational Mitigation Partnership. The Partnership has led to formation of the Solent Mitigation and Disturbance Project which will address the impacts of disturbance on wintering waterfowl in the Solent. Neighbouring the Plan Area, to the west, the Dorset Heathlands Planning Framework SPD provides for similar mitigation provision for the Dorset Heaths.

Agriculture

- 5.50 Figure 5.16 shows the agricultural land classifications for the District. Management of land and stock for agriculture, forestry and horticulture has a major influence on landscape quality. The commoning system and other agricultural management have contributed to the character of the district. The maintenance of a viable agricultural and commoning economy is therefore a significant issue in the District. Agricultural diversification can be a way of sustaining traditional land management practices.
- 5.51 Much of the undeveloped agricultural land in the Plan Area is classified as best and most versatile. There are large areas of agricultural land classified as Grades 2 and 3 in the Western Downlands, the river valleys (particularly the Avon) and between Lymington and New Milton; there are also smaller areas north of Totton and north-west of Marchwood. Around the main towns and in the river valleys there are pressures on this higher quality land for development including mineral extraction.

Figure 5.16 Agricultural land classifications

Historic Environment

- 5.52 The built environment is of mixed age and quality, but parts of it are of notable historic interest, including the medieval burgage plots evident in Lymington and to a lesser extent in other settlements, and examples of Georgian, Victorian and other building styles. The Plan Area includes around 1000 listed buildings and 23 Conservation Areas, as well as many Scheduled Monuments. Table 5.6 lists some of the heritage assets in the Plan Area. Any review of conservation area character appraisals is likely to focus on those conservation areas which have experienced, and are facing, the greatest pressures for change. Historic England suggests that a list of locally important buildings and features could also form part of the baseline for monitoring in the Plan Area. Such a list has not so far been compiled.
- 5.53 Within the Plan Area, there are six Scheduled Monuments identified by Historic England as being at risk. These are all located in the north-western Downlands area and mostly relate to ancient burial sites²¹. The Heritage at Risk Register does not include grade II buildings and no local survey has been undertaken to assess the condition of grade II buildings within the Plan Area, although a programme for undertaking a survey is being formulated.
- 5.54 The Plan Area also contains one area on the Historic England Register of Parks and Gardens of Special Historic Interest, and a further eight identified as being of historic interest. In addition, the floodplain of the Avon Valley includes relics of an ancient water meadow system that are of archaeological interest.

²¹ <http://risk.historicengland.org.uk/register.aspx>

- 5.55 Hampshire County Council has published an Historic Landscape Character Assessment (1999) of the area²². The Plan Area is covered by four character areas: New Forest Coast; River Valleys (Avon); New Forest Lowland and Heath; and Cranborne Chase. The Cranborne Chase AONB has also published an Historic Landscape Characterisation covering the AONB area²³.

Table 5.6: Identified heritage assets

Conservation Areas	Designated
Ashlett Creek, Fawley (part)	2000 (original designation 1993)
Bickton	1999 (original designation 1981)
Breamore (part)	2000 (original designation 1981)
Buckland, Lymington (part)	1999 (original designation 1988)
Damerham	2000 (original designation 1976)
Eling (Totton)	2000 (original designation 1979)
Fordingbridge	1999 (original designation 1975)
Hanger Farm, Totton	2000 (original designation 1986)
Harbridge	1999 (original designation 1993)
Hazel Farm, Totton	1999 (original designation 1996)
Hythe	2000 (original designation 1978)
Ibsley	1999 (original designation 1981)
Lymington	1999 (original designation 1977)
Lymington (Kings Saltern)	2001
Martin	2000 (original designation 1974)
Milford-on-Sea	1999 (original designation 1975)
Old Milton Green, New Milton	1999 (original designation 1993)
Ringwood	1999 (original designation 1983)
Rockbourne	2000 (original designation 1976)
Royal Naval Armaments Depot, Marchwood	1999 (original designation 1997)
Sopley	1999 (original designation 1976)
Whitsbury	2000 (original designation 1976)
Listed Buildings	
Around 1000 listed buildings and structures	
English Heritage Register of Parks and Gardens	
Breamore Park, Breamore	SU155192
Hampshire Register of Historic Parks and Gardens²⁴ (not on national register)	
Including the following:	
Efford House, Everton	SZ 299943
Burgate Manor (Game Conservancy), Fordingbridge	SU 153146
Fryern Court, Fordingbridge	SU 143161
Newlands Manor, Milford-on-Sea	SZ 286933
Somerley Park, Ringwood Forest, Ringwood	SU 132082
Sandle Manor, Sandleheath	SU 136148
Testwood House, Testwood Lane, Totton	SU 360144
Burgage plots	
Nos. 2 to 24 High Street Lymington	
Nos. 45 to 51 High Street Lymington	
Nos. 55 to 58 High Street Lymington	
Nos. 63 to 75 High Street Lymington	
Nos. 124 to 131 High Street Lymington	
Nos. 43 to 48 St Thomas' Street Lymington	

²² <http://www3.hants.gov.uk/landscape-and-heritage/historic-environment/historic-landscape.htm>

²³ http://www.historiclandscape.co.uk/character_broad.html

²⁴ www3.hants.gov.uk/landscape-and-heritage/historic-environment/parks-gardens.htm

Scheduled MonumentsAround 60 Scheduled Monuments²⁵**Energy**

- 5.56 In 2011 (the latest year for which data is available²⁶) the District had an average level of domestic energy consumption per household slightly lower than the regional average, but higher than the national rate. Industrial and commercial consumption was however by far the highest in the region. It was some 20 times the average for all other local authorities in the South East and is the third highest level of consumption in England and Wales. This is due to the presence in the district of the Fawley petrochemical works, which is huge consumer of energy.
- 5.57 A gas-fired power station operates at Marchwood Industrial Estate. The landmark Fawley Power Station at Calshot has now been decommissioned. A number of renewable energy generation schemes have been developed in the District in recent years. Table 5.7 lists those schemes currently operating.

Table 5.7: Renewable energy generation schemes

Scheme	Technology	Generating capacity (MW)	Date commissioned
Fawley Waste to Energy	Incineration	8.6	2001
Marchwood Energy from Waste	Incineration	13.8	2004
Cadland Solar Farm, Fawley	Solar PV	5	2012
Tavells Solar Farm, Marchwood	Solar PV	5	2012
West Solent Solar Farm, Pennington	Solar PV	2.4	2014

Source: [Renewables Map](#)**Water supply and treatment**

- 5.58 Water quality planning does not follow local authority boundaries. Planning for water in Local Plans should reflect the plans of neighbouring LPAs and the needs of the wider catchment. Cross-boundary working should form part of work under the Duty to Co-operate. The process will be more effective and better informed if it involves water companies and sewerage undertakers. The provision of infrastructure for wastewater is listed as one of the strategic priorities that should be considered in Local Plans (NPPF paragraph 156). Collaborative working with water organisations and providers to ensure that strategic priorities across local boundaries are properly coordinated and clearly reflected in individual Local Plans (see NPPF paragraphs 178 and 179) and the quality and capacity of infrastructure for water supply, wastewater and its treatment (NPPF paragraph 162) has been assessed.
- 5.59 Much of Hampshire County relies on groundwater or groundwater-fed streams for its water supply. New Forest District contains groundwater Source Protection Zones (SPZ) at Ampress, Lymington and in the Western Downlands extending to Fordingbridge and through Breamore into the National Park at Hale, serving boreholes at Hale and Woodgreen. There are also Protection Zones near Ellingham and South Gorley. SPZs relate to how quickly a pollutant could reach an abstraction point (e.g. for drinking water) SPZ1 is the highest level of sensitivity and means a 50 day travel time from any point below the water table to the source. The Environment Agency has defined a surface water protection zone in the north-eastern part of the District. The zone defines an area upstream of drinking water sources where efforts to control contamination will be

²⁵ <http://list.english-heritage.org.uk/default.aspx>²⁶ Department of Energy and Climate Change 2013 <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistical-data-sets/total-final-energy-consumption-at-regional-and-local-authority-level-2005-to-2010>

concentrated. It extends from Redbridge causeway north and westwards beyond the M27 and A36 and includes Testwood and Testwood Lakes and much of Calmore.

- 5.60 The District is well supplied with water as it contains large reservoirs at Blashford Lakes (administered by Wessex Water and Sembcorp Bournemouth Water) which draw water from the River Avon (although neither company currently extracts from this source), and Testwood Lakes (administered by Southern Water) which draw from the River Test.
- 5.61 During a drought the lakes at Testwood come under pressure. As well as providing water for Hampshire residents there can be transfers of water to support the River Itchen. Whilst we may have sufficient supply today this may not always be the case in future years. Water efficiency measures are important to reduce demand on water resources and to accommodate growth in business, housing and population requirements without the need to increase overall consumption. Drivers for water efficiency include: delivery of the objectives under the Water Framework Directive; reducing pressure on wastewater treatment capacity; adapting to the impacts of climate change; and reducing domestic energy use.
- 5.62 Waste water in the District is dealt with by Southern Water and Wessex Water. Adequate provision of waste water treatment services is an essential pre-requisite for future development. The adequacy of sewage treatment capacity to serve new development will require further investigation. Where necessary, more capacity can be provided by the provision of additional local infrastructure.

Pollution

Water quality

- 5.63 Rivers with catchments largely contained within the Forest are of varying quality, with the main problems relating to low flows in summer. Low flows, which can have an impact on the ecology of the area, can be attributed to the lack of a major aquifer to hold winter rainfall, partial drainage of some of the mire systems and the straightening and dredging of rivers. Ground water abstraction may also be contributing to reduced flow rates.
- 5.64 The Avon and Test Rivers have experienced a gradual loss of quality. Diffuse pollution from agricultural land, roads and built up areas are contributory factors. Licenses allowing industrial discharges into the Solent from the industries along the Waterside are being reviewed. Use of fertilisers results in nutrient-rich run-off that enters coastal waters via streams and rivers, adding to problems of nutrient enrichment associated with sewage. The Environment Agency monitors and reviews abstraction licenses within Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) where these may have a significant effect on their ecological value.
- 5.65 The Local Plan will need to consider the environmental capacity of the water environment using evidence sources such as the River Basin Management Plans (RBMP). The quality and capacity of the existing wastewater treatment works and sewerage network will be an important consideration as this is also shown to impact upon biodiversity. Evidence of the impacts of phosphorous discharge to the River Avon²⁷ from agriculture and sewerage treatment shows the potential for conflicts with the conservation objectives of the European designation. The potential for harmful discharges to the water environment, arising from development, is likely to be a significant constraint. The impacts of proposed development on the River Avon, Southampton Water and Solent are likely to require assessment through a Water Cycle Study.

²⁷ River Avon Special Area of Conservation Nutrient Management Plan for Phosphorus (April 2015)
https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/429214/River_Avon_Nutrient_Management_Plan_FINAL_30th_April_2015.pdf

- 5.66 Coastal bathing waters in the District meet the Environment Agency's Guideline standards, which exceed the standards required by the Bathing Water Directive. Beyond these areas, there are no such standards, and water quality is more variable. There is occasional pollution around the coast from sewage, the dumping of waste at sea, industrial discharges, oil spills, litter and oil from boats, and agricultural run-off.
- 5.67 The Marine and Coastal Access Act 2009 introduced a new system of marine planning. The Government's Marine Policy Statement²⁸ is the national framework for marine planning and provides guidance for the production of marine plans. The Marine Management Organisation is responsible for licensing, regulating and preparing marine plans for inshore and offshore areas. Marine plans are intended to ensure the sustainable management of the marine environment. They will help guide activities within the marine environment including any new development opportunities. The Plan Area is covered by the South Inshore and South Offshore Plans, draft versions of which are expected to be published for consultation in Winter 2015/16. The South Plan area tends to have high levels of economic activity; poor or declining marine environmental conditions; a high number of protected environments; and high levels of tourism and recreation.

Air quality

- 5.68 Air quality is generally good, although localised problems still exist. New Forest District Council currently has 1 declared AQMA in Lyndhurst, for the exceedance of the annual mean objective for nitrogen dioxide. The aim of declaring an AQMA is to focus regulators to improve local air quality in pursuit of the air quality objectives.
- 5.69 Recent air quality monitoring for nitrogen dioxide and particulates in Totton, Marchwood and throughout the District, and sulphur dioxide and particulates in the Waterside have shown concentrations which were low enough not to be noticed by people who would consider themselves to be sensitive to such pollutants.

Noise and light pollution

- 5.70 A Campaign to Protect Rural England (CPRE) study from 2000 indicated that light pollution from Southampton was likely to be an issue on the eastern side of the District. It showed that the only parts of the District with 'dark skies' were the centre of the New Forest and the north-western corner of the District. A study was produced for the Cranborne Chase AONB in 2007 comparing the 1993 and 2000 night time satellite images for the area²⁹. The report looked at problems of light trespass, skyglow (e.g. from settlements) and scenic intrusion into the landscape. The only area within the District's part of the AONB which was highlighted as a problem was Martin where localised forms of light pollution were identified. Within the District, Fordingbridge is a larger-sized settlement situated close to the AONB, but it was shown to have lower light emissions than some other similar-sized settlements (e.g. Verwood and Shaftesbury) and had emissions similar to the countryside which surrounds it. In general, light pollution affects the sense of remoteness and tranquillity for which the area is valued.
- 5.71 Noise pollution can be associated with heavily trafficked roads, airports, built up areas and industrial installations. Intrusion maps developed for CPRE³⁰ indicate areas disturbed by noise and visual intrusion. These show large areas of the District subject to noise and visual intrusion including all the main built up areas and main roads. Sizeable areas remain undisturbed however including the south-east and north-west of the National Park and most of the Cranborne Chase AONB area within the District. The research confirms the direction of travel over time is for 'intrusion' to become more extensive together with increasing fragmentation of undisturbed areas. Rising levels of traffic and the presence of

²⁸ The UK Marine Policy Statement 2011

²⁹ Cranborne Chase AONB, Dark Skies and Light Pollution Study 2007. Entec UK Ltd.

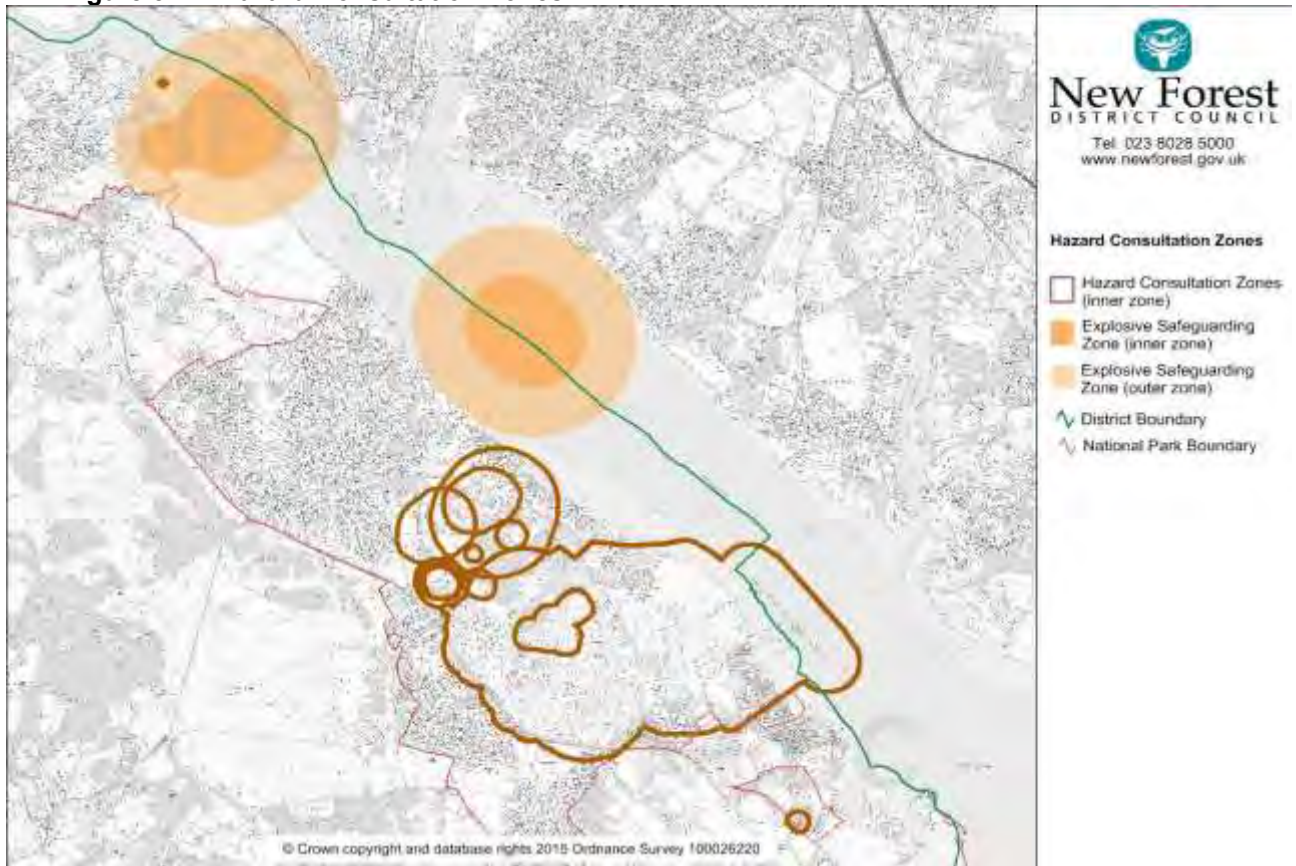
³⁰ Developing an Intrusion Map of England, Land Use Consultants for CPRE 2007

key commuting and trunk routes across the District; development pressures within the District and in neighbouring areas; the expansion of the sub-regional airports at Southampton and Bournemouth; and the presence of major industrial installations both within and close to the District are all factors contributing to ‘intrusion’ and threatening to reduce tranquillity.

Hazardous installations

5.72 Within the District there are a number of uses that can potentially pose a risk to life and property. These include the Fawley oil refinery, petrochemicals complex and power station, military installations at Marchwood and off Hythe, and gas pipelines. Safeguarding consultation zones are defined around these installations where development is limited. In addition, the District lies entirely within one or both of the safeguarding zones for Bournemouth and Southampton airports. Figure 5.17 shows the extent of hazard consultation zones, within which proposals for development are subject to advice from the Health and Safety Executive (HSE).

Figure 5.17: Hazard Consultation Zones



Natural Hazards

Coastal Erosion

5.73 The coast of the District is subject to erosion, particularly at Barton on Sea, the remaining cliffs around Christchurch Bay and Hurst Spit, where a permanent breach could cause extensive flooding inland and disrupt the tidal regime of the Solent. Within the Solent, there has been extensive erosion of mudflats and marshes. Coastal monitoring is continuing to assess the scale and rates of coast change and cliff instability. Figure 5.18 shows the Coastal Change Management Area defined in the previous Local Plan between Barton on Sea and Milford-on-Sea. Figure 5.19 shows the area also defined at Barton where there are restrictions on new soak-aways in order to reduce cliff erosion.

Figure 5.18: Coastal Change Management Areas at Milford-on-Sea and Barton on Sea



Figure 5.19: Restrictions on new soak-aways, Barton on Sea

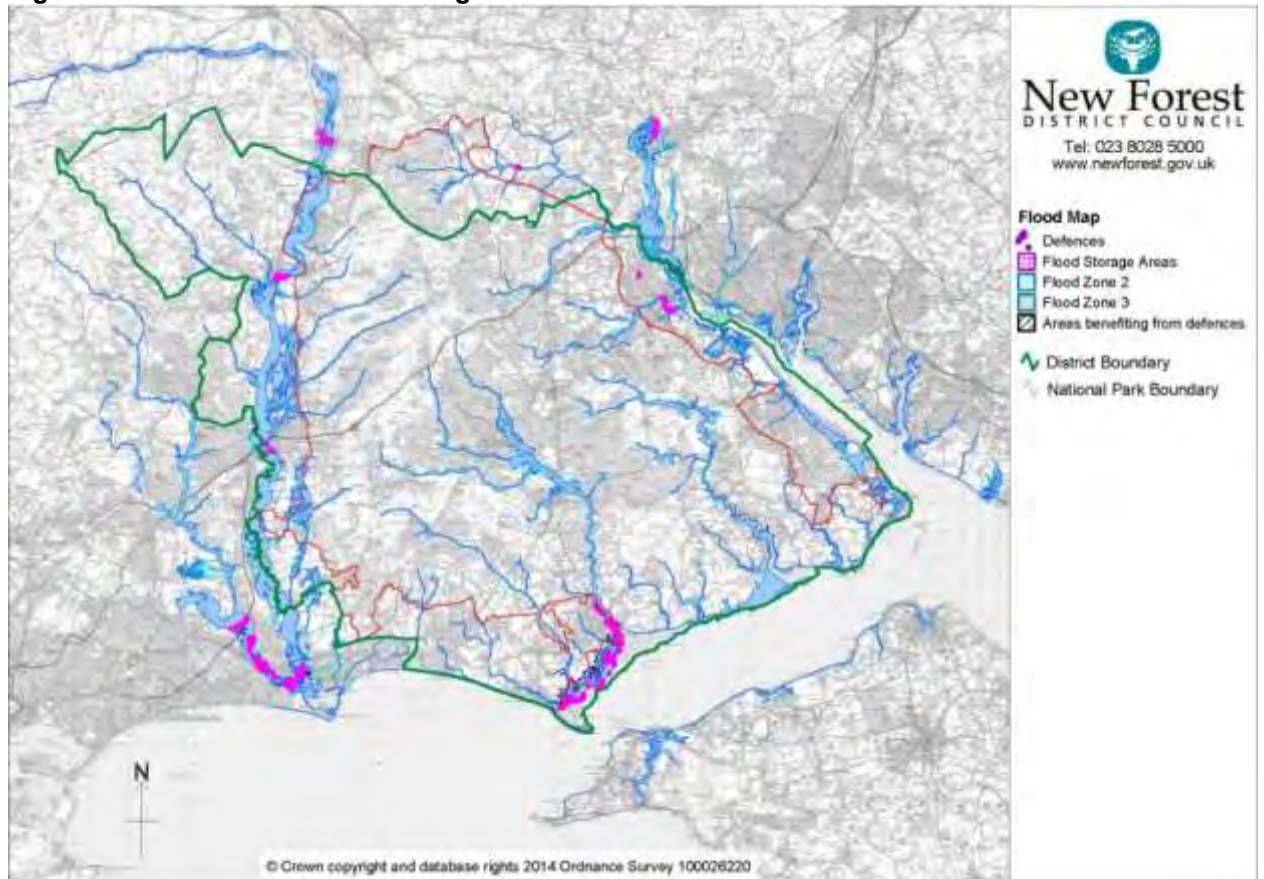
- 5.74 The policy for management of New Forest District Council's coastline is set out by two Shoreline Management Plans, which take a strategic approach to management of the shoreline. The frontage between Hurst Spit and Chewton Bunny is covered in the Poole and Christchurch Bays Shoreline Management Plan. The North Solent Shoreline Management Plan covers the coastal frontage between the River Test/Southampton Water and Hurst Spit. Shoreline Management Plans aim to determine and recommend sustainable coastal defence policy options to reduce flood and erosion risks to people, the developed and natural environments, and to identify habitat mitigation and compensation measures, including potential habitat creation sites. Compensation habitat will be delivered through the Environment Agency's Regional Habitat Creation Programme.
- 5.75 The North Solent SMP seeks to 'Hold the Line' along the Totton and Waterside coastline to Calshot Spit. West of Hurst Spit to the District boundary, the approach of the Poole and Christchurch Bays SMP is to 'Hold the Line' from Hurst Spit to Milford-on-Sea, but the remainder of the coastline to the west of Milford-on-Sea is subject to a combination of 'No Active Intervention' and 'Managed Realignment'. This means that much of the southern coastal strip is vulnerable to erosion.

Flood Risk

- 5.76 Flood risk is an issue around the coast and in the river valleys, affecting a number of settlements and the low-lying coast along the north-west Solent shore and Southampton Water. It is associated with increased rainfall and, in the case of coastal flooding, with storm surges and high tides. The effects of flooding are likely to increase with climate change.

- 5.77 Erosion of saltmarshes is increasing flood risk along the north-west Solent shore and along the coast of Southampton Water, and resulting in the loss of habitats of European and international importance. Natural habitats will also be affected by increased incidents of flooding as a result of climate change. Coastal habitats could be lost due to inundation, particularly where coastal defence measures limit the natural migration of these habitats inland. Coastal protection and flood defence works are subject to environmental and financial constraints and managed retreat/realignment is becoming an increasingly feasible option in some places.
- 5.78 Figure 5.20 shows flood risk areas across the District. Significant parts of the Plan Area, including parts of Totton, Marchwood, Hythe, Lymington, Milford, Ringwood and Fordingbridge, lie in areas at risk from fluvial or coastal flooding. The Strategic Flood Risk Assessment indicates that existing flood defences are already below standard for current flood risks in some areas. A further Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (Level 2) may be required if, following the sequential test, sites within areas at risk of flooding need to be considered for development, particularly if this would bring regeneration benefits. This should assess the levels of risk and the requirements for flood risk infrastructure and mitigation measures needed for potential sites within Flood Zones 2 and 3.

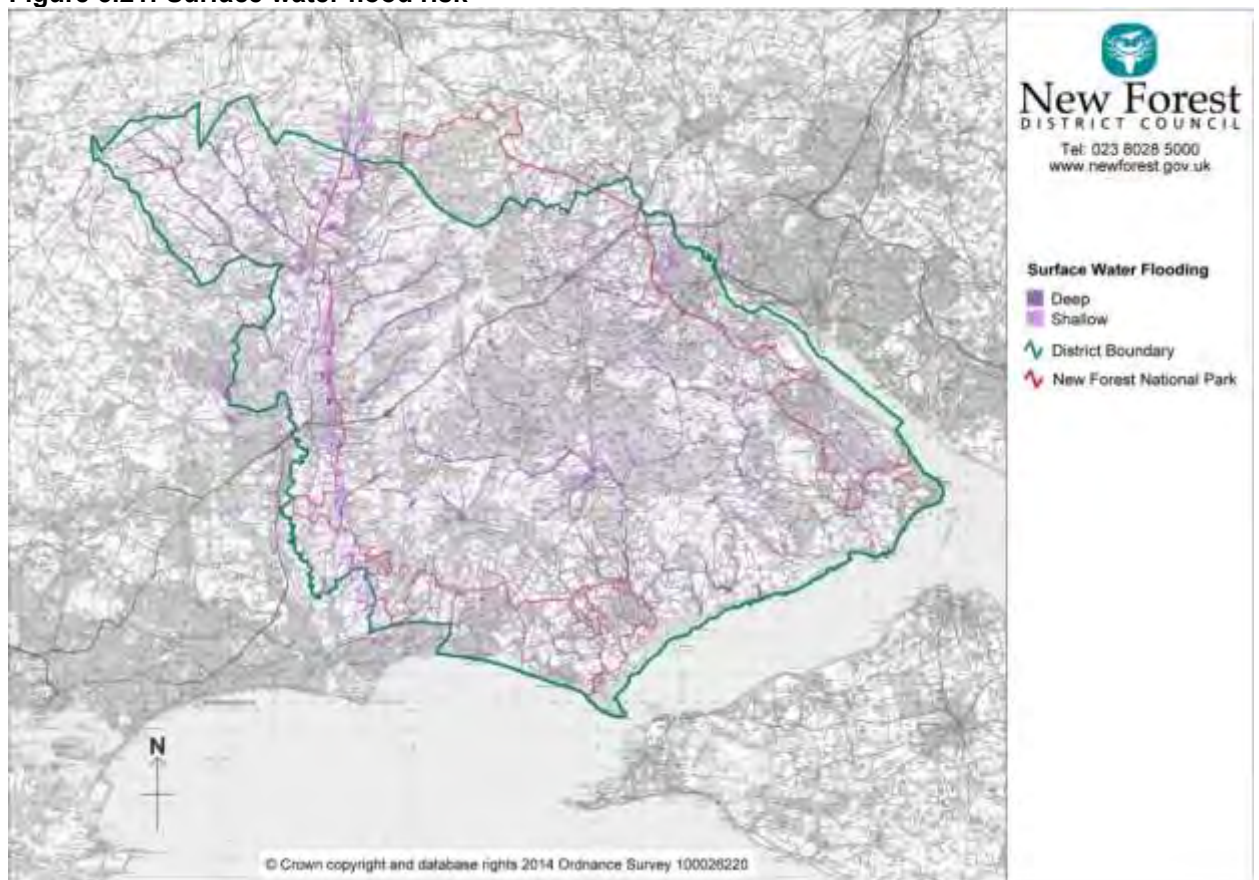
Figure 5.20: Areas at risk of flooding



- 5.79 As a consequence of climate change, significant parts of the Plan Area will be at increased risk from flooding as a result of the rise in sea levels and increased storminess. In considering new locations for development, to minimise future risks, it is important that development is avoided in areas currently at risk from flooding, or likely to be at risk as a result of climate change, or in areas where development is likely to increase flooding elsewhere. The Environment Agency has finalised a model for Southampton Water which will indicate extreme tide levels.

- 5.80 In towns and villages already built in areas at risk from flooding, climate change may increase the risk of flooding. National planning policy provides detailed guidance on development in areas at risk from flooding. While directing new development to areas at least risk from flooding, it recognises that there are circumstances where it can be appropriate for new development to take place in areas where there is a flood risk. This includes new building on previously-developed land within our towns and villages. However, where such development takes place there will be a need to consider minimisation and management of future flood risk.
- 5.81 There is a catchment Flood Management Plan in place for the New Forest which considers all types of inland flooding from rivers, groundwater, surface water and tidal flooding (but not coastal flooding)³¹. The Plan covers the Totton and Waterside and Southern Coastal parts of the Plan Area, but not the Avon Valley and Downlands area. The Management Plan sets policies for managing flood risk in the area. Risks are most significant in Totton, Lymington and Milford on Sea.
- 5.82 The Environment Agency has identified areas of risk from surface water flooding where rainwater does not soak into the ground or drain away through drainage systems, but instead lies on or flows over the ground (Figure 5.21). Significant areas of the Avon Valley are at risk, particularly at Ringwood and Fordingbridge; and parts of the Waterside including Marchwood and Totton. Within these areas there may be concern that development could increase the severity and frequency of flooding unless measures are in place to address the problem.

Figure 5.21: Surface water flood risk



³¹ New Forest Catchment Flood Management Plan 2009

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/293855/New_Forest_Catchment_Flood_Management_Plan.pdf

- 5.83 Groundwater is water that collects or flows beneath the surface of the land, filling the porous spaces in soil, sediment, and rocks and is the source of water for aquifers, springs, and wells. The upper surface of groundwater is known as the water table and this can rise when there is heavy or prolonged rainfall. When a river rises the groundwater in the adjacent land rises and can cause flooding. Groundwater flooding can occur in permeable material such as chalk, or in areas where the rainwater is trapped by a more impervious material such as clay. This can happen in many places in the New Forest. Within the Plan Area, the areas adjoining the chalk downlands in the north-west, Breamore and the Avon Valley can be affected by groundwater flooding.

Minerals and Waste

- 5.84 Hampshire County Council is the Minerals and Waste Planning Authority for the Plan Area. The Hampshire Minerals and Waste Plan provides details of existing and proposed mineral sites³².
- 5.85 The District has extensive sand and gravel deposits, as lower terrace or valley gravel deposits, particularly in the Avon Valley. They also occur as upper terrace or plateau gravels in the New Forest and Ringwood Forest, and adjacent to the south coast and Southampton Water.
- 5.86 There are extensive areas of sand and gravel extraction in the District, at Fawley, Marchwood, Harbridge, Sopley, Milford, and Blashford. New areas are identified at Ringwood Forest, Roeshot (on the District boundary, north of Highcliffe) and south of Hythe. Both the Roeshot and Ringwood Forest minerals areas are proposed to be extended over the border in Dorset as part of the emerging Bournemouth, Dorset and Poole Draft Minerals Plan.
- 5.87 Mineral workings north of Ringwood have produced a change in the character of part of the Avon Valley, creating an area of lakes known as Blashford Lakes. These have developed nature conservation interest, in particular for wild birds, and are also of value for recreational uses. A Blashford Lakes Strategic Management Plan (2006) is in place, which seeks to manage competing interests in the area including water storage, nature conservation and recreational activities.
- 5.88 Figures for 2012/13 show the amount of household waste collected in the District was 327kg per person. This was above the average for Hampshire (including the cities) of 325kg/person, but below the regional and national averages of 386kg/person³³. A total of 29.7% of the waste in the New Forest District is recycled, compared with an average of 38.7% in Hampshire and 40% across the South East³⁴.
- 5.89 There are a number of waste disposal and processing facilities in the area, for example the energy from waste plants (Energy Recovery Facilities) at Marchwood and Fawley, biomass plant at New Milton; and landfill sites at Ringwood Forest³⁵.

³² [Hampshire Minerals and Waste Plan 2013](#)

³³ WasteDataFlow, Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra) <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistical-data-sets/env18-local-authority-collected-waste-annual-results-tables>

³⁴ [LGA performance data 2012/13](#)

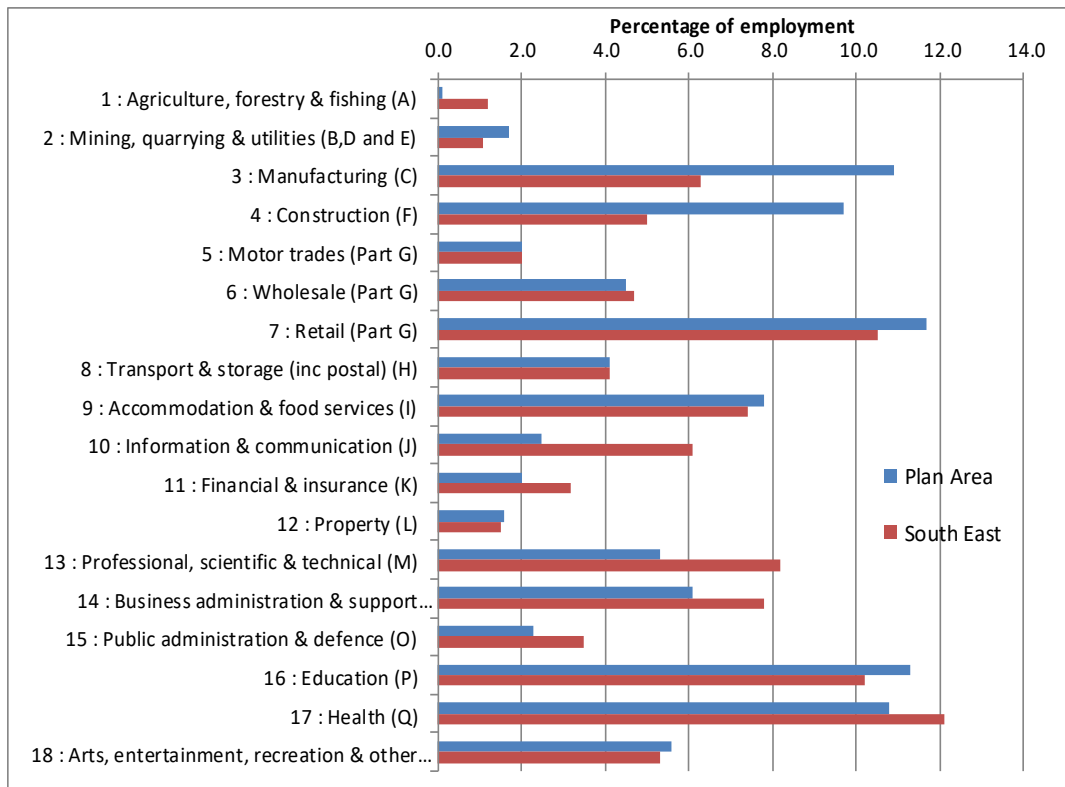
³⁵ Hampshire Minerals and Waste Local Plan 2013.

Economic Characteristics

Employment Sectors

5.90 There are approximately 50,000 employee jobs within the Plan Area. Figure 5.22 shows the breakdown of sectors these jobs fall into. The Plan Area has a much higher proportion of its employment in manufacturing and construction than the South East region. There is also more employment in quarrying and utilities, retail, accommodation and food service, and education. The Plan Area has lower employment in agriculture and forestry, information and communication, professional, scientific and technical, business and public administration, and health.

Figure 5.22: Employment sectors within the Plan Area compared with the South East



Source: Business Register and Employment Survey 2013

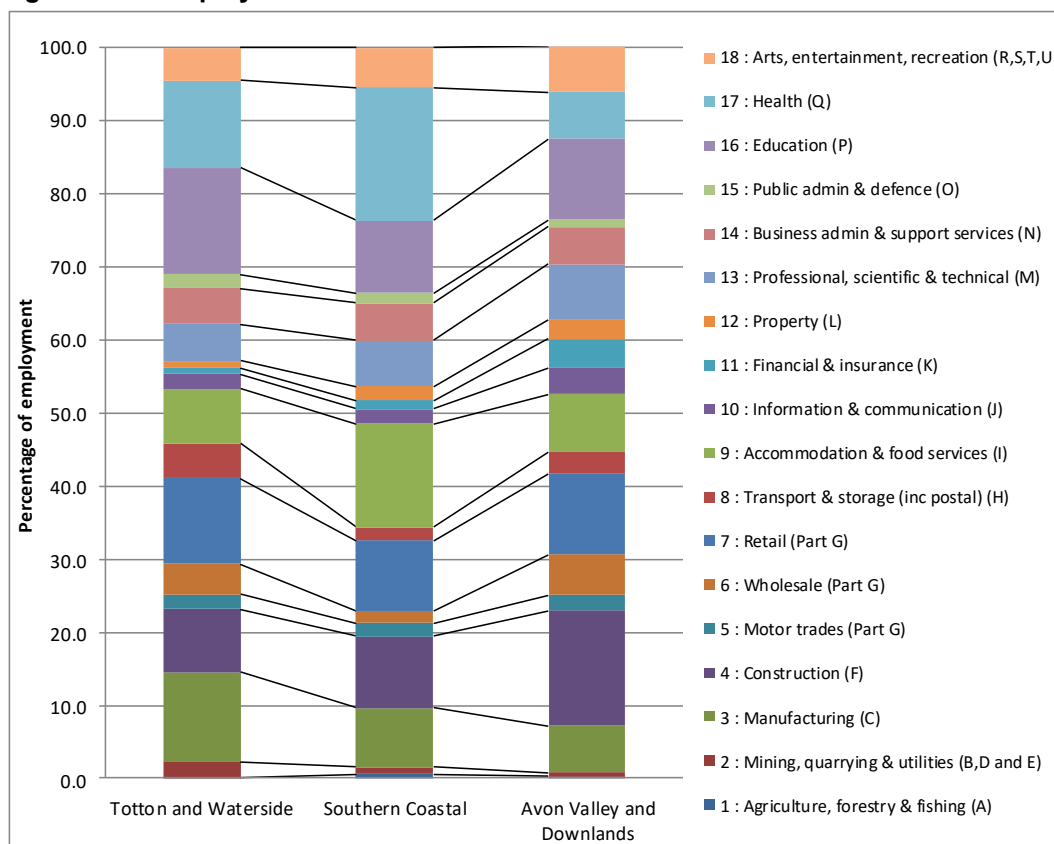
5.91 Figure 5.23 shows the breakdown of employment sectors within the sub-areas. The chart shows a number of key differences between the areas.

5.92 Totton and the Waterside provides around 22,000 employee jobs, with around 14,000 of these being full-time³⁶. This area has relatively high levels of employment in manufacturing and utilities due to the presence of large industrial estates particularly in Totton and Marchwood and significant energy generation at Marchwood and at Fawley Refinery. Employment in transport and storage is also higher in this area and is due to the proximity of the Port of Southampton and the convenience of parts of the area for accessing the strategic road network. The proximity of the Port of Southampton has an influence on demand for and use of employment land in the area. There is significant demand for open storage related to port uses. For example substantial areas of employment sites are in use for container storage and for cruise passenger vehicle parking. However, the fact that this sector only accounts for around 5% of employment indicates that job numbers associated with storage uses can be low. This area also has a high level of employment in education compared with the other sub-areas as a result of

³⁶ Business Register and Employment Survey 2013

the presence of large schools and Totton College serving the relatively younger population in this part of the District.

Figure 5.23: Employment sectors within sub-areas



Source: Business Register and Employment Survey 2013

- 5.93 The Southern Coastal area provides around 16,800 employee jobs, with around 9,800 of these being full-time. The most notable characteristics of this area are the relatively high levels of employment in accommodation, food services and health. The higher percentage of employment in health, which is three-times the level in Avon Valley and Downlands, is likely to follow from the high proportion of elderly residents in this part of the District. The prevalence of accommodation and food services in this area stems from the presence of many hotels, caravan parks and other holiday accommodation.
- 5.94 In the Avon Valley and Downlands there are around 11,700 employee jobs, with around 7,500 of these being full-time. This area has a relatively high level of employment in construction due to the presence of a number of contractors' offices, mainly located in Ringwood. There is also a high proportion, relative to the other sub-areas, of employment in the financial and insurance sector. Bournemouth, in particular, has a concentration of businesses in this sector and so given its proximity to Bournemouth, it is likely that the Avon Valley, in particular Ringwood, is experiencing the effects of 'business clustering' in this sector. The examples of port-related uses in Totton and the Waterside and the financial sector in Ringwood both illustrate that the employment structure of the sub-areas is influenced by the characteristics of the wider economic areas within which they operate.

Tourism

- 5.95 Employment in accommodation and food service reflects the local importance of tourism. The National Park is a major tourist destination. Around 13.5 million visitor days are spent in the Park resulting in an estimated spend of £72 million and around 2,500 jobs supported by visitors³⁷. The coast and historic towns of the Plan Area are also attractive to

³⁷ Tourism and Recreation: Facts and Figures (2007) New Forest National Park Authority

tourists, as is the Cranborne Chase AONB (although less well-known or accessible). The Plan Area provides recreation and tourist facilities, as well as accommodation, facilities and services for visitors to the area. Visitors and holiday-makers also help to support local businesses in the Plan Area’s towns and villages, for example helping to insulate town centres like Lymington and Hythe from some of the adverse economic conditions affecting retailing in the wider economy.

Size of businesses

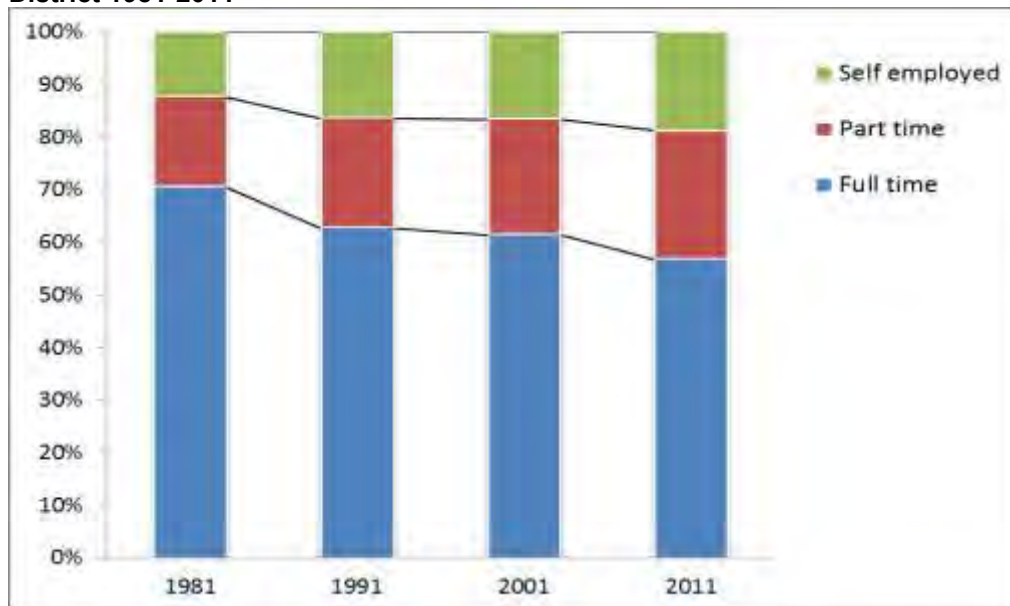
5.96 The District as a whole has a slightly lower representation of larger businesses (employing 250 or more) than the regional or national picture. The vast majority (98%) of businesses in the District are micro (0-9 employees - 88.6%) or small (10-49 employees – 9.3%) in size and there is a high percentage of self-employment (12.5%, compared with 11% for the region and 9.9% nationally)³⁸. At around 7,700, the District has the highest number of active businesses of any local authority in Hampshire³⁹. This provides for a relatively high business density which is an indication of a competitive local economy.

Employment

5.97 The Plan Area has an economic activity rate of 59.6% of the population aged 16+, compared with 65.1% for the South East region and 63.3% nationally⁴⁰. Amongst the 16-64 age range the economic activity rate in the Plan Area is higher (80.4%) than the regional (79.3%) and national (76.8%) rates. The apparent drop off in activity rates in the 65+ age group indicates the popularity of the area as a retirement location; people in this age group come to the area to retire and not to carry on working. National population projections indicate an actual fall in the number of economically active people over the next 20 years despite overall population growth of 15% (see Fig.5.6). This fall in economically active age groups clearly has implications for future employment provision in the Plan Area.

5.98 The nature of employment is changing. Figure 5.24 shows that the representation of part-time and self-employment has grown over the past 40 years. This reflects a national trend, but the proportions of both part-time and self-employment are higher compared with the regional and national picture.

Figure 5.24: Proportion of full-time, part-time and self-employed in New Forest District 1981-2011



³⁸ ONS Annual Population Survey [New Forest District Labour Market Profile](#)

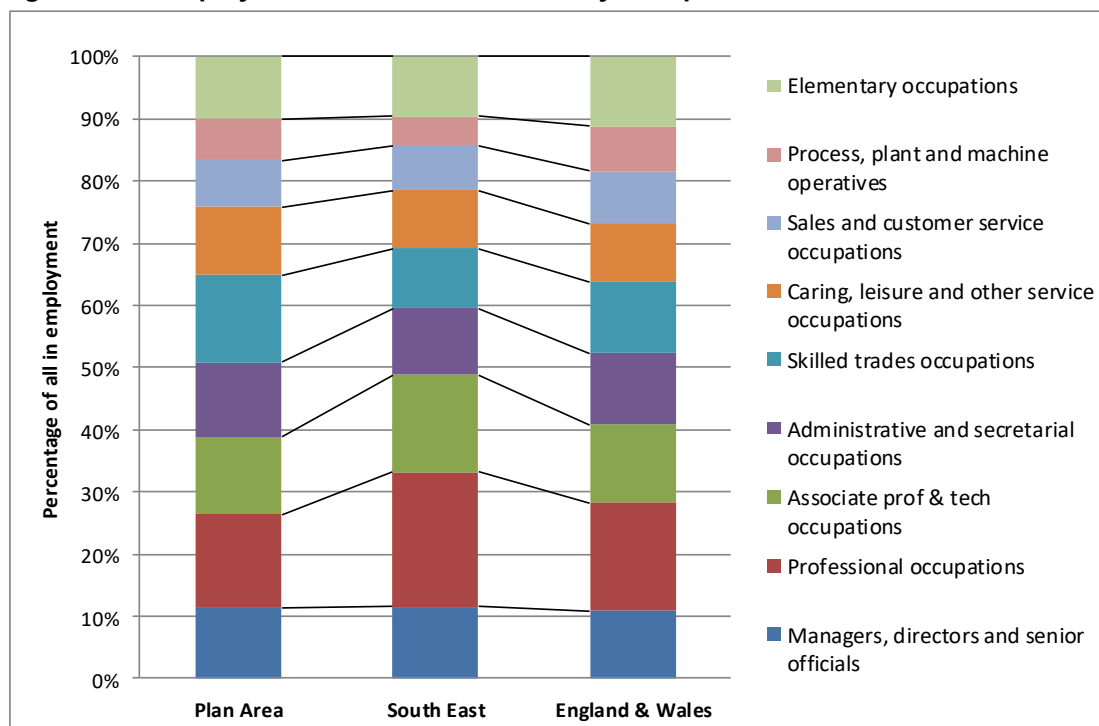
³⁹ ONS Business Geography 2011

⁴⁰ 2011 Census LC6017EW

Source: Census data (whole District)

5.99 Figure 5.25 shows the occupation categories in which residents of the Plan Area work.⁴¹ The most notable differences between the Plan Area, regional and national profiles are the higher proportion of skilled trades and managers, and lower proportion of professional occupations. The higher proportion of skilled trades is likely to be related to the higher levels of self-employment in the area, while the lower percentage of professionals is likely to be influenced by the nature of the area i.e. the lack of a single large centre which might attract professional employment, including office-based businesses or higher education establishments. Other occupations are similar in proportion to the regional and national pictures.

Figure 5.25: Employment of District residents by occupation



Source: 2011 Census

Earnings

5.100 Jobs within New Forest District as a whole are relatively poorly paid. In 2013 they provided an average gross weekly pay of £434.60, below Hampshire and regional averages (see Table 5.8). The incomes of the resident population of the District tend to be higher at an average of £483, but this is still a long way below the Hampshire and regional figures. More than 60% of District residents in work earn less than the average UK wage of £26,500⁴².

Table 5.8: Average gross weekly earnings 2013

Weekly Gross Earnings	New Forest	Hampshire	South East
Workplaces within area	£434.60	£499.50	£514.30
Residents within area	£483.50	£538.50	£557.10

Unemployment and worklessness

5.101 Unemployment is generally lower than the County, regional and national rates, although the rate amongst younger people aged 16-24 has been higher than County rates. The claimant rate for Job Seekers Allowance currently stands around 1% of the resident population aged 16-64. However, there are pockets of higher unemployment in the area,

⁴¹ 2011 Census LC660IEW

⁴² ASHE 2013 (provisional) Table 7 & Table 8 - Place of Work/Place of Residence by Local Authority.

most notably in parts of the Waterside and coastal towns. Table 5.9 sets out details of people claiming all out of work benefits.

5.102 **Table 5.9: Main worklessness measures 2014**

5.103

5.104	Job Seekers Allowance		Employment Support Allowance		Lone Parent		Other		All Main Out of Work Benefits	
	No.	Rate	No.	Rate	No.	Rate	No.	Rate	No.	Rate
New Forest	1,330	1.3	4,290	4.2	790	0.8	240	0.2	6,660	6.6
Hampshire	18,800		48,700	4.3	11,040	1.0	2,950	0.3	81,490	7.2
Great Britain	1,145,410	2.9	2,451,480	6.2	480,080	1.2	138,720	0.3	4,215,690	10.6

Source: HCC, Department for Work and Pensions

5.105 Unemployment and income factors are influential in determining areas suffering deprivation. One ward within the District, Holbury and North Blackfield, falls within the 20% most deprived wards in England under the government’s Indices of Multiple Deprivation (see Social Characteristics section). Some other areas including Pennington, Milton and parts of Totton fall within the 40% of most deprived wards.

Journey to work

5.106 There is a high level of commuting out of New Forest District. In 2011 around 29,800 (46%) residents in employment worked outside the District. The principal destinations of out-commuters were Southampton (30.6%), Bournemouth/Poole and Dorset (24.3%) and Eastleigh (9.1%). London was also a popular destination for out-commuters, making up 4.1% of the total out-commuting. The conurbations on either side of the District are major centres for employment and are commuting destinations for New Forest residents. There were around 22,800 in-commuters. Most in-commuting comes from Bournemouth/Poole and Dorset authorities, Southampton and other Hampshire authorities. Figure 5.26 shows the flows into and out of the District, while Table 5.10 sets out the main destinations and origins of commuters including the percentages of total commuting flows.

Figure 5.26: Commuter-flows diagram

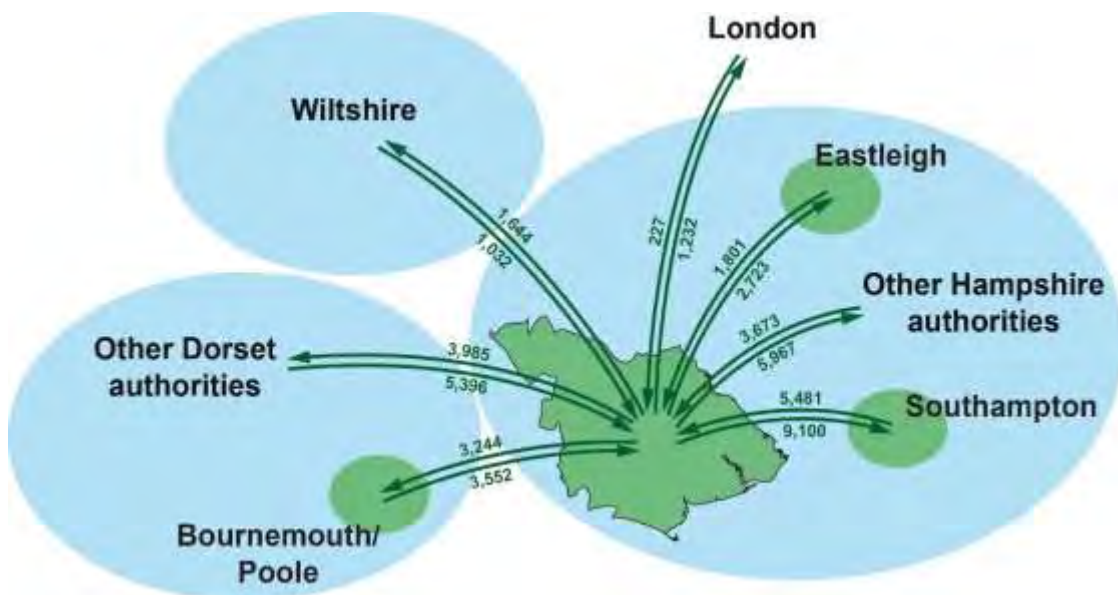
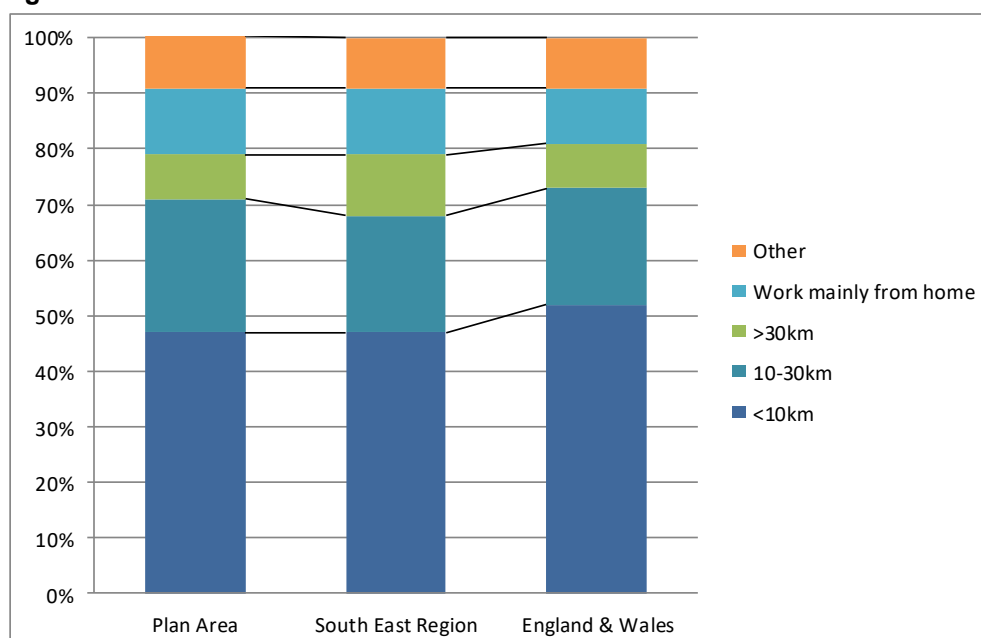


Table 5.10: Travel to work – main commuter flows

Destination	Number of out-commuting residents	Percentage of total out-commuting
Southampton	9,100	30.6
Eastleigh	2,723	9.1
Other Hampshire authorities	5,967	20.0
Bournemouth/Poole	3,244	10.9
Other Dorset authorities	3,985	13.4
Wiltshire	1,644	5.5
London	1,232	4.1
Origin	Number of in-commuters	Percentage of total in-commuting
Southampton	5,481	24.1
Eastleigh	1,801	7.9
Other Hampshire districts	3,673	16.1
Bournemouth/Poole	3,552	15.6
Other Dorset authorities	5,396	23.7
Wiltshire	1,032	4.5
London	227	1.0

Source: 2011 Census

- 5.107 Figure 5.27 shows the distances travelled to work for residents in the Plan Area compared with the South East Region and England and Wales. The same proportion of residents of the Plan Area and the Region travel less than 10km (47%), but the proportion for England and Wales is higher (52%). A higher proportion of residents in the Plan Area (24%) travel 10-30km compared with regional and national figures (both 21%), while the proportion travelling farther than 30km (8%) is less than the region (11%), but the same as the national figure. The relatively short distances travelled by residents of the Plan Area reflect the proximity of major employment centres close to the borders of the District.

Figure 5.27: Distance travelled to work

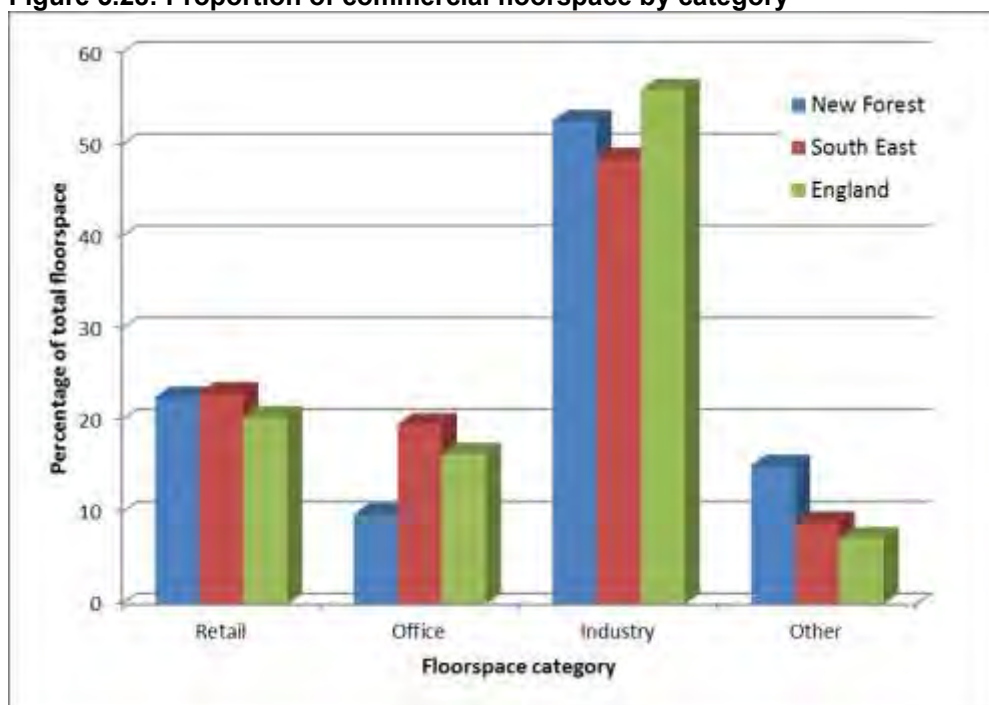
Source 2011 Census LC7102EW

- 5.108 Providing more opportunities for people to work close to where they live is a sustainable response, but in reality this is a complex matter which is influenced by housing choices and affordability. Some increase in the number of jobs close to where people live could be advantageous, although this will need to be balanced against environmental impacts of related development and resulting increased pressures on housing.

Employment sites and premises

- 5.109 In 2012 New Forest District had around 1.2 million square metres of commercial floorspace. Around 23% of this was within retail premises, 10% offices and 53% industrial (excluding floorspace within the oil refinery complex)⁴³. Figure 5.28 shows the proportion of floorspace in different categories. The most notable feature of these figures is the relatively small proportion of offices in the District (9.8%), which is half the proportion for the South East Region (19.6%) and significantly below that for England (16.5%). Office premises in the District tend to be small, serving local markets. The District has a relatively high proportion of floorspace within the 'Other' category. This category includes things which can be large and are quite numerous in the District such as boat yards, guest houses, caravan sites, leisure and activity centres and stables.

Figure 5.28: Proportion of commercial floorspace by category



Source: Valuation Office Agency 2012

- 5.110 Changes to the General Permitted Development Order⁴⁴ which allow the change of use from office use to residential without the need for planning permission has resulted in the loss of office floorspace in the Plan Area. Since the introduction of the change, a majority of the floorspace converted to residential was occupied by businesses at the time, rather than vacant, and some high quality office accommodation has been lost as a result⁴⁵. Employment sites have traditionally come under pressure from residential development which achieves much higher land values. Evidence already suggests that they could have a significant impact upon the supply of commercial premises and put existing businesses under pressure to vacate their premises in the expectation of achieving residential value. While planning policies cannot influence this process, there may be implications for the future provision of employment sites and premises.
- 5.111 There are substantial employment sites in the Waterside part of the District, in Totton and Marchwood in particular, as well as Fawley Refinery which is reserved for petro-chemicals related industries. There are industrial estates in most of the other towns, although Hythe

⁴³ Valuation Office Agency 2012 http://www.voa.gov.uk/corporate/statisticalReleases/120517_CRLFloorspace.html

⁴⁴ Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (Amendment) Order 2013

⁴⁵ [Local Plan Monitoring Report 2014](#)

and Fordingbridge have only small estates within or adjoining them. Table 5.11 below shows land which is available (not currently in use) or allocated for employment development in each of the sub-areas.

Table 5.11 Identified employment land 2014

Economic sub-area	Total employment land identified ⁴⁶
Totton and the Waterside	24.3ha
Lymington and New Milton	14.2ha
Ringwood and Fordingbridge	18.1ha

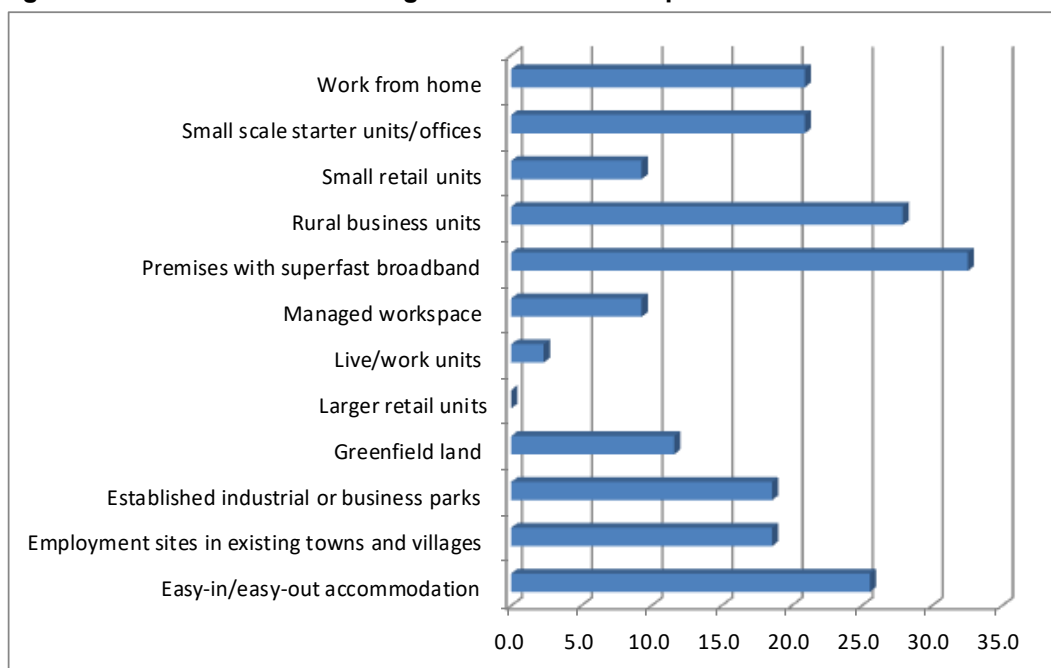
- 5.112 As opportunities to provide new employment allocations are limited, it has been considered important to retain existing employment sites wherever possible, and to explore other options that create jobs, for example re-use/conversion of rural buildings, and enabling/encouraging more working from home, in relation to which the availability of fast broadband is of some significance.

NFDC Business Needs Survey 2014

- 5.113 In early 2014 the District Council and the National Park Authority together undertook a survey of the needs of businesses in the District. The survey asked about business confidence and planning-related matters such as satisfaction with premises and future floorspace requirements. It is estimated that the survey reached around 5,000 of the more than 8,000 businesses in the area. A total of 157 responses were received. This is a small sample (2-3%) and therefore results should be treated with caution. Most responses were received from service trades, retail, food service and accommodation businesses which accounted for around 55% of respondents. Around 50% of respondents indicated that their business was based from their home.
- 5.114 In response to questions regarding the quality of premises, there was a high rate of apparent satisfaction with premises, with 90% of respondents stating that their location was excellent, good, or satisfactory and a similar proportion stating that their premises were of top or good specification. Around 70% of respondents had been operating from the same location for more than five years, with nearly 50% having been in that location for more than 10 years, again demonstrating a level of satisfaction with existing premises.
- 5.115 In response to questions regarding the need for new premises, more than 40% of respondents expected their space requirements to change over the next five years with more than three-quarters of these expecting to need more space. About one third of those requiring more space felt they could expand on their existing site. When asked about what characteristics were being sought in new premises⁴⁷, the most popular requests were sites with superfast broadband (33%), rural business units (28%) and easy-in/easy-out accommodation (26%). Figure 5.29 shows the responses.

⁴⁶ Source HCC/NFDC monitoring. Includes sites with planning permission and allocations in the Local Plan Part 2. Excludes sites identified for specific businesses and land at Fawley Refinery which are not available for general business development.

⁴⁷ Respondents could make multiple choices. Based on 43 responses.

Figure 5.29: Characteristics sought in new sites and premises

Source: New Forest Business Needs Survey 2014

Enterprise M3 Commercial Property Market Study

- 5.116 Enterprise M3 has commissioned a property market study which looks at the availability, type and demand for commercial property in the area, also what the key opportunities and challenges are and how these can be addressed. The study identifies that there is low current demand for office space in the District (outside Solent LEP area) and loss of existing offices under Permitted Development is an issue. There may be a case for public intervention to secure investment in, for example, managed workspace for small and medium enterprises in order to avoid deterioration of the local economy. Investment in broadband infrastructure would also assist in supporting business and promoting the ICT and digital sectors which are under-represented in the District (relative to other M3 LEP market areas).

Town Centres and Retailing

- 5.117 The Plan Area contains six town centres and numerous village and local centres. Table 5.12 sets out the retail floorspace within the town centres⁴⁸.

Table 5.12: Retail floorspace within town centres

Town Centre	Retail Floorspace (m ²)
Totton	32,600
Hythe	11,350
Lymington	32,900
New Milton	29,400
Ringwood	33,950
Fordingbridge	9,650

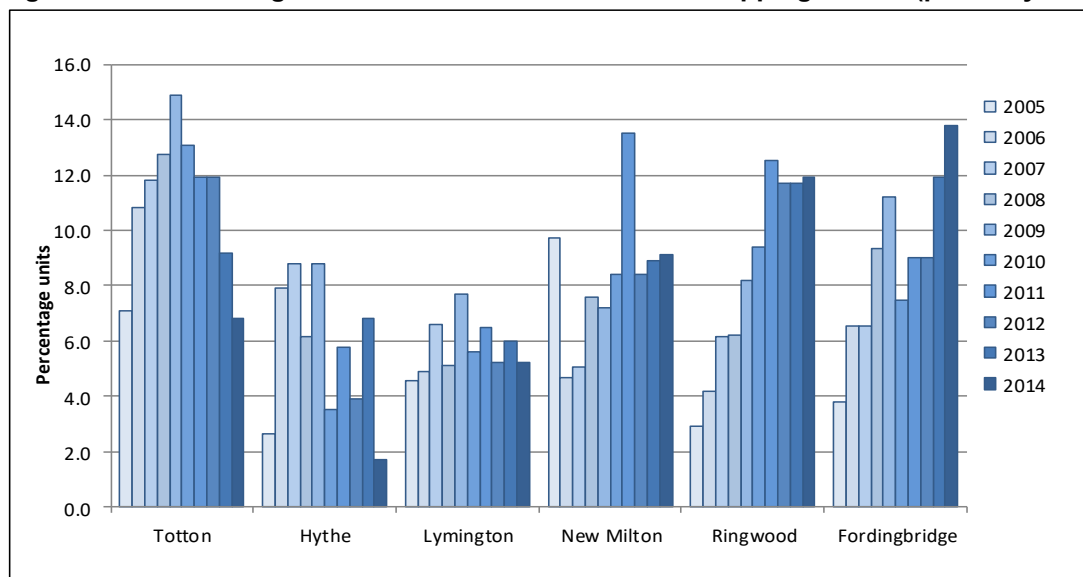
Source: Valuation Office Agency data (2010 listing)

- 5.118 Within the town centres of Totton, Hythe, Lymington, New Milton, Ringwood and Fordingbridge the number of vacant units has increased over the past ten years from around 4% of units in 2004 to around 9% in 2013. Conditions for retailing generally have

⁴⁸ Includes shops, retail warehouses, supermarkets, banks and building societies, cafes and restaurants within the defined town centre boundaries

been challenging following the recession, but local vacancy rates have consistently been lower than national trends would suggest. In fact, vacancy rates can fluctuate significantly and this may be due to other factors such as the timing of lease renewals. Figure 5.30 shows vacancy levels over the period. Centres such as New Milton, Ringwood and Fordingbridge show a marked trend towards higher vacancy levels whereas this is less obvious in Totton and Lymington.

Figure 5.30: Percentage of vacant units in town centre shopping streets (past 10 years)



Source: NFDC monitoring

- 5.119 Planning policies have sought to retain a minimum percentage of A1 retail uses within the defined primary shopping areas. For the town centres, this level has been set at 70% of the shopping frontage. All of the towns, except Ringwood, are now below this level as alternative uses have been permitted. Generally, this has been where non-retail uses have demonstrated that they would complement the shopping function and support the vitality of the centre, but there may also have been other factors taken into account such as the prolonged vacancy of a particular unit. Often, cafes, restaurants and bars have been permitted, because they help support the shopping function and can extend trading and activity into the evening. These uses also make centres more attractive to visitors.
- 5.120 Town centre activity may be becoming more leisure-oriented, with people choosing to meet, eat and drink, rather than shop. The rise of online retailing is also likely to be affecting the viability of traditional high street shops, although this is difficult to quantify.
- 5.121 Changes to national planning controls, which remove the need for planning permission for the change of use between different town centre uses, recognise the changing roles and character of town centres.

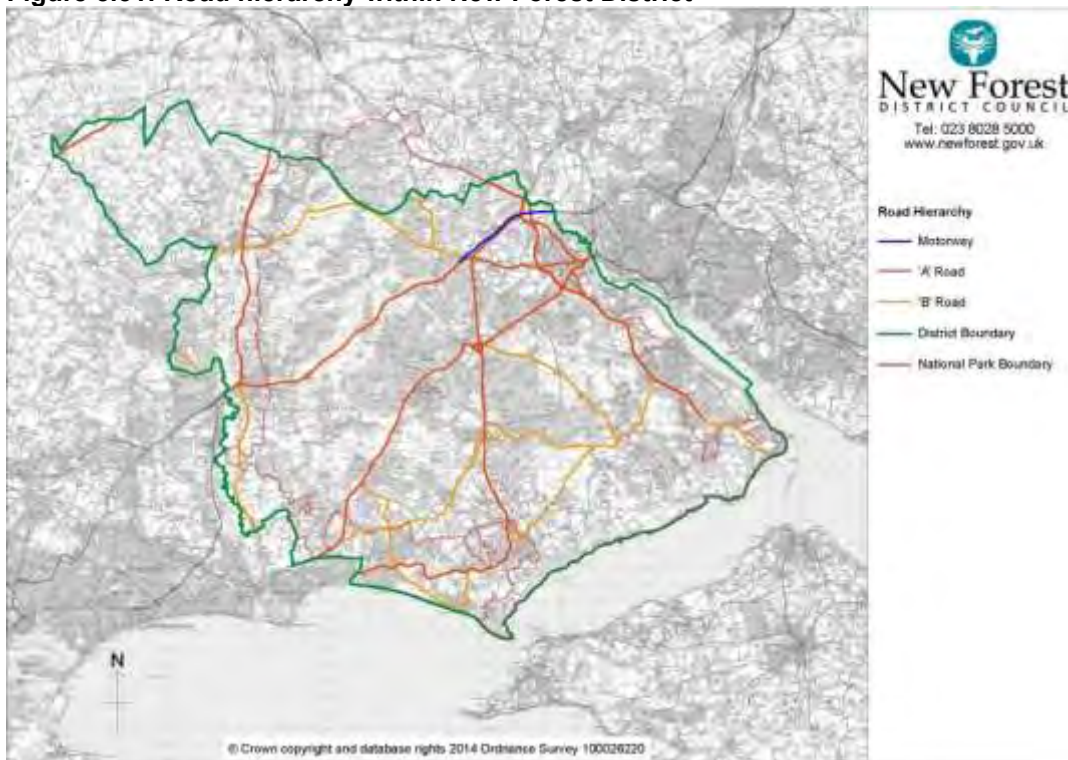
Transport and accessibility

- 5.122 For most employment uses accessibility to services and the highway network is of key importance. There are no employment sites in the Plan Area with direct access to the A31/M27, and few with easy access to the other strategic highway routes. Parts of the Plan Area are well served by road and public transport. For example, Totton and Ringwood have good links to the strategic road network, and may be attractive to wider sub-regional business investment. However, in general, demand in most of the Plan Area tends to be local and low-scale. Totton and New Milton are reasonably well served by rail services and there is a branch line service to Lymington. There is also a freight line extending to the Fawley Refinery complex, which has the potential to provide passenger services, subject to funding. There is also a passenger ferry at Hythe, sailing to

Southampton. Supporting the viability of existing services and the scope to provide new services will need to be reviewed in the context of development opportunities in these areas.

- 5.123 Figure 5.31 shows the hierarchy of roads within the district. Trunk routes include the A31/M27 which runs east-west across the district; the A338 north of Ringwood to Salisbury; the A36 north of Totton to Salisbury; and the A326 west of Totton. The Waterside and southern coastal settlements are served by the A326, A35 and A337. The A326 in particular is subject to peak time congestion due to high commuting flows between the Waterside towns and Southampton. There are also heavy traffic flows on the A31 and A35, which are the main east-west routes across the District linking the conurbations, and on the A337 between the southern coastal towns and Christchurch. The southern coastal towns and settlements are some distance from the higher order road network; some routes (e.g. Hythe to Lymington via Beaulieu) are unfenced forest roads where there can be conflict with livestock.

5.124 **Figure 5.31: Road hierarchy within New Forest District**



- 5.125 The New Forest Transport Statement⁴⁹ was approved in 2013 and sets out the transport challenges facing the area. These are set out below.

5.126

- Maintaining the existing highway network and improving its resilience to the effects of extreme weather events.
- Congestion on inter-urban road corridors, including motorways and trunk roads, and in some town and village centres.
- Mitigation of the transport impacts on both strategic and local networks, arising from planned housing growth, including growth in surrounding urban areas.
- Minimising the adverse impacts of traffic on the quality of life of rural communities and market towns through speed management and HGV routing.
- Protecting the rural areas on the fringes of planned major development areas.
- Managing transport and infrastructure impacts within the New Forest National Park.

⁴⁹ [NFDC Transport Statement December 2013](#)

- Improving accessibility for people without access to a car, including walking and cycling, while recognising that the car is likely to remain the main mode of travel for many people in rural areas.
- Ensuring that routes are managed to properly reflect their rural setting.
- Maximising the role of Community Transport in meeting local access needs.
- Ensuring that the transport network supports and enables economic growth and contributes towards efforts by the Enterprise M3 Local Enterprise Partnership to create jobs and improve economic competitiveness.
- Supporting the rural economy.

5.127 The Statement also establishes objectives and delivery priorities to guide proposals and transport funding and improvements. The Statement is accompanied by a Schedule of Transport Improvements which is reviewed on a regular basis.

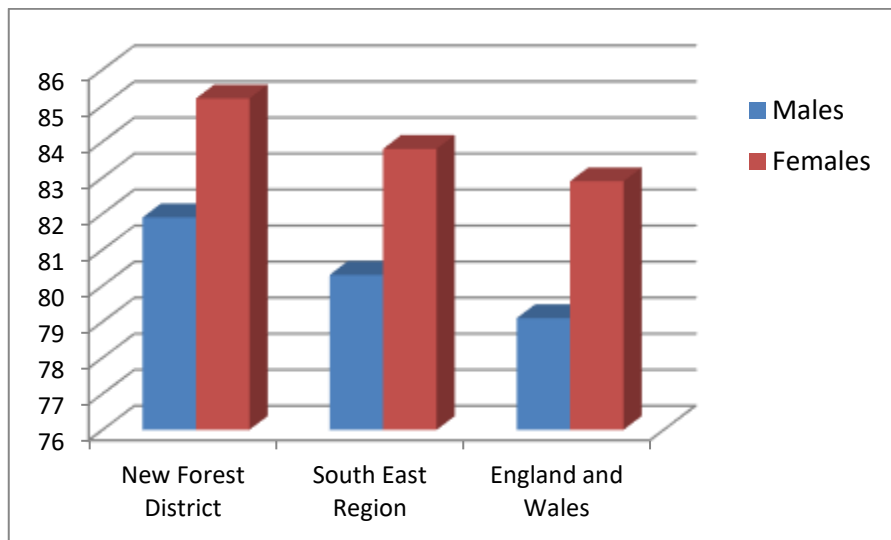
5.128 The Highway Authority has advised on the need for evidence setting out the baseline conditions for transport as it relates to the Local Plan and for transport assessment evidence relating to proposed development allocations.

Social Characteristics

Health and Wellbeing

- 5.129 Life expectancy for both males, at 81.9, and females, at 85.2 years, is higher than the regional and national figures. Figure 5.32 shows life expectancy at birth for males and females. The 2011 Census established that 95.1% of the District's population considered that their health was fair, good or very good, but 19.3% stated that their day to day activities were limited a little or a lot because of health problems. 11.7% of the population provide some level of unpaid care. This was higher than the regional (9.8%) and national (10.3%) percentages and is likely to follow from the high proportion of older age groups.

Figure 5.32: Life Expectancy at Birth (years) 2010-2012



Source: Office for National Statistics

Cemetery provision

- 5.130 Forecasts indicate that some additional cemetery provision will be required during the plan period. There is an urgent requirement to replace the cemetery at Blackfield, which is nearly full. A suitable replacement has been identified at Calshot which is expected to open in 2016. Additional provision is forecast to be needed for cremated remains at Eling and for burial plots at Lyminster in the mid-2020s and for additional burial plots at Eling and cremated remains at Lyminster by the end of the plan period.

Sport and Recreation

- 5.131 The main towns accommodate the major indoor recreation facilities that serve the needs of the District's residents. The Council operates recreation centres at Totton, Hythe, Lyminster, New Milton and Ringwood. Most towns also offer formal and informal open space for public recreation; however, it is not evenly distributed and not all parts of the built-up areas have good access to such spaces.

Education and skills

Early years education and childcare

- 5.132 Childcare services offer opportunities for families to enter the labour market and improve household incomes. Children aged three and four (and some two year old children – subject to low income or benefit criteria) are eligible for free early years education for 570 hours per annum (increasing to 1,140 hours from 2017). Provision is made through a mix of day nurseries, pre-schools and child-minders. There are currently 154 such businesses

in the district employing around 700 people⁵⁰. There are indications of unmet demand for early years education within the Plan Area with a lack of suitable sites and premises. There are opportunities to share facilities, for example community halls with outdoor space are often used for childcare provision.

School Places

- 5.133 Hampshire County Council's School Place Planning Framework 2013-18⁵¹ provides forecasts for the capacity of schools in the area based on changes in the number and size of households. In general, there is high demand for places within primary schools as recent high birth rates feed through to the school population. Pupil numbers in secondary education have generally been falling, but spare capacity in this sector will be taken up as the increases in the primary sector feed through. Table 5.13 sets out the capacity forecasts at 2018 for the various parts of the District.

Table 5.13: Forecast schools capacity 2018

Schools Planning Area	Forecast places	2018 forecast surplus/shortfall	2018 intake year surplus/shortfall
Totton Primary	3,246	11%	9%
Hythe & Dibden Primary (includes south Waterside primaries)	3,306	7%	14%
Lymington Primary	1,993	1%	4%
New Milton Primary	1,626	1%	10%
Ringwood Primary	1,735	-8%	-6%
Fordingbridge Primary	952	-2%	-19%
Totton Secondary (includes the Waterside secondaries)	5580	29%	23%
Ringwood Secondary (includes Fordingbridge, Lymington & New Milton secondaries)	5,321	22%	1%

- 5.134 The figures show there are forecast capacity shortfalls in the primary sector at Ringwood and Fordingbridge in particular. Forecasts are based on existing planned levels of development provided for in the Local Plan Part 2 (2014). Capacity will need to be reassessed as part the Local Plan Review, based on the locational strategy and levels of development proposed by the plan. Where necessary, new provision will need to be made in line with the delivery of new housing.

Qualifications and skills

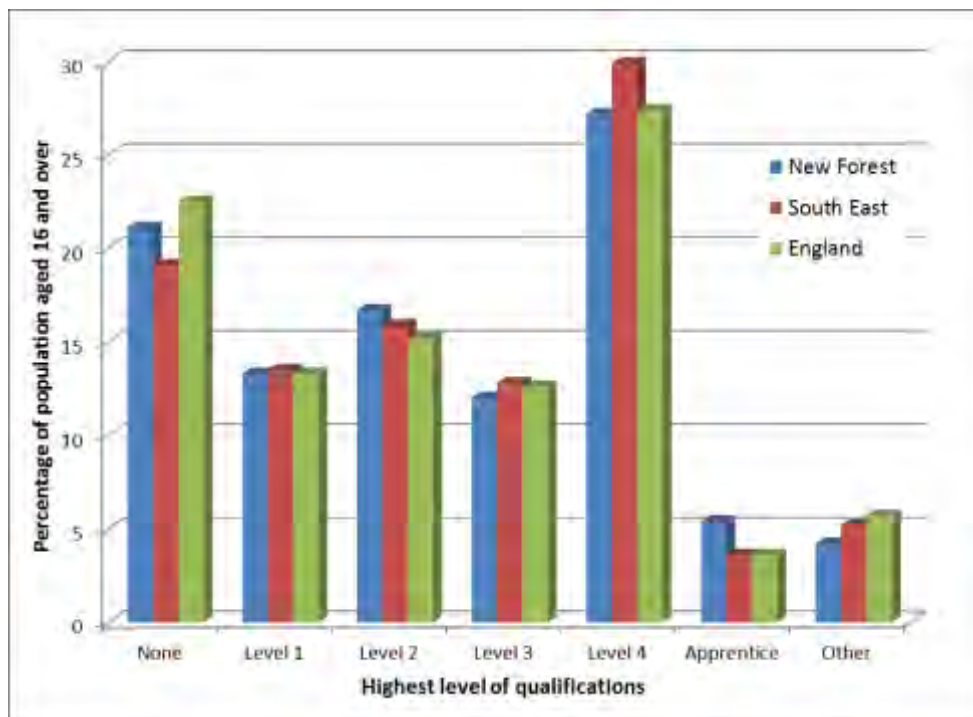
- 5.135 Figure 4.33 shows the highest levels of qualifications attained by residents of New Forest District, compared with the South East region and England, using the levels defined in Table 5.14 below.

Table 5.14: Qualification levels

No qualifications	No formal qualifications held
Level 1 equivalent	Fewer than 5 GCSEs at grades A-C, foundation GNVQ, NVQ 1, or equivalent
Level 2 equivalent	5 or more GCSEs at grades A-C, intermediate GNVQ, NVQ 2, or equivalent
Level 3 equivalent	2 or more A levels, advanced GNVQ, NVQ 3, or equivalent
Level 4 equivalent and above	HND, Degree and Higher Degree level qualifications or equivalent

⁵⁰ Hampshire County Council Services for Young Children (2014/15)

⁵¹ <http://www3.hants.gov.uk/education/schools/school-places>

Figure 5.33: Highest level of qualification

Source: 2011 Census (Table DC5102EW)

- 5.137 The District has a slightly higher percentage of its residents with no qualifications than the region. This can be explained by the higher proportion of older residents who tend to have fewer formal qualifications having finished education at an earlier age (those aged 65 or over account for 62% of the people with no qualifications in the District compared with 51% for the South East Region). However, the District percentage is lower than the national percentage. The District has a comparatively higher percentage of its residents qualified to Level 2 than either the region or nation, but comparatively lower percentages of residents with qualifications higher than this. The District has a significantly higher percentage of residents in apprenticeships than regional or national levels, which could relate to the higher levels of employment in manufacturing and construction sectors.

Deprivation and Social Exclusion

- 5.138 The English Indices of Deprivation 2010 use 38 separate indicators, organised across seven distinct domains of deprivation which can be combined, using appropriate weights, to calculate the Index of Multiple Deprivation 2010 (IMD 2010). This is an overall measure of multiple deprivation experienced by people living in an area. The domains are: Income, Employment, Health and Disability, Education Skills and Training, Barriers to Housing and Other Services, Crime and Living Environment.
- 5.139 Overall, New Forest District ranks 264 out of 326 local authorities in England (where the rank of 1 represents the most deprived). There is no threshold for determining whether an area is deprived or not deprived, but areas falling within the 20% most deprived can be considered to indicate a notable level of relative disadvantage. Holbury and North Blackfield ward within the Plan Area falls within the 20% most deprived wards in England. Other areas where the Indices of Multiple Deprivation indicate a level of relative disadvantage on one or more of the domains can be found include parts of Totton, Pennington and Milton.
- 5.140 There is a high level of car ownership in the District, but a significant number of households (10,250 - 13%) do not have access to a car. This can put households at a disadvantage in terms of access to facilities and employment. These are the households

most likely to be affected by reductions in public transport provision and the closure of local services.

Fuel Poverty

- 5.141 A household is considered fuel poor if it needs to spend more than 10% of its income on fuel to maintain an adequate level of warmth in the home. Although the emphasis is on heating in the home, fuel costs are based on total household fuel consumption and also include cooking, hot water, lighting and appliance usage⁵². The fuel poverty ratio is defined as:

$$\frac{\text{Fuel costs (usage x price)}}{\text{Income}}$$

- 5.142 The data indicates that in 2012 6.6% of households in the District were fuel poor. This was below the South East regional figure of 7.8% and the figure for England which was 10.4%. Table 5.15 provides data for the different parts of the Plan Area.

Table 5.15: Fuel poverty by Sub-Area

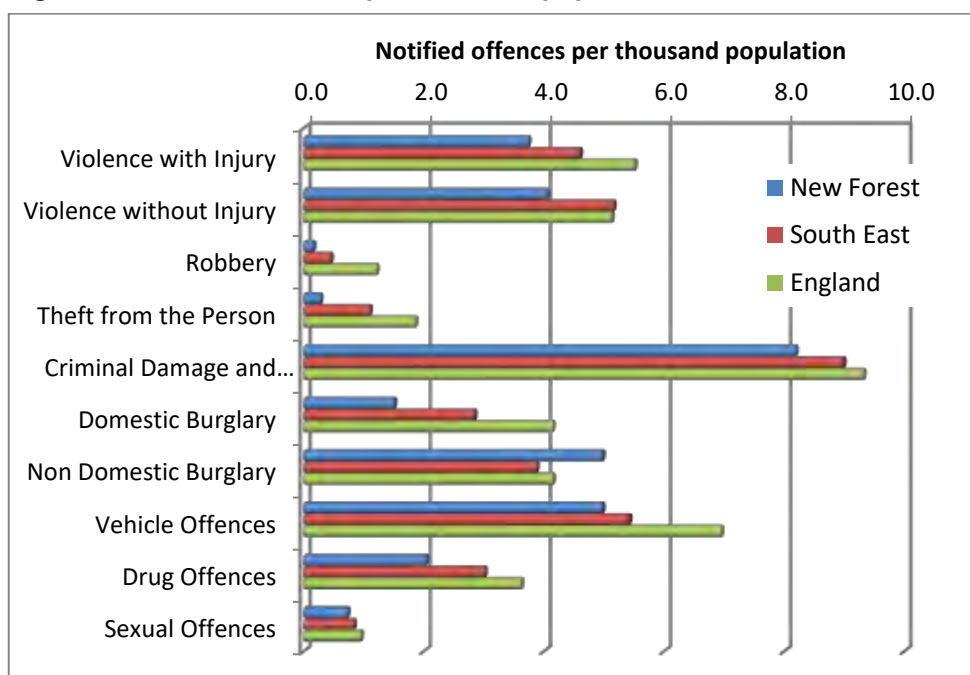
Sub-Area	Fuel Poor Households	Percentage of Households	Range for LSOAs within Sub-Areas
Totton and the Waterside	1,639	5.5%	2.4% – 10.4%
Southern Coastal Area	1,413	5.8%	3.8% – 9.1%
Avon Valley and Downlands	845	7.4%	5.1% – 14.0%

- 5.143 Although fuel poverty rates within the Plan Area are relatively low, there is considerable variation between different Lower Super Output Areas (LSOAs) within the Sub-Areas. For example, Totton and the Waterside contains areas with both the lowest and some of the highest rates within it. Avon Valley and Downlands has the highest overall rate and contains some LSOAs with the highest fuel poverty rates in the Plan Area. These include the Downland villages, as well as the Sopley and Ibsley areas. Other areas with relatively high rates include Netley View (south Hythe) and west Pennington. Factors such as low household incomes, less well insulated housing stock, and reliance on more expensive forms of fuel such as oil are likely to be important in influencing these rates.

Crime

- 5.144 Overall, reported crime levels in the District are below the regional and national levels (see Figure 5.34). The only exception to this was non-domestic burglary which was higher. This concerns theft other than from a dwelling.

⁵² Department of Energy and Climate Change 2012 data [Fuel Poverty Statistics](#)

Figure 5.34: Notified crimes per thousand population 2012-13

Source: Home Office; Communities and Local Government

Housing

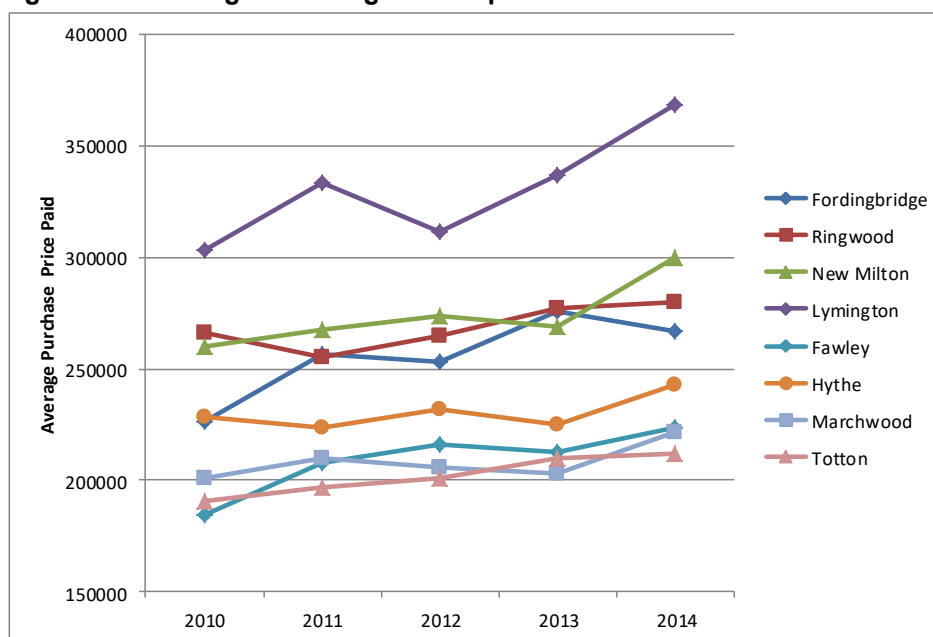
House prices and affordability

5.145 House prices in the District are high. The average price of a property, at £315,800, is considerably more expensive than the county (£221,900) and regional (£229,200) averages⁵³. Table 5.16 sets out the average house prices paid in 2014 in the Plan Area's main settlements and Figure 5.35 shows the change in average prices over the past five years.

Table 5.16: Average property price in main settlements 2014

Town or Village	Average property price
Totton	£212,200
Marchwood	£221,400
Hythe & Dibden	£242,900
Fawley, Blackfield, Holbury, Hardley	£223,800
Lymington & Pennington	£368,900
New Milton & Barton on Sea	£300,100
Ringwood	£280,200
Fordingbridge & Sandleheath	£266,900

⁵³ HM Land Registry House Price Data for 2014. Average price paid for all property transactions January to December 2014.

Figure 5.35: Change in average house prices in main settlements 2010-2014

- 5.146 Analysis of house prices compared with earnings shows that housing affordability is consistently worse in the District compared with County and regional averages. To be able to afford a home, within the lowest quarter of prices, a household earning within the lowest quarter of salaries in the area would need to borrow nearly 10 times its income⁵⁴.

Housing waiting list

- 5.147 The Council's Homeseach Register is a preference-based waiting list and allocation scheme for housing in the District⁵⁵. Most vacancies in council housing or housing association properties are allocated from the Register according to the priority awarded to the applicant, and the length of time on the Register. Table 5.17 shows the number of households currently on the Register and the house types (number of bedrooms) being sought.

Table 5.17: Households on Homeseach Register seeking accommodation

Parish	1-bed	2-bed	3-bed	4-bed
Totton and Eling	547	304	158	31
Marchwood	491	267	136	24
Hythe and Dibden	560	310	166	25
Fawley	270	129	81	13
Lymington and Pennington	765	346	181	24
Milford-on-Sea	54	25	16	3
Hordle	48	36	19	2
New Milton	756	310	164	28
Bransgore	36	30	10	2
Sopley	3	4	1	0
Ringwood	501	212	114	28
Fordingbridge	359	128	71	18
Sandleheath	3	3	3	1
Damerham	9	2	6	0
Martin	8	4	3	0
Rockbourne	8	4	1	0

⁵⁴ New Forest Housing Market Assessment 2014, GL Hearn

⁵⁵ Preferences can be expressed for more than one bed type and for more than one parish so data should not be summed.

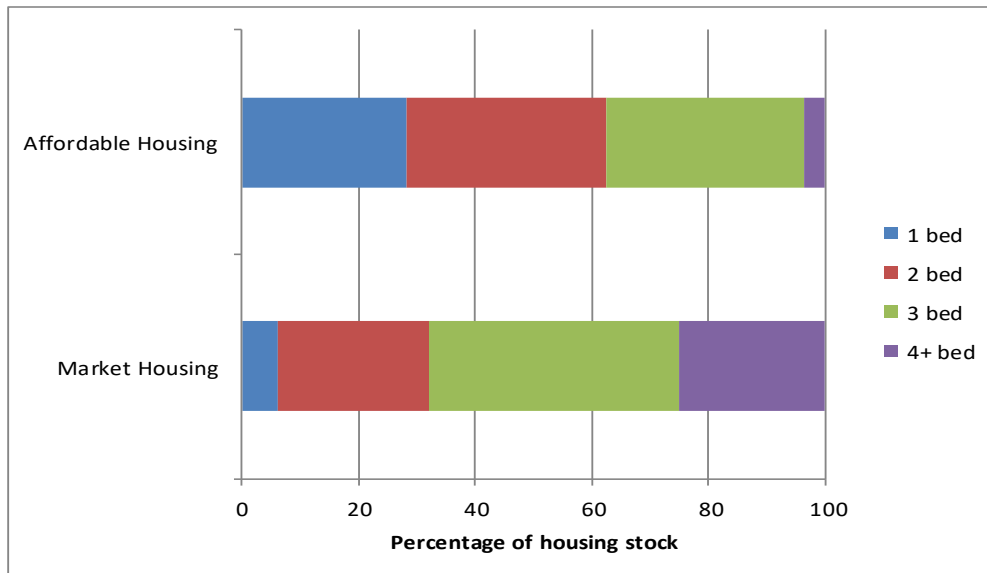
Whitsbury	17	0	1	0
Breamore	8	6	2	0

5.148 In October 2014 there were 343 households in temporary accommodation in the District which is consistent with the average over the past five years. In January 2015 there were around 8,300 households in receipt of Housing Benefit in the District as a whole. Around 5,200 were local authority or housing association tenants and 3,100 were tenants within the private sector⁵⁶.

Size of housing stock

5.149 Figure 5.36 shows the estimated sizes of the housing stock⁵⁷. There is a much higher proportion of smaller dwellings in the affordable sector and a much higher proportion of larger house types in the private sector. Smaller 1 and 2-bed dwellings make up around one third of housing in the District. Falling household size, down-sizing of older households, financial factors such as the ‘bedroom tax’, restricted mortgage availability and high local house prices are all likely to increase demand for smaller dwellings. New provision of smaller dwellings can be encouraged, but most needs will be met within the existing dwelling stock rather than through new build.

Figure 5.36: Profile of dwellings by number of bedrooms (whole District)



Source: Estimated from 2011 Census data

Elderly persons housing

5.150 The 2011 Census showed that more than 30% of all households in the District consisted entirely of people aged 65 and over, much higher than the regional (22%) and national (21%) percentages⁵⁸. As this group is set to grow, this will have implications for the type of future housing provision in the District. Pensioner households tend to under-occupy their housing with a high proportion (54%) of pensioner households having at least two more bedrooms than are required to accommodate the household. This would suggest that provision of smaller dwellings suitable for accommodating older people would facilitate the process of downsizing and freeing up larger family-sized accommodation which is currently under-occupied.

5.151 One further implication of the increase in older age households is that a significantly higher percentage of single pensioner households tend to occupy social rented

⁵⁶ NFDC Welfare and Benefits and [number of housing benefit claimants and average weekly spare room subsidy amount withdrawal](#)

⁵⁷ The Census asks a question regarding the number of rooms. The number of bedrooms has been derived from this data.

⁵⁸ 2011 Census QS113EW

accommodation (13.4%) compared with households with two or more pensioners (4.4%). This could indicate a growing demand for housing suitable for occupation by older people within the social rented sector.

- 5.152 As the population ages and the number of very elderly people increases there is likely to be increased demand for elderly residential care and nursing care. Table 5.18 shows the number of care homes and care home places in the Plan Area⁵⁹. There were 61 care homes providing around 1,500 places. Around half of these places provide, or are able to provide, nursing care. The majority of provision (63%) is to be found in the southern coastal area of the District with more than 40% located in New Milton and Barton on Sea.

Table 5.18: Care Home Provision in the Plan Area

Location	Care Home Establishments	Care Home Places
Totton	8	208
Marchwood	2	19
Hythe and Dibden	2	79
Hardley, Holbury, Fawley, Blackfield	2	13
Lymington and Pennington	8	242
Milford-on-Sea	2	56
Hordle and Everton	3	17
New Milton and Barton on Sea	26	641
Ringwood	5	114
Fordingbridge	3	131
Total	81	1,520

- 5.153 Hampshire County Council's Adult Social Care Services is focused on the provision of extra-care accommodation which enables the elderly to remain independent for as long as possible. The aim is to provide 25 places in extra-care per 1,000 residents aged 75+. This would result in a need for around 1,100 places by 2037 in the District as a whole. Current provision is around 230 places.

⁵⁹ Hampshire County Council, Sept 2014

6. Sustainability Appraisal Framework

- 6.1 The SA framework is presented in **Table 6.1** below (this framework supersedes that shown in Table 2.3 of the 2015 SA Scoping Report). **Appendix 2** sets out the detailed site assessment criteria which have been used to appraise the proposed residential and employment development sites (the other site-specific proposals were appraised against the headline SA objectives only as the detailed site assessment criteria were not relevant to other types of development).
- 6.2 SA objectives are a recognised way in which the likely environmental, economic and social effects of the Local Plan can be described, analysed and compared in the SA process. SA objectives are distinct from the Local Plan objectives, although there can be considerable overlap between the two. The SA objectives take account of relevant international and national policy (see **SA Scoping Report, Appendix 1**), the key sustainability issues facing the Plan Area (see **Chapter 4 of the Scoping Report**) and the environmental effects which the SEA Directive requires consideration of (biodiversity, population, human health, fauna, flora, soil, water, air, climatic factors, material assets, cultural heritage including architectural and archaeological heritage, landscape, and the interrelationships between them).
- 6.3 The SA objectives for the Local Plan Review are set out in **Table 6.1**. The table also sets out how the SA objectives will cover the SEA Directive topics.

Table 6.1: Sustainability Appraisal objectives

SA Objectives for Local Plan Review	SEA Directive Topic
<p>1. Meeting Housing Needs</p> <p>To provide for local housing needs.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Population • Human Health • Material assets
<p>2. Accessible Opportunities, Facilities and Services</p> <p>To provide a range of services, facilities and opportunities that are accessible to the local community and reduce the need to travel</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Population • Human health • Material assets
<p>3. Safe and Healthy Environments</p> <p>To provide safe, healthy and secure living environments including by preventing, avoiding or managing flooding, pollution, other significant hazards and the potential for crime.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Population • Human health • Climatic factors
<p>4. A Thriving Economy</p> <p>Support a thriving, sustainable local economy making best use of local skills, assets and resources.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Material assets • Biodiversity
<p>5. Protecting Biodiversity and Wildlife</p> <p>Protect and enhance biodiversity and safeguard wildlife and the integrity of nature conservation sites.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Biodiversity • Fauna & Flora
<p>6. Accessible Green Space, Coast and Water Bodies</p> <p>Protect and where possible provide and enhance public open spaces, green infrastructure and access to the countryside, coast and water bodies</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Biodiversity • Landscape • Human health • Soil • Water • Air
<p>7. Protecting Landscape and Townscape</p> <p>To maintain, enhance and create high quality places.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cultural heritage • Landscape
<p>8. Conserving Heritage</p> <p>To conserve, manage and enhance historic buildings and places</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cultural heritage
<p>9. Sustainable Natural Resources</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Material assets • Climatic factors

SA Objectives for Local Plan Review	SEA Directive Topic
To conserve or manage natural resources and their sustainable use within environmental limits.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Water • Soil
10. Managing Climate Change To minimise contributions to climate change and mitigate and adapt to its effects.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Climatic factors • Water • Air • Material assets • Biodiversity • Human Health

6.4 Table 6.2 below identifies the key links between key sustainability issues and the SA objectives for the Local Plan Review.

Table 6.2: Relationship of issues to SA objectives

Key Sustainability Issue	SA Objectives
1. Requirement for housing which contributes to the needs of the wider housing market areas of Southampton, Bournemouth/Poole, Salisbury (SHMAs) and addresses the housing needs of local people while protecting environmental assets.	1, 2, 6, 7, 9
2. Ensuring all local people have access to housing which is affordable to them and meets their housing needs.	1, 2, 3
3. Requirement for housing that meets the needs of an ageing population and facilitates independent living for those requiring support and care.	1, 2, 3
4. The area's population has high proportions of elderly and retired people and there will be a significant increase in older cohorts of the population. Working age population will decline over the Plan period.	1, 3, 6
5. Requirement for sustainable economic growth which will provide jobs and prosperity for local people, while avoiding direct and indirect harm to the area's environmental quality and assets.	2, 4, 5, 6, 8, 9
6. Ensure employment land supply is of the quality required to attract investment.	4.
7. Employment land requirements are changing with more efficient use of existing space and remote or home based working enabled by technology.	2, 4, 10
8. Expansion of port-related activities in the Waterside and the impact on European sites and the local environment.	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 9, 10
9. Ensuring employment development is located in areas close to the labour market and minimises journeys to work times/distances.	2, 4,
10. Supporting the rural economy and rural communities.	1, 4, 7
11. Maintaining the vitality and viability of town and district centres.	1, 2, 4, 7, 9
12. Protecting and enhancing sites of importance for nature conservation, minimising impacts on, and enhancing, biodiversity.	3, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9
13. Ensuring development does not have an adverse effect on the integrity of European nature conservation designations.	5, 6, 7, 10
14. Avoiding harmful impacts on the New Forest National Park and its purposes (to conserve and enhance their natural beauty, wildlife and cultural heritage and to promote opportunities for the understanding and enjoyment of their special qualities by the public).	5, 6, 7, 9

15. Requirement for accessible high quality green space and green infrastructure within and close to settlements.	1, 2, 3, 5, 6, 7, 10
16. Requirement to conserve and enhance the historic environment	7, 8, 9
17. Requirement to protect the character of areas of significant landscape quality and importance, including the Cranborne Chase Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty	6, 7, 8
18. Pressures on land within the Green Belt for new development and the lack of available non-Green Belt land in parts of the Plan Area to address local needs.	1, 2, 6, 7
19. The Green Belt will continue to fulfil the five purposes (set out in para. 80 of the NPPF).	6, 7
20. Additional pressures to release non-Green Belt land for development.	1, 2, 4, 6, 7
21. Poor accessibility from parts of the Plan Area to the strategic road and rail networks.	1, 2, 6, 9, 10
22. High dependency on private transport to access jobs, services and facilities. Limited public transport provision, even in larger settlements.	1, 2, 4, 6, 10
23. Parts of the Plan Area within defined Hazard Zones.	1, 3
24. Significant parts of the Plan Area are subject to flood risk – fluvial, surface, groundwater and coastal.	1, 3, 6, 10.
25. Ensuring the sustainable use of water resources and maintaining the quality of water bodies.	5, 6, 7, 9, 10
26. Safeguarding minerals reserves.	9
27. Capacity of local infrastructure and services to serve increased demand arising from population growth.	1, 2, 3, 4, 6, 7, 9, 10

- 6.5 As set out **Chapter 4**, once the Local Plan objectives (set out in **Appendix 1**) were established they were tested against the SA Objectives. This is set out in Table 6.3 below.

Table 6.3 – Appraisal of Local Plan Objectives against the SA Objectives

		SA Objectives									
		Housing	Accessible facilities	Safe & Healthy environments	Economy	Biodiversity & Wildlife	Accessible spaces	Landscape & Townscape	Heritage	Natural resources	Climate change
Local Plan Objectives		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
SO1	Landscape & countryside	+/-	?i	+	?i	++	++	++	+	?i	+
SO2	Biodiversity and environment	?i	0	+	?i	++	++	++	+	?i	++
SO3	Built environment & heritage	?i	+	?i	+	?i	?i	?i	++	?i	?i
SO4	Housing provision	++	+	+/-	++	?i	?i	?i	?i	?i	+/-
SO5	Housing mix and affordability	++	+	?i	+	0	0	+/-	0	0	+/-
SO6	Economic prosperity	+	+	0	++	?i	?i	+/-	+	?i	+/-
SO7	Vibrant towns and villages	++	++	+	+	0	?i	+	+	?i	+
SO8	Rural areas and tourism	+	+	0	+	+	+	+	0	0	+
SO9	Climate change	+/-	0	+	+	+	+	+	0	+	++
SO10	Infrastructure and facilities	+	++	+	+	?i	?i	?i	0	+	?i

- 6.6 For the majority of Local Plan Objectives and SA Objectives there are **positive effects** or it will depend on the implementation of requirements set out in the various policies (and related mitigation measures arising from the SA and HRA process). Where there are potentially **mixed effects** these are summarised below:

- **Local Plan Objective 1 – Landscape and countryside:** there could potentially be negative effects from built development (SA Objective 1) with mixed impacts depending on the location and attributes of the site.
- **Local Plan Objective 4 – Housing provision:** there are potentially negative effects on air quality / pollution (SA Objective 3) but also potential positive effects on access and possible reduction of existing hazards. In addition there are possible adverse effects (SA Objective 10) on emissions from built development and associated traffic, but related potential to install renewable energy and reduce flood risk as part of development scheme.
- **Local Plan Objective 5 – Housing needs, mix and affordability:** This objective would help secure a mix of residential development but with potential adverse impacts on green belt/countryside (SA Objective 7). In addition there are possible adverse effects (SA Objective 10) on emissions from built development and associated vehicular traffic, but also potential to install renewable energy and reduce flood risk as part of development schemes.
- **Local Plan Objective 6 Economic opportunity:** This could help secure schemes that are relevant to the local economy but there may be potential negative impacts on landscape / countryside (SA Objective 7). There are also possible negative effects (Objective 10) on emissions from built development and associated traffic, alongside potential to install renewable energy and reduce flood risk as part of the development schemes.
- **Local Plan Objective 9 – Climate change:** There could be possible adverse effects (SA Objective 1) on the ability to meet housing need if the impacts from flood risk and increased vehicle emissions prove to be unacceptable.

- 6.7 Table 6.4 shows how the SA objectives will be used. Criteria have been formulated in order to help apply the SA objectives to options, policies and proposals of the Local Plan Review and the selection of site allocations (see **Appendices 2 and 4**). The criteria provide a more detailed checklist of the sort of things that will be looked for in the Plan and to determine the likelihood of each SA objective being achieved. This enables a judgement to be made of the likely outcome

or 'effects' of the Plan in sustainability terms. This updates the initial objectives and criteria published in the 2015 Scoping Report.

- 6.8 The SEA Directive also requires that the significant effects of implementing the Local Plan are monitored. The monitoring indicators (last column below) are examples of data sets by which the actual achievement of the SA objective could be measured (note, these are likely to change as work on data collection, monitoring etc. evolves).

Table 6.4 Sustainability Appraisal Framework

SA Objectives for Local Plan Review	Appraisal Criteria – Will the option/policy:	Examples of Indicators (see Chapter 9 for final indicators)
<p>1. Meeting Housing Needs</p> <p>To provide for local housing needs.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1A Contribute effectively to meeting the housing needs of local communities and the housing market area(s)? • 1B Provide affordable housing that meets local needs? • 1C Provide appropriately for the special accommodation needs of the area including for an ageing population, travellers and the less mobile? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Housing trajectory showing past dwelling completions and forecast future delivery • Five year housing land supply • Affordable housing completions • Traveller pitches/plots provided. • Monitoring size and type of dwellings
<p>2. Accessible Opportunities, Facilities and Services</p> <p>To provide a range of services, facilities and opportunities that are accessible to the local community and reduce the need to travel</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2A Locate new development to relate well to existing settlements, service and employment centres to reduce the need to travel? • 2B Provide convenient access to leisure, community and cultural facilities? • 2C Benefit from or provide access to schools and early years' child care in the local area? • 2D Benefit from, enhance or provide opportunities for access and movement by sustainable modes of transport (train, bus, bicycle, walking)? • 2E Provide a suitable connection to the road network (and advisory lorry network for employment use) for the proposed use? • 2F Provide for or improve access using mobile or high speed broadband devices? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitoring of public transport usage, cycling and pedestrian journeys • Travel to work data – method of travel and length of journeys • Changes in public transport services (particularly evening and weekend services) • Areas with access to high speed broadband • Provision of early years child care • Educational attainment data
<p>3. Safe and Healthy Environments</p> <p>To provide safe, healthy and secure living environments including by preventing, avoiding or managing flooding, pollution, other significant hazards and the potential for crime.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 3A Provide for safe movement and safe access by vehicle and for cyclists and pedestrians, especially the young and less mobile? • 3B Ensure that potentially hazardous activities are appropriately located and managed, and to avoid locating sensitive uses where they would be adversely affected by safety hazards or pollution? • 3C Protect and where possible improve air quality • 3D Promote and contribute to personal safety and security in 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitoring of permissions for flood defence works • Road injury statistics • Air Quality Management Areas • Crime data and surveys • Health statistics by local authority • Environmental Health complaints received regarding air, noise or light pollution relevant to the juxtaposition of different land uses • Contaminated land records

SA Objectives for Local Plan Review	Appraisal Criteria – Will the option/policy:	Examples of Indicators (see Chapter 9 for final indicators)
	developments and in the public realm to help reduce crime and the fear of crime?	
<p>4. A Thriving Economy</p> <p>Support a thriving, sustainable local economy making best use of local skills, assets and resources.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 4A Support businesses to start, grow and adapt to serve local markets and target wider opportunities • 4B Support the vitality and viability of town, district and service centres? • 4C Support tourism opportunities and rural enterprises which are appropriate to the location and environmentally acceptable? • 4D Provide or improve opportunities for further education and skills training in accessible locations? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New employment floorspace developed by type • Employment land available by type and sub-area • Loss of employment floorspace • Unemployment rates • Average salary levels • Loss of tourist accommodation / provision of new tourist accommodation • Town centre vacancy levels • Proportions of retail and non-retail uses within primary shopping frontages • Monitoring of town centre commercial and leisure uses developed within defined town centres • Numbers of apprenticeships
<p>5. Protecting Biodiversity and Wildlife</p> <p>Protect and enhance biodiversity and safeguard wildlife and the integrity of nature conservation sites.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 5A Protect and where possible enhance biodiversity and designated nature conservation sites (international, national and local), Ancient Woodlands and Priority Habitats and Species? • 5B Avoid, limit or mitigate recreational or other pressures on designated Natura 2000 sites? • 5C Maintain and enhance biodiversity and provide opportunities to create or join up habitats? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitoring of the condition of designated sites and priority habitats and species • Changes in local/national designations • Monitoring of mitigation measures delivered and their effectiveness
<p>6. Accessible Green Space, Coast and Water Bodies</p> <p>Protect and where possible provide and enhance public open spaces, green infrastructure and access to the countryside, coast and water bodies</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 6A Protect open space and ensure development benefits from and/or provides sufficient outdoor play facilities and public open space for informal recreation? • 6B Protect outdoor sports facilities and ensure development benefits from and/or provides sufficient local opportunities for outdoor sports • 6C Protect and where possible enhance natural and semi natural open spaces, water bodies and features of green infrastructure value. • 6D Enable public enjoyment of the countryside, coast and water bodies within environmental constraints? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Areas of formal and informal open space per head of population by parish • Amount of new Green Infrastructure (GI) which is connected to existing GI • Monitoring of mitigation provision delivered and its effectiveness in diverting recreational pressures • Monitoring contributions towards habitats mitigation • Waiting lists for allotments
<p>7. Protecting Landscape and Townscape</p> <p>To maintain, enhance and create high quality places.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 7A Maintain and where possible enhance local distinctiveness, townscape and the public realm? • 7B Safeguard the setting and purposes of the New Forest 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Landscape appraisals • Local distinctiveness studies • Numbers and extent of Conservation Areas

SA Objectives for Local Plan Review	Appraisal Criteria – Will the option/policy:	Examples of Indicators (see Chapter 9 for final indicators)
	<p>National Park and the setting of the Cranborne Chase AONB?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 7C Protect and where possible enhance the intrinsic character and beauty of the general countryside and coast? • 7D Conserve and/or manage important geological sites and features? • 7E Protect and where possible enhance the beneficial use of land that meets the statutory purposes of Green Belt? • 7F Protect identified tranquil areas and areas of dark night skies? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extent of designated Green Belt • Measures/studies of tranquillity • Development within AONB by type
<p>8. Conserving Heritage</p> <p>To conserve, manage and enhance historic buildings and places</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 8A Conserve, manage and enhance historic buildings, sites, features, places, areas and landscapes, and where appropriate improve public access to them? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitoring of applications within Conservation Areas • Number of heritage assets by type which are at risk
<p>9. Sustainable Natural Resources</p> <p>To conserve or manage natural resources and their sustainable use within environmental limits.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 9A Protect soil quality and the best and most versatile agricultural land? • 9B Ensure sufficient water supply, protect water sources and water bodies, and maintain and where possible enhance water quality and water use efficiency? • 9C Encourage the beneficial re-use of previously developed land, redundant buildings and the restoration of contaminated or degraded land? • 9D Enable the sustainable extraction of safeguarded and workable mineral resources? • 9E Encourage recycling and minimise waste generation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Per capita water consumption • Condition of water resources, water bodies and coastal waters • Water Framework Directive status of water bodies • Monitoring development on previously developed land • Safeguarded mineral reserves • Domestic recycling and composting rates • Amounts of waste going to landfill • Loss of agricultural land in different grades
<p>10. Managing Climate Change</p> <p>To minimise contributions to climate change and mitigate and adapt to its effects.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 10A Locate development to help limit the emission of greenhouse gases by minimising the need to travel by private vehicle? • 10B Encourage energy and resource efficiency and climate change resilience in the siting, construction and adaptability of development? • 10C Encourage microgeneration and renewable and community-based energy projects in environmentally and visually appropriate locations? • 10D Avoid, reduce or manage the risk to people and property from flooding and erosion, taking into account the likely effects of climate change? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Domestic energy consumption data • Applications granted contrary to Environment Agency advice • Monitoring of schemes which will improve resilience to the effects of climate change • Monitoring of permissions granted for flood defence/coastal protection schemes

7. Key sustainability issues and likely evolution without the Plan

7.1 Using the baseline information presented in **Chapter 6**, the key sustainability issues affecting the Plan Area are identified in this section. Identification of the key sustainability issues and consideration of how these issues might develop over time if the Local Plan is not prepared helps to meet the requirements of the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004, Regulation 12(3) and Schedule 2 which requires information on:

*‘... the relevant aspects of the current state of the environment and the likely evolution thereof without implementation of the plan or programme’ and
‘any existing environmental problems which are relevant to the plan...’*

7.2 The set of key sustainability issues for the area are set out in the **Table 7.1** below. The table sets out the likely evolution of the environment in the Plan Area if the Local Plan was not reviewed and implemented.

7.3 The provisions of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), as well as policies from the current adopted Local Plan (where they are consistent with the NPPF) have been taken into consideration, as they would still apply in the absence of a Local Plan Review.

Table 7.1: Key sustainability issues and evolution without the Local Plan Review

Key Sustainability Issue	Likely evolution of the issue without implementation of the Local Plan Review
1. Requirement for housing which contributes to the needs of the Plan Area.	Uncertainty over how the housing needs of the area should be addressed by development within this Local Plan area. Ad hoc releases of land for development through planning appeals due to lack of five year land supply.
2. Ensuring all local people have access to housing which is affordable to them and meets their housing needs.	Suppressed household formation. Increasing numbers of people in housing need or in inadequate or unsuitable housing. Increasing social deprivation and inequality.
3. Requirement for housing that meets the needs of an ageing population and facilitates independent living for those requiring support and care.	Lack of suitable housing choices for older age groups will mean that they are more likely to under-occupy dwellings which no longer adequately meet their housing needs, inhibiting the potential release of housing which might be suitable for other households.
4. The area's population has high proportions of elderly and retired people and there will be a significant increase in older cohorts of the population. Working age population will decline over the Plan period.	Growth in the local labour supply within the existing population will be even more constrained. Economic growth within the area will be constrained by lack of growth in the local workforce.
5. Requirement for sustainable economic growth which will provide jobs and prosperity for local people, while avoiding direct and indirect harm to the area's environmental quality and assets.	Aspirations for economic growth drive national policy (including in the NPPF) and the aspirations of Local Economic Partnerships strategies. These growth aspirations will require a significant increase in housing provision in the area which would not be met in the absence of the Local Plan Review.
6. Ensure employment land supply is of the quality required to attract investment.	Land which is no longer suitable for employment/business needs will remain undeveloped. Inadequate supply of sites to meet business/employers needs may result in unplanned releases of land in inappropriate locations.
7. Employment land requirements are changing with more efficient use of existing	Existing assumptions about employment land requirements and needs continue, resulting in

Key Sustainability Issue	Likely evolution of the issue without implementation of the Local Plan Review
space and remote or home based working enabled by technology.	inappropriate land allocations. No assessment is made of the future needs of local businesses and appropriate provision is not made.
8. Expansion of port-related activities in the Waterside and the impact on European sites and the local environment.	Increasing intensification of the use of existing facilities at Marchwood Military Port. No local policy framework to address local issues raised by Port of Southampton's aspirations for port development at Dibden Bay.
9. Ensuring employment development is located in areas close to the labour market and minimises journeys to work times/distances.	Development in less accessible parts of the Plan Area could result in significant increases in commuting to work. Congestion and capacity problems on road network.
10. Supporting the rural economy and rural communities.	Current policies in rural areas will continue (Saved Policies).
11. Maintaining the vitality and viability of town and district centres	Reduced management of change within town and district centres. Loss of commercial floorspace due to changes in the General Permitted Development Order. Policies become outdated and irrelevant.
12. Protecting and enhancing sites of importance for nature conservation, minimising impacts on, and enhancing, biodiversity.	While the NPPF seeks protection of sites of international and national importance, the current Local Plan policies may not provide an adequate framework to consider the cumulative impact of pressures for higher levels of development within the Plan Area on sites of nature conservation importance and local biodiversity.
13. Ensuring development does not have an adverse effect on the integrity of European nature conservation designations	No plan would result in all plans/projects requiring a full Appropriate Assessment with no up to date and agreed approach to avoid or mitigate impacts on European sites. Development potential may be stalled.
14. Avoiding harmful impacts on the New Forest National Park and its purposes (to conserve and enhance its natural beauty, wildlife and cultural heritage and to promote opportunities for the understanding and enjoyment of its special qualities by the public).	Likely to be more difficult to avoid impacts in the absence of a strategy to guide new development to less sensitive locations. Existing settlements and potential development areas are close to the National Park in many parts of the Plan Area. Expansion of these areas has the potential to affect the setting of the Park.
15. Requirement for accessible high quality green space and green infrastructure within and close to settlements.	Increasing pressure from additional recreational use of sensitive sites, including the New Forest and coastal SPA/SACs.
16. Requirement to conserve and enhance the historic environment	Opportunities to conserve and enhance the historic environment could be missed.
17. Requirement to protect the character of areas of significant landscape quality and importance, including the Cranborne Chase Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.	Likely to be more difficult to avoid impacts in the absence of a strategy to guide new development to less sensitive locations. There are small villages within the AONB where development could adversely affect the sensitive landscape.
18. Pressures on land within the Green Belt for new development and the lack of available non-Green Belt land in parts of the Plan Area to address local needs.	Only part of the countryside in the Plan Area is designated Green Belt (south of Ringwood and the Southern Coastal area). Green Belt land is not necessarily the most environmentally sensitive land within the Plan Area. Non Green Belt land may be

Key Sustainability Issue	Likely evolution of the issue without implementation of the Local Plan Review
	<p>subject to other significant environmental and development constraints or may not be in appropriate locations to address the needs of the relevant housing market area.</p> <p>Development may be directed to less sustainable locations to avoid Green Belt land.</p> <p>Un-planned releases of land from Green Belt in conflict with Green Belt purposes</p>
19. Requirement for Green Belt to fulfil the five purposes (set out in para. 80 of the NPPF).	Opportunities for land which is not fulfilling Green Belt purposes to accommodate sustainable development needs of local communities would not be taken.
20. Additional pressures to release non-Green Belt land for development.	The needs of areas which are located within the Green Belt are displaced to non-Green Belt areas which may be less sustainable.
21. Poor accessibility from parts of the Plan Area to the strategic road and rail networks.	<p>No strategic assessment of the impacts on transport networks of development.</p> <p>Opportunities to minimise traffic impacts locally and across the wider Plan Area are reduced because development is unplanned and without full consideration of infrastructure needs.</p>
22. High dependency on private transport to access jobs, services and facilities. Limited public transport provision, even in larger settlements.	Development will be unplanned and without full consideration of infrastructure needs or of the potential to locate residential development close to existing transport hubs, employment centres and services and facilities. Increased dependency private transport. Congestion on local road network. Increase in journey times.
23. Parts of the Plan Area lie within defined Hazard Zones.	The Health and Safety Executive (HSE) advises on the acceptability or otherwise of development within hazard zones.
24. Significant parts of the Plan Area are subject to flood risk – fluvial, surface, groundwater and coastal.	Opportunities to address local issues through the development proposals will not take place..
25. Ensuring the sustainable use of water resources and maintaining the quality of water bodies.	The quality of water bodies will decline further in the absence of measures to address this issue.
26. Safeguarding minerals reserves.	Significant parts of the Plan Area are underlain with minerals reserves. Land released for development not in accordance with a Local Plan may result in loss of future workable deposits of mineral reserves. Requirements for prior extraction of mineral reserves can have an impact on timescales for site delivery.
27. Capacity of local infrastructure and services to serve increased demand arising from population growth.	<p>New development may not be directed to areas which have infrastructure capacity available. Potential funding for infrastructure improvements may not be available when required.</p> <p>Timely investment in crucial infrastructure may not be made.</p>

8. Methodology for land appraisal

Site appraisal process

- 8.1 The Council has carried out a comprehensive Sustainability Appraisal of all land in the district outside of the defined towns and villages to identify all potentially suitable locations for housing development. Land in the main settlements was excluded because there are few opportunities for strategic scale housing development within built up areas, and the future housing contribution of smaller scale development within existing towns and villages is also likely to be limited.
- 8.2 The appraisal has taken into account a wide range of factors such as access to facilities, landscape sensitivity and constraints such as flood risk, coastal erosion, protected habitats and industrial hazards
- 8.3 The SA Sites Assessment has been split into a number of stages which together capture the information needed to appraise and score each site. Every piece of land in the plan area was assessed under this SA process so that the Council could be certain that all land has been assessed consistently to come to a robust position on the sustainability of sites.

Stage 1 – Defining land parcels

- 8.4 The Plan Area, outside defined settlements, was divided into coherent land parcels (around 600 in all) for sustainability assessment of potential for development. Parcel boundaries were defined using a combination of natural boundaries, landscape features, environmental constraints (e.g. flood risk), and the boundaries of sites considered in previous Local Plan reviews (where applicable).

Stage 2 - Critical Criteria

- 8.5 Early in the process ‘critical criteria’ were identified: these are circumstances where land is unsuitable in principle for development. The Council defined the following as critical criteria:
- Environment Agency flood risk zones 2 or 3, or land which has critical drainage problems (additionally, later stages of the SA Site Assessment will incorporate Strategic Flood Risk Assessment findings on any local level flood risks). The overall aim is to steer new development to Flood Zone 1 and away from areas with a higher probability of flooding on-site or likely to cause consequential flooding elsewhere.
 - Areas at risk of coastal erosion (in particular the Climate Change Management Areas that are set out in the adopted Local Plan Part 2: Sites & Development Management (2014).
 - Military exclusion zones, in particular the inner and outer blast zones relating to Marchwood military port activities. They exclude development within defined areas adjacent to military explosive storage areas.
 - Health and Safety Executive consultation zones (especially the Fawley Oil Refinery inner consultation zone and to a lesser degree the middle consultation zone, which impose restrictions on development that would be in the vicinity of major hazard installations and major hazard pipelines).
 - Internationally significant nature conservation sites (specifically land parcels lying within or mostly within sites of international nature conservation interest - Special Protection Areas (SPA), Special Areas of Conservation, Ramsar sites - or within national Sites of Special Scientific Interest). These have been established as especially sensitive locations for development and are therefore screened out.

- 8.6 Land parcels that are wholly or mostly subject to any of the above critical criteria were not assessed further. By their nature these sites are subject to risks or impacts which cannot be adequately mitigated and therefore should be avoided (see **Appendix 3** for a full list of these sites). Just over 100 sites were classified as critical criteria failures and roughly equates to around 20% of the whole plan area.

Stage 3 – Call for sites

- 8.7 In 2015 New Forest District Council launched a 'call for sites' as part of its Local Plan Review Strategic Land Availability Assessment. During the call for sites landowners and other parties were invited to put forward land and sites which they wished to be considered for development. The call for sites provided an opportunity for land to be considered for a range of possible uses including housing. For land that was considered available, the assessment also asked promoters to indicate that the land was available and deliverable within the plan period. The housing potential of land not submitted in the call for sites has been assessed in exactly the same way.

Stage 4 – Desktop assessment

- 8.8 A desktop assessment was carried out of all the remaining land parcels not affected by critical criteria against the SA sustainability objectives (around 500 parcels were assessed). The ten SA objectives each have a number of SA **appraisal criteria** covering different aspects of the broader objective. The appraisal criteria in turn have one or more specific SA **appraisal questions** (as set out in Table 8.1). Not all of the objectives, appraisal criteria or appraisal questions are relevant to site selection. Those not relevant were screened out. Those most relevant to the suitability of a site for development in principle were given more weight in making an overall judgement. These include but are not limited to:

- 8.9
- Accessibility and proximity to facilities and services;
 - Potential for significant ecological impact;
 - Scope to avoid or mitigate the impact of development including ability to provide accessible recreational natural green space on suitable land on or adjoining the site.
 - Landscape capacity and landscape sensitivity assessment based on site visits and fieldwork.
- 8.10 The tables in **Appendix 2** provide a commentary for each SA objective setting out the SA appraisal questions, the basis for assessment rating, the relevance and applied weighting of individual SA criterion to strategic housing site selection and brief explanatory notes.

Stage 5 – Landscape assessment

- 8.11 A Landscape Sensitivity and Capacity Study⁶⁰ was undertaken including site visits and fieldwork drawing on previous Landscape Character Assessments. This forms part of the evidence base for the identification of potential sites for new residential development in the local plan area. The aim of this study is to assess the landscape sensitivity and the capacity of the landscape to absorb development without detrimental impact, focusing in particular on edge-of-settlement locations. The assessed areas are based on landscape features and do not reflect ownership or current use. The study also provides a general indication of potential landscape enhancement or mitigation that may be required if development should come forward.

Stage 6 - Green Belt study

⁶⁰ Available here: www.nfdc.gov.uk/localplan2016

- 8.12 The Council commissioned an independent study of land in the Green Belt in terms of whether it still meets the five purposes of Green Belt that are set out in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)⁶¹. The study result for each SA polygon is noted in the SA site assessment for locations situated in the Green Belt.
- 8.13 This is a change from the Interim SA assessment where Green Belt status was deliberately not factored into the overall assessment conclusion about the potential sustainability of land for development. This was because the 2016 Initial Proposals public consultation consulted on three options for releasing land for development from the Green Belt in otherwise potentially sustainable locations.

Stage 7 – Site specific sense check

- 8.14 It was important that checks were made on the existing land use, any local plan allocations or sites with planning permission. Where existing housing allocations adjoined a site a judgement was made as to whether that allocation might be better considered or potentially subsumed as part of a strategic site option (as opposed to leaving it as a stand-alone allocation). Where existing uses were for residential, a judgement was made as to whether that use is likely to remain within the plan period to 2036. Where an existing use was judged likely to remain, the sites were screened out.

Stage 8 – Pre-consultation with infrastructure providers

- 8.15 Once the Council had completed enough of the SA site assessment to give *preliminary* results for potential sites, an informal consultation was carried out with infrastructure providers on possible critical infrastructure constraints. The following were consulted:
- Water utility companies (in relation to water supply and waste water treatment).
 - Environment Agency and Hampshire County Council (with regard to capacity constraints or deficiencies in surface and/or ground water drainage)
 - Electric utility companies (on whether there would be sufficient overall electricity supply, and connection issues relating to existing electricity supply)
 - Gas utility companies (about the existence of mains gas connections in each area)
 - Telecommunication firms (asking whether the potential sites were unlikely to have mobile coverage to the latest speeds, and likely access to fibre optic enabled connections)
 - Hampshire County Council (on the likely sufficiency of primary and secondary school places)
 - Highways England and HCC Highways (about the sufficiency of highway capacity to meet likely demand from proposed housing, taking into account any committed investment)
 - Public transport bodies and firms (regarding the capacity on the existing bus routes to meet likely demand from proposed housing, taking into account any committed investment)
 - NHS West Hampshire Clinical Commissioning Group (on whether there would be sufficient hospital, surgery and dentist capacity to meet likely demand from proposed housing, and any other healthcare needs that are likely to be necessary to make the proposed development acceptable in planning terms).

- 8.16 The responses (see **Appendix 8 - Table A8.1**) informed the SA site appraisals as appropriate.

Stage 9 – Incorporate relevant facts, evidence and consultation feedback

- 8.17 Following a period of public consultation on the Local Plan Initial Proposals (Regulation 18 stage) in 2016 and further correspondence with statutory bodies and utility providers the council appraised the responses⁶². This feedback was used to update the SA site appraisals (where required) and to inform decisions regarding strategic sites and policy approaches. In some cases new evidence came to light which required the council to undertake further technical work (e.g.

⁶¹ New Forest District Green Belt Study, by Land Use Consultants (July 2016)

⁶² Public responses to Initial Proposals were published in the summary document – “Statement of Consultation (Regulation 18) “

air quality and flood risk), in order to confirm the deliverability or otherwise of proposed development sites. **Appendix 8 (Tables A8.2 and A8.3)** sets out how the Local Plan Review (Regulation 19 stage) responds to previous comments on the Local Plan.

- 8.18 The potential release of land from the Green Belt was a key question for the 2016 Initial Proposals public consultation. The SA to that point had assigned no sustainability weighting to the status of land as Green Belt for the purposes of assessing whether land parcels in Green Belt are potentially sustainable locations for housing development, Green Belt status notwithstanding. The interim SA Site Assessment initially recorded the extent to which each land parcel within the Green Belt contributes to the five purposes of Green Belt, as set out in the Green Belt Study conclusions
- 8.19 Responses received to the Initial Proposals consultation in 2016 confirmed that Green Belt was highly valued by local residents.
- 8.20 The Initial Proposals consultation also proposed new potential sites or site extensions not in the Green Belt which the SA assessed as reasonable alternatives alongside potential Green Belt allocation sites.
- 8.21 For potential sites within the Green Belt, subsequent work with site promoters on potential masterplans also identified opportunities to focus development on weaker performing Green Belt supported by open space and recreational mitigation land on adjoining land in ‘stronger’ Green Belt.
- 8.22 The Council judged that it could meet its Objectively Assessed Need (OAN)⁶³ for housing provided that some weak to moderately performing Green Belt land was released from the Green Belt and allocated for housing development. The council considered this to be the right balance between national policy objectives for protecting the Green Belt, and for delivering sufficient housing. On this specific basis the ‘exceptional circumstances’ test for the release of Green Belt land for development through the Local Plan review was considered to be met.
- 8.23 There is no longer a need to consider the release of land in stronger Green Belt, thus there are no longer ‘exceptional circumstances’ to justify releasing stronger Green Belt sites for development, and no stronger Green Belt sites are proposed to be allocated in the Local Plan. This was due to the combination of:
- A revised, lower OAN requirement.
 - The allocation for housing development of an additional large strategic housing site not in the Green Belt at Burgate, north of Fordingbridge.
 - Extensions to other proposed sites, either to include additional land not in the Green Belt, or to use land retained in the Green Belt to provide supporting open space including for habitat mitigation. This enables the developable part of the site to be used more efficiently.
 - Additional capacity on smaller sites based on an analysis of potential including public calls for sites and local assessments for emerging Neighbourhood Plans.
- 8.24 It is important to note that up until this point the appraisals of the land parcels gave a ‘policy off’ assessment of the intrinsic merits of developing each parcel. Stages 10 and onwards represent the parts where the SA appraisal process looked at how the development will be deliverable and made acceptable on the ground given the specific needs and any significant effects identified (i.e. ‘policy on’) using a combination of strategic policies and site-specific policies.

⁶³ Justin Gardner Consulting report 2017

Stage 10 – Land availability confirmation

- 8.25 The Local Plan process included a number of milestones at which availability of land was tested. A formal Call for Sites which took place in October 2015 was the first stage, and this has been followed by the Initial Proposals consultation (July 2016) and a further call for sites consultation (brownfield land only) in November 2016. Together these have provided the evidence we needed in relation to the availability of land and the likely timescales of delivery. Memorandums of Understanding are also being sought from promoters of sites to confirm the availability and phasing of strategic sites.

Stage 11 – Incorporate Strategic Flood Risk Assessment findings

- 8.26 The 2017 Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA) identifies any local level flood risk, and provides a comprehensive up to date evidence base to take account of the latest flood risk information. The Level 1 SFRA was carried out for the whole plan area and models the sources of flooding and the extent of flood risk. It also provides an assessment of the potential impact of climate change on flood risk and critical drainage areas and recommendations on potential need for Surface Water Management Plans. A comprehensive set of maps display the flood risk information.
- 8.27 Given that significant areas of the district are at high risk of flooding from tidal, fluvial and surface water sources, a Level 2 SFRA has also been carried out for some of the proposed development sites to satisfy the Sequential and, where necessary, Exception Tests in accordance with the NPPF.
- 8.28 The output from the Level 1 and Level 2 work has been used to score sites in this SA.
- 8.29 Additional data were derived from the SFRA outputs so that the sequential approach could be verified in the Local Plan.

Stage 12 – Detailed assessments of infrastructure requirements

- 8.30 More detailed assessments of infrastructure requirements have incorporated feedback from including infrastructure providers, through direct approaches and by Regulation 18 public consultation⁶⁴.
- 8.31 Hampshire County Council is one of the key providers of a number of important services in New Forest District. These include: education; fire and rescue; waste management; library services; and highways and transport.
- 8.32 Utility companies (water and electric) were also consulted at an early stage in relation to water supply capacity, water quality, sewage treatment, and gas and electric supply.
- 8.33 Highways England is responsible for operating, maintaining and improving the strategic road network in England on behalf of the Secretary of State for Transport. In the New Forest District Local Plan area, Highways England is responsible for the A31, M27 and A36 and it was approached at various points to ascertain the likely constraints and opportunities that development could bring.

Stage 13 – Open space needs assessment

- 8.34 An open space (formal and informal) needs assessment has been drafted which updates the councils evidence base and gives an indication of whether open space requirements may affect site capacity. Quantitative requirements are being established and will be set against open space

⁶⁴ Details of this can be found in the council's Infrastructure Delivery Plan

policy requirements. This will allow the council to see which strategic sites require new provision of open space as part of their development frameworks.

Stage 14 – Viability appraisal

- 8.35 In order to understand the viability of development in the district, in particular for residential and housing development in its various forms including market, affordable, private rental etc the council commissioned a study to provide the required background evidence. It advises on the viability of various forms and combinations of affordable provision and undertakes a site specific viability assessment of the strategic sites in the Local Plan. The study assesses the individual and cumulative viability implications of policy standards from policies in the adopted and emerging local plans and supporting documents. In addition it applies sensitivity testing on key assumptions and draws out any implications.

Stage 15 - Findings from site specific technical studies by site promoters

- 8.36 As part of the process of appraising strategic sites, the council wrote to site promoters at various stages to request copies of site technical studies and master plan proposals. The majority of promoters provided documents that aided policy officers in assessing constraints and opportunities on each site. Concept masterplans for each strategic housing site proposal helped to guide SA appraisals for individual land parcels, identify mitigation proposals, and to guide policy content for strategic sites. Technical studies identify key factors such as the landscape and ecological considerations (including habitat recreational mitigation), the main arrangements for site access and circulation, presence of flood risk, and mineral potential.
- 8.37 Sites were appraised on their own merits to allow for consistent and comparable appraisal and the council then used available studies to firm up the policy approach regarding elements such as mitigation.

Table 8.1: Overview of the relevance and weighting of SA objectives to strategic housing site selection

SA Objectives for Local Plan Review	SA Appraisal Criteria for strategic level housing site selection. Does the site/policy/proposal:	Relevance for strategic site suitability	Reasons for screening out (where applicable)
1. MEETING HOUSING NEEDS	1.1 Provide sufficient housing to meet the needs of local communities?	Screened out	All sites allocated for housing would in principle contribute to meeting general housing needs in housing supply terms, but further work is required to confirm sites are suitable, available and deliverable and their potential to address affordable housing and specialist housing needs. All sites allocated for housing would in principle contribute to meeting affordable housing needs, subject to confirmation that provision would be viable. This criterion is more relevant for housing policies and site policies.
	1.2 Provide an appropriate range and choice of dwelling types and sizes including opportunities for self and custom build?		
	1.3 Help address the local need for affordable housing?		
	1.4 Provide a range and choice of homes accommodation for older people including supported living?		
	1.5 Enable people to continue to live independently in their homes?		
	1.6 Provide for the accommodation needs of travellers		

SA Objectives for Local Plan Review	SA Appraisal Criteria for strategic level housing site selection. Does the site/policy/proposal:	Relevance for strategic site suitability	Reasons for screening out (where applicable)
	1.7 Provide appropriate opportunities for rural and agricultural workers		
2. ACCESSIBLE OPPORTUNITIES, FACILITIES AND SERVICES	2.1 Located close to a defined town or local centre?	High	2.9 - The recent agreement by BT Openreach to provide fibre broadband for free to developments of 100+ dwellings means that all strategic sites have the potential to meet this SA objective so it is screened out for preliminary site selection. Openreach recommends developers inform them of a sites' broadband need at the land purchase stage (and at least 9 months before first occupancy).
	2.2 Well related to employment opportunities, or provide employment as well as housing?	Medium	
	2.3 Located near community facilities?	Low	
	2.4 Accessible to an infant / primary school with adequate capacity?	Medium	
	2.5 Accessible to a secondary school with adequate capacity?	Low	
	2.6 Well located to a main public transport route serving a higher order settlement?	High	
	2.7 Well connected to facilities by footpaths and cycleways	High	
	2.8 Adequately served by highways infrastructure appropriate to the form of development?	High	
	2.9 Adequately served by high speed broadband?	Screened out	
3. SAFE AND HEALTHY ENVIRONMENTS	3.1 Provide safe access to the site including by foot/ cycle?	High	3.3 and 3.4 - Relevant for site policy and implementation but not for strategic housing site selection stage.
	3.2 Significantly affected by existing levels of pollution or a hazardous or polluting activity or installation?	High	
	3.3 Protect and where possible improve air quality	Screened out	
	3.4 Achieve or improve personal and public safety and security	Screened out	
4. A THRIVING ECONOMY	4.1 Protect viable business uses on designated business sites and in other appropriate locations?	Screened out	Not applicable at strategic site selections stage for green field locations except where development would appear to result in the loss of a viable business - each site checked by officer judgement. Loss of an apparently viable business would result in a low score for the site.
	4.2 Provide and safeguard an appropriate range and choice of sites for identified business and commercial needs?		
	4.3 Protect commercial sites and premises in town and local centres in viable use or suitable to meet identified needs?		
	4.4 Support tourism opportunities and rural enterprises which are appropriate to the location and environmentally acceptable?		

SA Objectives for Local Plan Review	SA Appraisal Criteria for strategic level housing site selection. Does the site/policy/proposal:	Relevance for strategic site suitability	Reasons for screening out (where applicable)
	4.5 Provide or improve opportunities for further education and skills training in accessible locations?		
5. PROTECTING BIODIVERSITY AND WILDLIFE	5.1 Have an adverse, neutral or beneficial effect on an internationally designated Natura 2000 conservation site?	High	5.5 - Relevant for site policy and implementation but not for site selection - to be appraised at site policy / masterplan stage.
	5.2 Have an adverse, neutral or beneficial effect on a Site of Special Scientific Interest (that is not also designated as a Natura site)?	High	
	5.3 Have an adverse, neutral or beneficial effect on a Site of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINC), Ancient Woodlands, a protected species, Priority or other habitats of nature conservation value?	High	
	5.4 Adequately mitigate potential recreational impacts on the New Forest SPA and SAC and/or Solent RAMSAR sites?	High	
	5.5 Create, enhance or connect areas of local habitat and biodiversity value?	Screened out	
6. ACCESSIBLE GREEN SPACE, COAST AND WATER BODIES	6.1 Provide or be located near Public Open Space?	Low	6.4 – Only relevant at site policy and implementation stage.
	6.2 Provide or contribute to the provision of outdoor sports facilities?	Low	
	6.3 Have an adverse, neutral or beneficial effect on TPO trees and protected hedgerows?	Low	
	6.4 Have an adverse, neutral or beneficial effect on natural and semi natural open spaces, water bodies and networks of them?	Screened out	
	6.5 Have an adverse, neutral or beneficial effect on rights of way or public foot paths providing access to the coast, water bodies or the countryside?	Low	
7. PROTECTING LANDSCAPE AND TOWNSCAPE	7.1 Affect locally important views and setting?	Medium	7.3 and 7.6 – Not deemed appropriate for strategic assessment – can only be applied at site policy and implementation stage.
	7.2 Maintain clear physical and visual separation between settlements as perceived from areas within and outside them?	High	

SA Objectives for Local Plan Review	SA Appraisal Criteria for strategic level housing site selection. Does the site/policy/proposal:	Relevance for strategic site suitability	Reasons for screening out (where applicable)
	7.3 Help secure development of high quality design appropriate to its setting and context?	Screened out	
	7.4 Safeguard the setting and purposes of the New Forest National Park and the setting of the Cranborne Chase AONB?	High	
	7.5 Protect and where possible enhance the intrinsic character and beauty of the general countryside and coast?	High	
	7.6 Conserve and/or manage important geological sites and features?	Screened out	
	7.7 Have an adverse, neutral or beneficial effect on land in Green Belt that continues to serve the statutory purposes of Green Belt?	High	
	7.8 Have an adverse, neutral or beneficial effect on identified tranquil areas and areas of identified dark night skies?	High	
8. CONSERVING HERITAGE	8.1 Have an adverse, neutral or beneficial effect on listed buildings, conservation areas, historic parks and gardens, scheduled monuments and archaeological areas (including non-scheduled archaeological remains of demonstrably equivalent significance to scheduled monuments); and their settings?	Medium	8.2 - Only relevant at site policy and implementation stage.
	8.2 Have an adverse, neutral or beneficial effect on a non-designated heritage asset or other non-scheduled archaeological remains?	Screened out	
9. SUSTAINABLE NATURAL RESOURCES	9.1 Have an adverse, neutral or beneficial effect on higher grade agricultural land?	Low	9.3 / 9.3B - As an interim position (2016) we assumed these matters were capable of satisfactory resolution pending further work through ongoing consultation with statutory bodies. Further work on sites brought to light an issue regarding water quality on the River Avon.
	9.2 Have an adverse, neutral or beneficial effect on a Groundwater Source Protection Zone	High	
	9.3 Have or provide sufficient waste water network and treatment capacity?	Screened out	
	9.3B Include surface water management techniques that could affect the quality of any nearby open water bodies?	Screened out	

SA Objectives for Local Plan Review	SA Appraisal Criteria for strategic level housing site selection. Does the site/policy/proposal:	Relevance for strategic site suitability	Reasons for screening out (where applicable)
	9.4 Have or provide sufficient water supply for planned growth?	Screened out	9.4 / 9.7 – Relevant for site policy and implementation but not for site selection. Ongoing consultation with Environment Agency and the water companies on this matter has confirmed the position regarding supply.
	9.5 Bring derelict, contaminated, redundant or previously developed land or buildings back into beneficial use ?	High	
	9.6 Have an adverse, neutral or beneficial effect on a safeguarded mineral resource or facility?	Medium	
	9.7 Encourage recycling and minimise waste generation	Screened out	
10. MANAGING CLIMATE CHANGE	10.1 Conveniently accessible by public transport, cycling and walking?	High	10.2 / 10.3 – These can only be addressed in site policies and through implementation measures –they are not relevant for strategic site selection.
	10.2 Encourage energy and resource efficiency and climate change resilience in the siting, construction and adaptability of development?	Screened out	
	10.3 Encourage microgeneration and renewable and community-based energy	Screened out	
	10.4 At risk from flooding or coastal erosion? (taking into account climate change)	High	

9. Appraisal of site selection and alternatives

- 9.1 A full assessment of all land outside of settlement boundaries to ensure that the Council could be certain that all land has been assessed consistently to come to a robust appraisal of the sustainability of sites.
- 9.2 As described in **Chapter 8** every site was scored on an equal basis with careful judgements on their relationship with adjoining land parcels. Developing with adjoining land sometimes afforded the opportunity to improve the sustainability score (e.g. to provide recreational mitigation natural green space). In this way the strategic sites emerged – sometimes as standalone parcels of land, other times as a combination of land parcels which taken as a whole were scored as sustainable in SA terms.
- 9.3 Full SA site appraisals for each parcel of land are available on the councils SA webpage⁶⁵. Overall ratings were applied as follows:

SA Score colour	Overall site conclusion	Notes	Number of SA site polygons
	Highly sustainable location	These are sites that are allocated for housing in the adopted Local Plan but where construction had not yet commenced at the time of the assessment	2
	Sustainable location	These sites passed the SA stages of appraisal and are assessed as suitable for consideration. They exhibit positive or acceptable impacts on most of the SA objectives.	5
	Acceptable location with no major issues	These sites passed the SA stages of appraisal and are assessed as suitable for consideration. They exhibit some negative impacts on the SA objectives but they are deemed acceptable – either because mitigation measures appear viable or technical work demonstrates that they are acceptable.	65
	Significant sustainability issues – in combination these appear to make the site unsuitable for housing	These sites only passed some of the SA stages of appraisal. A number of the SA objectives are scored adversely, some with significant adverse effects.	29
	Unsustainable location – development would be unacceptably harmful (and mitigation not deemed possible)	These sites only passed the early stages SA appraisal. In most cases a number of the objectives and criteria were scored adversely, many of them for highly weighted objectives. In some instances the SA objectives were mostly scored as acceptable but the site was assessed as unsustainable due to single issues e.g. the site is in existing viable use as a residential plot.	411
x	Critical Criteria Failures	Screened out under the critical criteria and not assessed further.	104

- 9.4 With regard to finding alternative options, it has always been clear to New Forest District Council that the requirements of the NPPF in relation to boosting the supply of housing would require a significant uplift in housing delivery. This led to the early decision to assess all land across the plan area (outside the settlement boundaries) in order to identify any land that was suitable (i.e. sustainable) for development. Those sites scored as 'red' – *Unsustainable location* were screened out early on in the SA process and have only been reconsidered where robust technical evidence demonstrated that the SA conclusion should change.

⁶⁵ <http://maps.newforest.gov.uk/publicmap8/Map.aspx?MapName=StrategicLandAssessment>

- 9.5 Consequently the potential to find ‘alternatives’ with regard to site selection was very limited - all sites deemed sustainable were considered for development – save for the decision on Green Belt which has a clear impact on housing delivery and the targets to be adopted.

Green Belt scenarios

- 9.6 The independent review of the green belt has informed the options that were available to the council in meeting its housing need and **Chapter 9** sets out a sustainability appraisal assessment of these three consultation (housing delivery) scenarios against the 10 Sustainability Objectives.
- 9.8 Scenario One: Protect and retain as Green Belt all land currently in Green Belt
- Identified capacity for around 8,980 homes (around 800 homes on sites of 10 or more homes, around 1,000 homes small developments of up to 9 homes, 2,700 from commitments and small sites, 3,100 homes on new sites outside the Green Belt, and 1,380 homes on Fawley Power Station site).
 - As a result 100% of the Green Belt would be retained, and 86% of housing needs would be met, a shortfall of 1,440 homes (assessed against the 2017 OAN).
- 9.9 Scenario Two: Protect and retain as Green Belt land in Green Belt that performs strongly or relatively strongly as Green Belt
- Release for development Green Belt land that performs moderately or weakly as Green Belt, if it is also a sustainable location for housing development.
 - Identified capacity for around 10,500 homes (around 800 homes on sites of 10 or more homes, around 1,000 homes small developments of up to 9 homes, 2,700 from commitments and small sites, 3,100 homes on new sites outside the Green Belt, 1,380 homes on Fawley Power Station site, and 1,525 homes on sustainable sites in Green Belt that perform weakly or moderately as Green Belt).
 - As a result 97% of the Green Belt would be retained, and 101% of housing needs would be met (assessed against the 2017 OAN).
- 9.10 Scenario Three: Release all sustainable locations for housing development from Green Belt
- Identified capacity for around 12,855 homes (around 800 homes on sites of 10 or more homes, around 1,000 homes small developments of up to 9 homes, 2,700 from commitments and small sites, 3,100 homes on new sites outside the Green Belt, 1,380 homes on Fawley Power Station site, 1,525 homes on sustainable sites in Green Belt that perform weakly or moderately as Green Belt, and 2,350 homes on land that performs more strongly as Green Belt).
 - As a result 94% of the Green Belt would be retained, and 122% of housing needs would be met (assessed against the 2017 OAN).
- 9.11 **Table 9.1** below assesses the three Green Belt consultation scenarios against our ten SA objectives, setting out a conclusion for each relevant objective and commenting on the extent to which Green Belt is relevant and significant.

Consideration of Green Belt scenarios for SA appraisal

- 9.12 The choices we have made about the release of Green Belt land involve a trade-off between the significant social and economic benefits of providing and if possible fully meeting housing needs, and the potential for significant harm to the environment and important landscapes.
- 9.13 The social and economic benefits also included some important consequential effects of providing additional housing. More affordable housing could also be provided including more starter homes. The local economy would benefit in terms of general demand for goods and services. The locally resident working age population (which is projected to fall by 2,200) would

be larger than it otherwise would be and in principle better able to meet the needs of the local economy without the need for longer distance commuting and its harmful environmental consequences.

- 9.14 The environmental and landscape consequences needed to be weighed in the balance. There are two points to note:-
- 9.15 First, the general status of land as Green Belt (rather than other undesignated countryside) has no direct bearing on the level of harm to the environment or landscape that might arise from its release for development. This is because Green Belt is not designated on the basis of environmental or landscape quality or sensitivity. The impacts and the sustainability balance will vary from site to site and this has been assessed in more detail through the SA framework.
- 9.16 Second, whilst the Green Belt status of land has no specific bearing on the potential for environmental and landscape harm to be realised, in the context of this District the use of Green Belt land would enable higher levels of housing growth. Therefore decisions about release of Green Belt land bring into play the potential for greater harmful environmental and landscape impacts of higher levels of housing development if the sites – as in our case – are on green field land. The most significant potential impacts are:
- The potentially harmful impact on sensitive and high quality landscapes, and in particular on the purposes and landscape of the New Forest National Park that may arise from increased development on its periphery.
 - The potentially higher impacts on the protected habitats and species, and in particular on the New Forest SPA and SAC, that arise may from increased recreational pressures likely with higher levels of housing growth.
- 9.17 Looking at the three scenarios in turn:
- **Scenario 1** whilst giving maximum protection to Green Belt is likely to give rise to significantly adverse social effects in that a significant proportion of housing needs would not be met, with related adverse but less severe consequences for the local economy and labour supply. This scenario has less potential for environmental harm to landscape and biodiversity, although all the proposed sites have been selected to avoid development in the most sensitive locations.
 - **Scenario 2** improves significantly upon scenario 1 by meeting housing needs in full and supporting the economy. Potential for environmental harm to landscape and biodiversity is similar to scenario 1, as the release of weak to moderately performing Green Belt sites does not introduce significantly more development near to the National Park or other more sensitive areas. It also enables more homes to be provided in locations more accessible to opportunities and facilities.
 - **Scenario 3** performs over and above in terms of meeting housing need, with associated benefits in terms of economic objectives. However this scenario has the most potential for environmental harm to landscape and biodiversity, including some large sites close to or bordering the National Park, although all the proposed sites have been selected to avoid development in the most sensitive locations. Residual impacts would require more extensive mitigation and buffering assuming which significant harm to the environment could be avoided.
- 9.18 The extent to which potential harm to the landscape and to habitats and species actually occurs would depend to an extent on how site proposals are developed. There is significant scope to mitigate potentially adverse effects. Local Plan policies including site specific policies have an important role in helping to ensure effective mitigation is achieved. With good quality site master planning and landscaping and the provision of attractive areas as recreational mitigation it is possible that additional housing development could achieve net benefits in landscape and environmental terms.

Table 9.1: Sustainability Appraisal of Green Belt Scenarios

SA Objectives for Local Plan Review	Scenario 1 Protect ALL Green Belt. Total supply c8,980 homes	Scenario 2 Protect STRONGER Green Belt. Total supply c10,500 homes	Scenario 3 Sustainable sites in Green Belt released. Total Supply c12,855 homes	Commentary
1. Meeting Housing Needs To provide for local housing needs	--	+	++	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relevance of Green Belt land release to this objective: Highly relevant. • Decisions about the extent of protection of the existing Green Belt would significantly affect how the Local Plan would perform against this SA objective. • Releasing land in sustainable locations from the Green Belt for development would enable more homes to be provided to better meet housing needs • The release of all potentially sustainable locations for housing from Green Belt that performs weakly or moderately would provide enough land for all housing needs to be fully met • The amount of affordable housing (including starter homes) and other types of specialised housing provided would likely increase if the total amount of housing provided increased.
2. Accessible Opportunities, Facilities and Services To provide a range of services, facilities and opportunities that are accessible to the local community and reduce the need to travel	0	0?	+?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relevance of Green Belt land release to this objective: Moderate and mixed relevance. • Not relevant for new facilities and services, some relevance for access to existing facilities, services and opportunities. • To achieve a ++ assessment rating: would require all proposed sites to have very good access to a wide range of services and facilities; whether existing, provided on site or a mix of both. • Some sustainable locations in the Green Belt, and especially stronger performing Green Belt, have better than average access to existing facilities and opportunities including public transport in some of the larger towns in the district, probably better than would otherwise be available or could be provided in alternative (new) locations elsewhere • Not relevant for new facilities and services which would for the most part be provided alongside new homes, whether or not the homes were on land currently in Green Belt.
3. Safe and Healthy Environments To provide safe, healthy and secure living environments including by preventing, avoiding or managing flooding, pollution, other significant hazards and the potential for crime.	Screened out for the assessment of differing strategic approaches to the release of land in Green Belt for housing development.			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relevance of Green Belt land release to this objective: Limited relevance, screened out for the assessment of differing strategic approaches to the release of land in Green Belt <p>Observations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Neither the status of land as Green Belt nor the development of land in Green Belt would have any bearing on whether or not a safe and healthy living and working environment could be provided.

SA Objectives for Local Plan Review	Scenario 1 Protect ALL Green Belt. Total supply c8,980 homes	Scenario 2 Protect STRONGER Green Belt. Total supply c10,500 homes	Scenario 3 Sustainable sites in Green Belt released. Total Supply c12,855 homes	Commentary
4. A Thriving Economy Support a thriving, sustainable local economy making best use of local skills, assets and resources.	-?	-0?	+?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relevance of Green Belt land release to this objective: Limited and indirect relevance • To achieve a ++ assessment rating: The Local Plan would provide for the full range of identified or likely business and employment needs. • The district already has strategic employment land reserves available outside the Green Belt. But land in Green Belt provides the only realistic option to meet needs for smaller and flexible premises for smaller local businesses to start up or expand into in the southern coastal towns. • Higher levels of residential development arising if land in Green Belt is included would likely result in greater levels of demand for services provided by some local business including shops, and could offer more local employment and contracting opportunities. • Potential use of land in Green Belt is not relevant to the tourism sector or for skills/training.
5. Protecting Biodiversity and Wildlife Protect and enhance biodiversity and safeguard wildlife and the integrity of nature conservation sites	-0?	-0?	-?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relevance of Green Belt land release to this objective: Significant in terms of the quantum of housing that could be delivered rather than anything specific to Green Belt status. • To achieve a ++ assessment rating: Habitat mitigation and green infrastructure provision alongside development would need to significantly improve habitats, benefit protected species and other wildlife, and enhance European nature conservation sites (Natura 2000 sites). • Development anywhere in the district requires mitigation for recreational impacts on the New Forest SPA and SAC. • All development has the potential to adversely affect other local biodiversity, whether or not the land is Green Belt. The extent of potential harm will vary from site to site relative to the proximity and significance of habitats and species in the locality, and sites in Green Belt do not appear to have more local biodiversity value thus potential for harm. • Potential for harm does not mean that harm would be realised. On a site by site basis green infrastructure provision (reinforcing existing GI features) and recreational mitigation for habitat impacts should adequately mitigate potential impacts and may lead to improvements at site level. • Whilst there is scope for development to have a neutral or beneficial effect on wildlife and biodiversity at site level, higher levels of development are on balance more likely to be more harmful and to increase the base level of habitat disturbance, even if these effects are adequately mitigated to avoid significant harm.

SA Objectives for Local Plan Review	Scenario 1 Protect ALL Green Belt. Total supply c8,980 homes	Scenario 2 Protect STRONGER Green Belt. Total supply c10,500 homes	Scenario 3 Sustainable sites in Green Belt released. Total Supply c12,855 homes	Commentary
<p>6. Accessible Green Space, Coast and Water Bodies</p> <p>Protect and where possible provide and enhance public open spaces, green infrastructure & access to the countryside, coast & water bodies.</p>	<p>Screened out for the assessment of differing strategic approaches to the release of land in Green Belt for housing development.</p>			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relevance of Green Belt land release to this objective: Limited relevance, screened out for the assessment of differing strategic approaches to the release of land in Green Belt. <p>Observations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The status of land as Green Belt or not has no bearing on the potential of individual sites to provide open space and to protect, provide or enhance access to countryside and coast • It could be argued that if development options in Green Belt are included, more sites would be developed and as a consequence more open space would be provided, and more currently private land would become accessible for public recreation.
<p>7. Protecting Landscape and Townscape</p> <p>To maintain, enhance and create high quality places.</p>	-/0?	-?	-	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relevance of Green Belt land release to this objective: mixed and site-specific • To achieve a ++ assessment rating: new development would be to a high standard of design and appropriate to its context in terms of form and materials, with a layout, landscaping and planting that preserves and enhances the quality of the landscape and important landscape and townscape features. Much of the detail could only be judged at planning application stage. • Potential development sites in Green Belt include some land that borders or is very close to important landscape features including the New Forest National Park and Conservation Areas, increasing the potential for harmful impacts (unless adequately mitigated) • Any growth and more so higher growth scenarios would reduce the extent of physical separation between some settlements, but is unlikely to result in the physical or visual coalescence of settlements. • No proposed sites are of high landscape value or sensitivity in their entirety, and none are in the most tranquil or remote rural areas. We would expect more sensitive parts of development sites to be protected and enhanced within any development scheme, for example mitigating landscape impacts whilst also providing recreational mitigation for habitat impacts. • Release of strongly performing Green Belt would have some local impact on the sense of open countryside, although Green Belt status is not an indicator of landscape or townscape quality.

SA Objectives for Local Plan Review	Scenario 1 Protect ALL Green Belt. Total supply c8,980 homes	Scenario 2 Protect STRONGER Green Belt. Total supply c10,500 homes	Scenario 3 Sustainable sites in Green Belt released. Total Supply c12,855 homes	Commentary
<p>8. Conserving Heritage</p> <p>To conserve, manage and enhance historic buildings and places</p>	0?	0?	0?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relevance of Green Belt land release to this objective: Limited strategic relevance, some relevance at individual site level • To achieve a ++ assessment rating: new development should avoid harm to and wherever possible enhance heritage assets and their settings, especially heritage assets at risk • The extent or sensitivity of heritage assets so differences between the three Green Belt scenarios do not significantly affect how the Local Plan performs against this objective. • North Lymington site adjoins a conservation area than encompasses Buckland Rings Scheduled Ancient Monument. North Marchwood site adjoins the RNAD conservation area. Various listed buildings or their settings could be affected by future development in or out of Green Belt but in principle potential adverse effects are likely to be avoidable or able to be mitigated assuming the Local Plan includes appropriate general and site specific policies for heritage assets.
<p>9. Sustainable Natural Resources</p> <p>To conserve or manage natural resources and their sustainable use within environmental limits.</p>	0?	0?	-?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relevance of Green Belt land release to this objective: Limited, indirect and mainly site-specific relevance • To achieve a ++ assessment rating: new development should avoid harm to and maximise the beneficial use of natural resources. • There is no intrinsic difference between land designated Green Belt or not in terms of sustainable resource management, resource potential varies from site to site • A number of sites including almost all in the Green Belt have potential sand or gravel resource. Where commercially viable and compatible with neighbouring uses the resource is likely to be worked prior to development, but perhaps not utilised as fully as it otherwise would be. • Further investigation is required to consider effects in the water cycle and water bodies for all site proposals, but in general terms the higher levels of development that would arise if Green Belt sites are included would increase resource demand and potential impacts on water bodies.

SA Objectives for Local Plan Review	Scenario 1 Protect ALL Green Belt. Total supply c8,980 homes	Scenario 2 Protect STRONGER Green Belt. Total supply c10,500 homes	Scenario 3 Sustainable sites in Green Belt released. Total Supply c12,855 homes	Commentary
<p>10. Managing Climate Change</p> <p>To minimise contributions to climate change and mitigate and adapt to its effects.</p>	<p>Screened out for the assessment of differing strategic approaches to the release of land in Green Belt for housing development.</p>			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relevance of Green Belt land release to this objective: Limited and indirect relevance, screened out for the assessment of differing strategic approaches to the release of land in Green Belt <p>Observations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The status of land as Green Belt has no direct bearing on the climate change implications of developing that site. • No proposed strategic housing site whether or not in Green Belt is in Flood Risk Zones 2 or 3, excepting small or peripheral parts in FZ2 likely if allocated to form part of the landscaping, open space or habitat mitigation areas. Draft SA will be updated with more detailed SFRA assessment • It could be argued that use of Green Belt sites would increase the overall level development and thus increase overall climate change impacts. On the other hand some of the largest proposed Green Belt sites offer the greatest potential to access facilities and services by public transport, walking and cycling.

Consideration of alternative sites promoted to the council

- 9.19 The council received a number of omission sites promoted on behalf of landowners. Some of these adjoined proposed sites, whilst others were standalone parcels of land. The council has appraised these under the SA framework and **Appendix 6** sets out the detailed SA of omission sites received by the council.

Strategic Housing Land and Land Availability Assessment and the SA process

- 9.20 The council has updated its Strategic Housing and Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA) and that work draws its conclusions in relation to suitability for housing directly from the work carried out in this SA site assessment for each parcel of land in the plan area. In this way the council has appraised the whole district for the suitability of housing sites both for larger strategic sites as well as for the smaller sites and brownfield sites within the built up areas. It also assessed land adjoining the defined built-up areas of the towns and villages in order to identify any further edge of settlement sites where there may be potential for smaller-scale development. This provides a consistent and comprehensive appraisal of land to identify future potential housing sites.

10. Appraisal of strategic policies and alternatives

- 10.1 The Local Plan sets out site-specific policies for strategic development sites within New Forest District.
- 10.2 The strategic policies that are included in the Local Plan have been appraised against the SA framework (set out in the Policy Assessment Matrix in **Appendix 4**), with a description of the projected position in relation to the SA questions with no policy change/intervention. The appraisal asked what effect would the proposed policy option have relative to the 'no change' position (++ /- - etc) and why. It is important to note that a positive rating for policies is for a relative improvement, whereas for site selection it was against an absolute standard. The assumptions/judgements that were made in evaluation of the option and how any adverse effects could be avoided or mitigated are also set out in full in **Appendix 3**.
- 10.3 The detailed appraisal matrices for each policy can be seen in full in **Appendix 5** along with appraisals of the reasonable alternatives to each policy.

SA Objective 1: MEETING HOUSING NEEDS

- 10.4 A number of the policies are expected to have positive effects associated with this objective as several of the policies allow for the development of new housing, including affordable housing and accommodation for meeting the needs of older people. In particular, **significant positive effects** are identified in relation to **Policy STR5: Meeting our Housing Needs** which sets out a housing target, and **Policies 16-20** as these policies identify a means to help to safeguard residential accommodation for groups in particular need or particular housing needs/types as identified in the evidence base.
- 10.5 However, a small number of **minor negative effects** have also been identified where policies may be seen as potentially restrictive to residential development (either directly or indirectly); for example **Policy ENV2: The South West Hampshire Green Belt** and **Policy CCC1: Safe and healthy communities** which protects areas that might otherwise have been made available for housing development.

SA Objective 2: ACCESSIBLE OPPORTUNITIES, FACILITIES AND SERVICES

- 10.6 The majority of the Local Plan policies are likely to have **positive effects** on this objective. In particular, **significant positive effects** are identified in relation to **Policy STR7: Strategic transport proposals**, **Policy STR8: Community service and infrastructure development**, **Policy CCC2: Safe and sustainable travel**, and **Policy IMPL1: Developer contributions**. These will deliver the improvements to access and the delivery of new facilities at various locations around the plan area.

SA Objective 3: SAFE AND HEALTHY ENVIRONMENTS

- 10.7 A large number of the policies are not relevant to this objective; however **significant positive effects** are associated with **Policy HOU4: Gypsies, travellers and travelling showpeople** (facilitating the provision of sites that deliver safe and healthy environments for those with a travelling lifestyle) and **Policy CCC1: Safe and Healthy Communities**, which provides protection from development within areas at risk of coastal erosion, areas at risk of fluvial and coastal flooding, contaminated land, and various hazard zones.

SA Objective 4: A THRIVING ECONOMY

- 10.8 Most of the development management policies are likely to have an impact on the delivery of this objective. **Most of the likely effects identified are positive**; however there are uncertain impacts associated with some as they will depend on implementation / mitigation to achieve an acceptable impact. **Policy HOU3: Residential accommodation for older people** will provide registered care homes that bring employment opportunities throughout the lifetime of the development, and **Policy ECON1: Employment Land and Development** will support local businesses, and encourage and support appropriate employment development. **Uncertain impacts** are associated with **Policy STR7: Strategic Transport Proposals**, **Policy HOU4: Gypsies, travellers and travelling showpeople** (this will

depend on the requirements of individual applicants, but could include elements of employment opportunity), and Policy CCC2: Safe and sustainable travel.

SA Objective 5: PROTECTING BIODIVERSITY AND WILDLIFE

- 10.9 Many of the identified effects on this objective are **uncertain / dependent on implementation**, and a few having positive impacts associated with proposals which should help to relieve pressure on sensitive areas.
- 10.10 **Significant positive effects** are identified for **Policy ENV1**: Mitigating the Impact of Development on International Nature Conservation Sites, which sets a strong framework for the delivery of mitigation measures designed to prevent adverse effects on the integrity of international nature conservation sites. Other **positive effects** are identified for policy approaches that support the aims of Policy ENV1, in relation to locating new development (**Policy STR3**) and criteria relating to transport and infrastructure schemes (**Policies STR7, STR8, and IMPL1**).
- 10.11 However, **uncertain impacts** are likely in relation to a number of policies – mostly with regard to development where schemes are yet to be submitted/determined, or the requisite mitigation measures are yet to be submitted by promoters. Strategic policies and Site policies seek to mitigate this by ensuring that the required measures are set out clearly for each development site.

SA Objective 6: ACCESSIBLE GREEN SPACE, COAST AND WATER BODIES

- 10.12 None of the policies will have a significant impact on the delivery of this objective; however where likely effects have been identified, all are positive. **Minor positive effects** are expected to result from policies which aim to protect and enhance green space, public open space, and the coast (e.g. **Policy ENV1**: Mitigating the Impacts of Development, and **Policy ENV3**: Design quality and Local Distinctiveness).
- 10.13 **Uncertain impacts** are associated with the delivery of this objective with regard to some of the policies - these are mostly housing policies which deal with meeting housing need, types, size, and rural exception sites. How they deliver this objective will depend on implementation and in particular the merits of the landscape and the final layout, density and design.

SA Objective 7: PROTECTING LANDSCAPE AND TOWNSCAPE

- 10.14 The majority of strategic policies have no effect or are dependent on implementation. **Positive effects** on the objective are assessed for **Policy ENV4**: Landscape character and quality, and policies relating to the location of the location of housing which prevents significantly adverse impacts on the landscape and green belt (**Policy STR2**: Protection of the Countryside etc, and Policy STR3: The Strategy for Locating New Development). However, **uncertain or mixed effects** have been identified in relation to a number of policies for this objective, in particular Policy STR5: Meeting Housing Need, and Policy HOU1: Housing type, size and choice where mixed effects have been identified in relation to Green Belt; some allocated sites include some weak to moderate Green Belt although development may provide some landscape enhancement.

SA Objective 8: CONSERVING HERITAGE

- 10.15 None of the policies will have a significant impact on the delivery of this objective; however **where likely effects have been identified, all are positive**. **Policy STR1**: Achieving Sustainable Development, **Policy STR2**: Protection of the Countryside etc, Policy STR7: Strategic Transport Priorities, and **Policy ENV4**: Landscape character and quality, all provide positive criteria for supporting development that protects or enhances the heritage or character of the Plan Area (in support of saved policy DM1).
- 10.16 However, **uncertain impacts** are likely in relation to a number of policies – mostly with regard to development where schemes are yet to be submitted/determined. Detailed considerations in regard to heritage assets are determined at the planning application stage.

SA Objective 9: SUSTAINABLE NATURAL RESOURCES

- 10.17 The majority have no effect or are dependent on implementation. **Positive effects** on the objective are assessed for **Policy STR1**: Achieving Sustainable Development (which supports developments that contribute to the economy), **Policy STR7**: Strategic Transport Proposals (which Policy ensures that major projects can be achieved without an unacceptable impact on the local environment) and **Policies ECON1-3** which relate to the retention of employment sites, some of which are involved in the processing of natural resources such as minerals.
- 10.18 However, **uncertain effects** are likely in relation to a number of policies which are dependent on implementation where schemes are yet to be promoted, or the requisite mitigation measures are yet to be submitted by promoters. In some cases the management of an adverse impact (e.g. water quality in the Avon area) is yet to be agreed by the relevant statutory body and/or infrastructure providers. Strategic policies and site policies seek to mitigate adverse effects by ensuring that the required measures are set out clearly for each development site.
- 10.19 **Mixed effects** are identified for **Policy STR6**: Sustainable Economic Growth provides for small new employment land provision in Ringwood and Totton in locations that have very good access to the strategic road network. But new employment provision as part of mixed-use residential-led strategic site allocations will result in the loss of some medium quality agricultural land, and will likely result in an increase in waste generation. However, the policy encourages the use of brownfield land and redundant buildings which will have a positive effect on the objective and provides for new employment development as part of a comprehensive mixed use redevelopment of the former Fawley Power Station site.

SA Objective 10: MANAGING CLIMATE CHANGE

- 10.20 In general, the development management policies are likely to have a positive impact on climate change mitigation. **Positive effects** on the objective are assessed for a number of policies. **Policy STR1**: Achieving Sustainable Development (which all new development needs to ensure that development is accessible by sustainable transport modes. Locating new development in sustainable locations helps to minimise the need to travel and reduce greenhouse gas emissions). **Policy STR7**: Strategic Transport Proposals ensures that major projects can be achieved without an unacceptable impact on the local environment, **Policy STR8**: Community service and infrastructure development (which encourages alternative modes of transport), and **Policy ENV3**: Design quality and local distinctiveness, where development should incorporate design measures that improve resource efficiency and climate change resilience, such as grey water recycling, natural heating and cooling and the use of Suds. In addition, **Policies ECON1 and ECON2** primarily support employment development within built-up areas where there are greater alternative modes of transport (buses, trains, cycling, walking) available which should provide jobs close to where people live and will minimise the need to travel by private car.
- 10.21 However, potential **mixed impacts** from **Policies STR5 and STR6** arise due to parts of some sites being within Flood Zones 2 and 3 (which can be mitigated to be safe and help resolve flood risks elsewhere). Nonetheless locating new development in sustainable locations identified in the policy helps to minimise the need to travel, and reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

Summary of Effects

- 10.22 The likely effects of the strategic policies are summarised below in **Table 10.1** by SA objective. It should be noted that ‘saved’ policies from the previous Local Plan Part 1: Core Strategy and the Local Plan Part 2: Sites and Development Management have already been subject to Sustainability Appraisal and therefore are not covered by this policy appraisal.

Table 10.1: Strategic policy appraisals summary table (excludes ‘saved’ policies)

Policy	SA Objectives												
	Housing	Accessible facilities	Safe & Healthy environments	Economy	Biodiversity & Wildlife	Accessible spaces	Landscape & Townscape	Green Belt	Heritage	Natural resources	Contribution to climate change	Flood risk	
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7a	7b	8	9	10 a	10 b	
STR1 - Sustainable Development	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	
STR2 - Countryside, National Park and AONB	+/-	0	0	0	0	+	+	0	+	0	0	0	
STR3 -Strategy for locating new development	0	0	0	+	+	+	+	+	0	0	0	0	
STR4 - Settlement hierarchy	0	+	0	+	0	0	?i	0	0	0	0	0	
STR5 - Meeting housing need	++	+	?i	+	?i	?i	?i	+/-	?i	?i	+	+/-	
STR6 - Sustainable economic growth	0	+	0	++	0	0	?i	0	0	+/-	+	+/-	
STR7 - Strategic transport proposals	0	++	+	?i	+	+	+	+	+	++	+	++	
STR8 - Community services, infrastructure and facilities	+	++	+	+	+	+	+	+	?i	?i	+	+	
ENV1 - Mitigating impact of development on international nature conservation sites	+	0	0	0	++	+	0	0	0	0	0	0	
ENV2 - South west Hampshire Green Belt	-	0	0	0	?i	0	0	+	0	0	0	0	
ENV3 - Design quality and local distinctiveness	0	0	+	0	0	+	?i	0	0	0	+	0	
ENV4 - Landscape character and quality	0	0	0	0	0	0	++	0	+	0	0	0	
HOU1 - Housing type, size and choice	+	0	0	+	?i	?i	0	+/-	0	?i	0	?i	
HOU2 - Affordable housing	++	0	0	+	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
HOU3 - Residential accommodation for older people	+	+	+	++	0	0	?i	0	0	0	0	0	
HOU4 - Gypsies, travellers and travelling showpeople	++	+	++	?i	0	0	++	++	+	0	0	0	
HOU5 - Rural Housing Exception Sites and Community Led Housing Schemes	++	+	0	+	?i	?i	?i	?i	?i	0	?i	?i	
ECON1 - Employment land and development	0	+	+	++	?i	0	?i	0	?i	+	+	0	
ECON2 - Retention of employment sites and consideration of alternative uses	+	+	0	+	0	0	+	0	0	+	0	0	
ECON3 - Marchwood Port	0	0	0	+	0	0	?i	0	0	+	+	0	
ECON4 - Port development at Dibden Bay	0	0	0	+	?i	0	?i	0	0	?i	?i	0	
ECON5 - Retail development and other main town centre uses	0	+	0	+	0	0	?i	0	?i	0	0	0	
ECON6 - Primary, secondary and local shopping frontages	0	+	0	+	0	0	0	0	?i	0	0	0	
CCC1 - Safe and healthy communities	-	0	++	0	+	0	+	0	?i	0	0	0	
CCC2 - Safe and sustainable travel	0	+	+	?i	?i	?i	?i	?i	?i	+	?i	+	
IMPL1 - Developer contributions	?i	++	+	+	+	+	?i	?i	?i	?i	?i	?i	
IMPL2 - Development standards	?i	+	+	0	+	0	0	0	?i	+	+	0	
IMPL3 - Monitoring	?i	?i	?i	?i	?i	?i	?i	?i	?i	?i	?i	?i	

11. Appraisal of site-specific policies

- 11.1 The Local Plan Proposed Submission document set out site-specific proposals for development within New Forest District. These include allocations and/or policies for residential and employment development.
- 11.2 The sustainability implications of developing each site for the purposes specified in the Local Plan, and of implementing the proposed boundary changes, have been appraised against the SA framework, with a rating being attributed to each headline objective. As described in **Chapter 6**, the sites proposed for residential were also scored against each of the detailed sub-questions for the headline objectives (these detailed criteria are set out in **Appendix 1**). It is important to note that these SA scores relate to a ‘policy on’ position, whereby the relevant measures have been applied to deal with require mitigation measures (set out in **Chapter 13**).
- 11.3 The appraisal of the sites that have been allocated for residential against each headline SA objective are set out in **Appendix 6**. **Chapter 9** explains how the council considered all reasonable alternatives to the sites allocated for residential and these were also subject to SA assessment.

SA Objective 1: MEETING HOUSING NEEDS

- 11.4 Without exception all the Local Plan site-specific policies are likely to have a **significant positive effect** on this objective. They will deliver a sizeable number of homes, with good levels of affordable housing provision when taking viability into account.

SA Objective 2: ACCESSIBLE OPPORTUNITIES, FACILITIES AND SERVICES

- 11.5 The majority of the site-specific policies are likely to have **positive impacts** on this objective. Except for the **SS4** Fawley site, they are located adjacent to existing settlements and therefore have access to a range of existing facilities. SS4 former Fawley Power Station policy sets out the delivery of a mixed use development for 10,000 sqm of community, retail leisure and service uses on site as well as 10ha of land for business and industrial uses. This is a **significant positive impact** for the site and the local area.

SA Objective 3: SAFE AND HEALTHY ENVIRONMENTS

- 11.6 All the site-specific policies have been judged to have a **positive impact** on this objective by requiring highway and other access improvements / enhancements, and clearly demonstrating how they will mitigate for the presence of activities generating pollutions (e.g. odour, contaminated land etc). Each site-specific policy identifies specific considerations to the locality and sets out criteria to address those issues.

SA Objective 4: A THRIVING ECONOMY

- 11.7 The majority of the site-specific policies are likely to have **positive impacts** on this objective except for the **SS4** Fawley site which is judged to have **significant positive impacts**. They are likely to benefit the economy in relation to construction jobs and the subsequent spending within the local economy from new homeowners.

SA Objective 5: PROTECTING BIODIVERSITY AND WILDLIFE

- 11.8 Without exception all the Local Plan site-specific policies are likely to have a **significant positive impact** on this objective. Each development must provide full mitigation land to avoid adverse impacts from recreational pressures. In addition this will involve the enhancement of biodiversity through the identified and enhancement of natural green spaces and networks. Each site policy sets out the master planning objectives that each scheme must comply with, according to the specific natural features and local nature conservation sensitivities.

SA Objective 6: ACCESSIBLE GREEN SPACE, COAST AND WATER BODIES

- 11.9 All the site-specific policies have been judged to have a **positive impact** on this objective. All the sites will have to provide public open space and children's play. In most cases this will enhance the existing local open space provision and help to further protect / enhance natural features such as water bodies through the provision of recreational natural green space within each site. This will also deliver positive outcomes for local residents.

SA Objective 7: PROTECTING LANDSCAPE AND TOWNSCAPE

- 11.10 A number of the site-specific policies are likely to have **positive effects** associated with the landscape/townscape element of this objective (7a). This is the case where the policy specifically identifies landscape features or elements that will require addressing by site master plans. Where the policies are silent on those specific points there are uncertain impacts associated with the site; the final effect on this objective would only become clear during the implementation phase through the planning application stage. With regard to Green Belt (7b), those sites that are outside the green belt will have **no effect** on this element of the objective, whilst those that are within the green belt are deemed to have **mixed impacts**; they have the potential to have an adverse impact on the purposes of green belt but also having the opportunity to enhance the purpose of green belt through design/urban edge treatment.

SA Objective 8: CONSERVING HERITAGE

- 11.11 The majority of the site-specific policies have **no effect** on this objective due to the lack of heritage features in the vicinity. However for sites **SS3** (North of Marchwood), **SS4** (Fawley Power Station), **SS11** (SW of New Milton), and **SS14** (East of Ringwood), there are heritage features adjoining or within the setting of the site which would need to be conserved and enhanced. At this stage there is not enough information to make a conclusive judgement but Saved Policy DM1 sets out how development must identify and appraise impacts on the historic environment and heritage assets. The implementation requirements therefore remain **uncertain** until the development stage.

SA Objective 9: SUSTAINABLE NATURAL RESOURCES

- 11.12 The majority of site-specific policies have **uncertain impacts** associated with this objective. For example some of the sites contain potential mineral resources which will require further investigation, and others are dependent on the implementation of sewer network improvements.
- 11.13 The one clear exception to this is the **SS4** Fawley former power station site – this is previously developed land and will have some degree of contamination, which redevelopment of the site will remediate so that the land can be reused for a beneficial use. This is a **significant positive impact**.

SA Objective 10: MANAGING CLIMATE CHANGE

- 11.14 All the site-specific policies have been judged to have a **positive impact** on this objective. With regard to minimising contributions to climate change (10a) the sites are likely to have **positive effects** due to being located in a sustainable and accessible location which will help to minimise the need to travel, and reduce greenhouse gas emissions. In relation to mitigating and adapting to flood risk (10b) the sites are mostly located in Flood Zone 1 (low flood risk) whilst those that are exposed to elements of Flood Zones 2&3 have been subject to a Level 2 Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA) and can be made safe through mitigation whilst also improving the level of flood risk downstream in some cases.

Summary of Effects

11.15 The likely effects of the site-specific policies are summarised below in **Table 11.1** by SA objective. It should be noted that ‘saved’ site policies from the previous Local Plan Part 1: Core Strategy and the Local Plan Part 2: Sites and Development Management have already been subject to Sustainability Appraisal and therefore are not covered by this policy appraisal.⁶⁶

Table 11.1: Site-specific policy appraisals summary table (excludes ‘saved’ policies)

Strategic Site		SA Objectives											
		Housing	Accessible facilities	Safe & Healthy	Economy	Biodiversity & Wildlife	Accessible spaces	Landscape / Townscape	Green Belt	Heritage	Natural resources	Contribution to climate change	Flood risk
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7a	7b	8	9	10a	10b
1	Land to the North of Totton	++	+	+	+	++	+	?i	0	+	?i	+	?i
2	Land south of Bury Road, Marchwood	++	+	+	+	++	+	?i	0	0	++	+	?i
3	Land at Cork’s Farm, Marchwood	++	+	+	+	++	+	+	0	?i	?i	+	?i
4	The former Fawley Power Station (mixed-use)	++	++	+	++	++	+	?i	0	?i	++	+	?i
5	Land at Milford Road, Lymington	++	+	+	+	++	+	?i	+/-	0	?i	+	+
6	Land to the east of Lower Pennington Lane, Lymington	++	+	+	+	++	+	?i	+/-	0	?i	+	+
7	Land north of Manor Road, Milford-on-Sea	++	+	+	+	++	+	?i	+/-	0	?i	+	++
8	Land at Hordle Lane, Hordle	++	+	+	+	++	+	+	+/-	0	?i	+	+
9	Land east of Everton Road, Hordle	++	+	+	+	++	+	+	+/-	0	0	+	++
10	Land to the east of Brockhills Lane, New Milton	++	+	+	+	++	+	+	+/-	0	?i	+	+
11	Land to the south of Gore Road, New Milton	++	+	+	+	++	+	+	+/-	?i	?i	+	+
12	Land to the south of Derritt Lane, Bransgore	++	+	+	+	++	+	+	+/-	0	?i	+	?i
13	Land at Moortown Lane, Ringwood	++	+	+	+	++	+	+	+/-	0	?i	+	?i
14	Land to the north of Hightown Road, Ringwood	++	+	+	+	++	+	+	0	?i	0	+	?i
15	Land at Snails Lane, Ringwood	++	+	+	+	++	+	+	0	0	0	+	?i
16	Land to the north of Station Road, Ashford	++	+	+	+	++	+	+	0	0	?i	+	?i
17	Land at Whitsbury Road, Fordingbridge	++	+	+	+	++	+	+	0	0	?i	+	?i
18	Land at Burgate, Fordingbridge	++	+	+	+	++	+	+	0	+	?i	+	+/-

⁶⁶ Part 1 policies: <http://www.newforest.gov.uk/CHttpHandler.ashx?id=12394&p=0>

Part 2 policies: <http://www.newforest.gov.uk/article/14301/Background-Paper-46-Sustainability-Appraisal>

12. Summary of likely significant effects and cumulative effects from the plan

- 12.1 Land Use Consultants (LUC) were commissioned by the Council to carry out a Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) of its Local Plan Part 1.
- 12.2 The requirement to undertake HRA of development plans was confirmed by the amendments to the Habitats Regulations published for England and Wales in 2007⁶⁷; the currently applicable version of the Habitats Regulations came into force in November 2017. The overall purpose of the HRA is to conclude whether or not a proposal or policy, or the whole development plan, would adversely affect the integrity of European sites either alone or in combination with other plans and projects.
- 12.3 The HRA of development plans is undertaken in stages and should conclude whether or not a proposal would adversely affect the integrity of the European sites in question. A screening assessment was undertaken to identify which components of the Local Plan Part 1 have the potential to have likely significant effects on European sites, either alone or in combination with other plans or projects.
- 12.4 **It is important to note that some of the potential effects identified during the HRA are mitigated by policies in the Local Plan Part 1, or by other plans or regulatory mechanisms. Such potential mitigation was taken into consideration in reaching the Appropriate Assessment conclusions.**
- 12.5 As described in the HRA a need for Appropriate Assessment was identified in relation to the following types of likely significant effect of the Local Plan Part1 on European sites:
- direct loss or physical damage to European sites;
 - loss or damage to offsite supporting habitat;
 - urban edge effects;
 - changes in air quality;
 - traffic collision risk;
 - recreation pressure;
 - changes in water quantity;
 - changes in water quality.
- 12.6 **Table 12.1** below summarises the key likely significant effects identified in the HRA.
- 12.7 **Chapter 13** sets out how these likely significant effects will be mitigated.

⁶⁷ *The Conservation (Natural Habitats, &c.) (Amendment) Regulations 2007* (2007) SI No. 2007/1843. TSO (The Stationery Office), London.

Table 12.1: Summary of likely significant effects

Adverse effects not ruled out	SA objectives where potential significant adverse effect	Development identified	Summary of potentially significant effects identified in HRA
Policy STR3: The strategy for locating new development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 5. Protecting Biodiversity and Wildlife 6. Accessible Green Space, Coast and Water Bodies 7. Protecting Landscape and Townscape 9. Sustainable Natural Resources 10. Managing Climate Change 	6,000 homes via strategic allocations SS1 – SS18, including 1,340 homes at former Fawley Power Station	Direct loss or physical damage to European sites
Policy STR4: The settlement hierarchy			Loss or damage to offsite supporting habitat
Policy STR5: Meeting our housing needs (strategic allocations only)			Urban edge effects
Policy site allocations			Changes in air quality Traffic collision risk
Policy STR6: Sustainable economic growth	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 4. A Thriving Economy 5. Protecting Biodiversity and Wildlife 	18 hectares of employment land within the residential-led mixed-use strategic site allocations at Totton (SS1), Fawley (SS4), East Ringwood (SS14)	Recreation pressure on international nature conservation sites Changes in water quantity Changes in water quality
Policy ECON3: Marchwood Port	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 4. A Thriving Economy 5. Protecting Biodiversity and Wildlife 	Port and port-related uses at Marchwood port, including commercial, economic and local employment generating purposes	

Cross boundary cumulative effects

12.8 New Forest District is bordered by four neighbouring planning authorities each with their own spatial strategies for development. They are:

- Christchurch Borough Council (Dorset).
- New Forest National Park Authority (Hampshire).
- Test Valley Borough Council (Hampshire).
- Wiltshire Council (Wiltshire)
- Southampton City Council (Hampshire).

12.9 **Table 12.2** below shows the policies in those plans that are close to the administrative boundary that could have an impact on the Plan Area, and assessment of the impacts on the sustainability appraisal objectives of the Plan.

Table 12.2 – Assessment of cross boundary cumulative effects

Relevant Policies	Commentary on cumulative effects.
Christchurch and East Dorset Local Plan – Adopted April 2014	
Policy CN1 – Urban extension to Christchurch 950 dwellings. Policy CN 2 – Housing allocation in Burton 45 homes.	The additional homes planned will ensure that the housing need arising from Christchurch will be met within its boundaries, alleviating the pressure of the Plan Area as an alternative option for existing Christchurch residents. This is a positive cumulative impact on the SA Objective 1, ‘Meeting housing needs’
Policy CH1 – up to 10,000 sq m of retail floorspace in Christchurch town centre.	The additional retail floorspace could have a positive effect on SA Objective 2 ‘ Accessible opportunities, facilities and services’ to district residents, as it will help maintain Christchurch’s position in the retail hierarchy, which serves residents to the east of the Plan Area. This could encourage linked trips and be an alternative for residents who would otherwise have to travel further to carry out their shopping and service needs. However, it could also encourage more residents to travel to Christchurch and thereby threaten the viability of the Plan area centres of New Milton which could be a negative impact on SA objective 2 ‘Accessible opportunities, facilities and services’ on the plan area.
New Forest National Park Local Plan – submission draft May 2018	
Policy SP22 - Housing allocation in Ashurst for 60 homes. Policy SP23 - Housing allocation in Lyndhurst for 50 homes. Policy SP22 - Housing allocation in Sway for 40 homes.	The additional homes planned will ensure that the housing need arising from the National Park will be met within its boundaries, alleviating the pressure of the Plan Area as an alternative option for existing National Park residents. This is a positive cumulative impact on the SA objective 1, ‘Meeting housing needs’
Policy SP22 - Housing allocation in Fawley for 120 homes.	This is a cross boundary allocation in tandem with the Local Plan Strategic Site 4 at the former Fawley Power Station. The allocation will provide habitat mitigation, supporting infrastructure and community facilities (including a primary school) that cannot reasonably be achieved within the Plan Area. This will have positive impact on Objective 1 ‘Meeting housing needs’ , provision of the school will be a significant positive impact on Objective 2 ‘ accessible opportunities, facilities and services’ and a significant positive impact on Objective 5 ‘Protecting biodiversity and wildlife’ with the proposed mitigation land within the National Park plan area.
Test Valley Borough Council Local Plan – Adopted January 2016	
Policy COM3 - Housing allocation in Romsey for 1300 homes and 6ha of employment land and 12.6 ha of open space.	The additional homes planned will ensure that the housing need arising from Romsey and southern Test Valley will be met within its boundaries, alleviating the pressure of the Plan Area as an alternative option for existing Test Valley residents. This is a positive cumulative impact on the SA objective 1, ‘Meeting housing needs’
Policy COM4 - Housing allocation in North Baddesley for 300 homes	This allocation is unlikely to have a cumulative impact on the SA objectives of the Local Plan
Policy LE4 – Brownhill Way. 26,200 sqm of employment land	This allocation is could have a positive cumulative impact on the SA objective 4, ‘a thriving economy’ , as this land may help provide jobs for those residents in the east of the Plan Area, some of who look towards Southampton for employment opportunities.

Relevant Policies	Commentary on cumulative effects.
Policy LE5 – Bargain Farm. 2ha of employment land and a Park and Ride	This allocation is could have a positive cumulative impact on the SA objective 4, ‘a thriving economy’ , as this land may help provide jobs for those residents in the east of the Plan Area, some of who look towards Southampton for employment opportunities. The proposed Park and Ride may provide an alternative to Plan Area residents in order to access job and retail trips in a more sustainable way, therefore this would have a positive impact on Objective 10a, ‘Managing climate change’
Policy LHW2 – Allocation of a Forest park	This allocation is likely to have a positive cumulative impact on SA objective 6 ‘Accessible green space..’ of the Local Plan as it will provide a new open space facility to residents of Test Valley and its surrounding areas, will have a positive effect on the recreational pressures in the vicinity.
Wiltshire Core Strategy – Adopted January 2015	
Core Policy ECON3 – Southern Wiltshire community area housing distribution. Downton 190 homes, rest of area 425	These distribution figures could have a negative cumulative impact on the SA objective 9 ‘Sustainable natural resources’ of the Local Plan as the level of development within the Avon catchment could contribute to the increase in Phosphates that needs addressing through the Local Plan.
Core Saved Policy DM4 – Wilton community area housing distribution. Rest of community area 255	These distribution figures are unlikely to have a cumulative impact on the SA objectives of the Local Plan as there are no strategic allocations made and growth is expected to come forward from infill or through the neighbourhood plan process.
Southampton Core Strategy – Adopted March 2015	
Policy CS9 – Southampton Port. Policy supports growth of the port within its boundary.	This policy could have a positive cumulative impact on the SA objective 4, ‘a thriving economy’ , as this land may help provide jobs for those residents in the east of the Plan Area, some of who look towards Southampton for employment opportunities. However, depending on the scale of development this could increase traffic movements through the plan area, in particular on the M27 which could impact on air quality. There is also the issue of the ships while in port, maintain their engines for power, which can increase air pollution in the port, which given its proximity to the Waterside, could increase air pollution in this location. This could be a negative impact on Objective 3, ‘Safe and healthy environments’ in that air quality could be worsened.
Policy CS2 – allocates 110,000 sqm of office space, 97,000 sqm of industrial space and 5450 new homes. There is also a quota of new homes to be delivered in the West of 1500 homes and central 1600 new homes	This allocation is could have a positive cumulative impact on the SA objective 4, ‘a thriving economy’ , as this land may help provide jobs for those residents in the east of the Plan Area, some of who look towards Southampton for employment opportunities. The additional homes planned will also ensure that the housing need arising from the population of Southampton will be met within its boundaries, alleviating the pressure of the Plan area as an alternative option for existing Southampton residents. This is a positive cumulative impact on the SA objective 1, ‘Meeting housing needs’

13. Mitigation

- 13.1 It is a requirement of the SEA Regulations that the plan considers measures to prevent and reduce significant adverse effects on the environment. The potential negative effects identified will be mitigated through a combination of the strategic policies and site-specific policies. **Chapter 12** set out the likely significant effects (**Table 12.1**) and this chapter sets out the mitigation measures that were recommended in the Habitat Regulations Assessment (HRA).

Conclusions and recommendations of the HRA

- 13.2 The HRA screening of the Cabinet draft of the Proposed Submission Local Plan Part 1, alone and in combination with other relevant plans and projects, was unable to rule the following types of likely significant effect on European sites:
- Direct loss or physical damage to European sites;
 - Loss or damage to offsite supporting habitat;
 - Urban edge effects;
 - Changes in air quality;
 - Traffic collision risk;
 - Recreation pressure;
 - Changes in water quantity; and
 - Changes in water quality.
- 13.3 An Appropriate Assessment was carried to determine whether any of these types of effect would result in adverse effects on the integrity of a European site.
- 13.4 The HRA has confirmed that adverse effects on the integrity of the European nature conservation sites in the form of potential **urban edge effects, changes in air quality, traffic collision risk, water quantity** from proposed development can be ruled out for the Local Plan Part 1 both alone and in combination.
- 13.5 The HRA further concludes that policies in the Local Plan adequately mitigate the **loss or damage to offsite supporting habitat for qualifying bird populations**, and that reliance can be placed on the mitigation provided by Policy ENV1, the New Forest (outside of the National Park) Recreational Mitigation Strategy (Review 1), and the Solent Recreation Mitigation Strategy to adequately mitigate **potential recreational pressure** from development proposed by the Local Plan Part 1 and that likely significant effects due to recreation pressure can be ruled out both alone and in combination.
- 13.6 In some cases it has not yet been possible to rule out the potential for adverse effects on integrity, and in these cases recommendations have been made on how these could be ruled out by inclusion of appropriate safeguards within the emerging Local Plan Part 1 policies. The results of the Appropriate Assessment are summarised in **Table 13.1** with notes on how the council will respond in the Local Plan.

Table 13.1 Summary of draft HRA findings and recommendations

Adverse effects on integrity not ruled out	Recommendation	NFDC action
Direct loss or physical damage to Solent and Southampton Water SPA and Ramsar site.	Policy ECON3: Marchwood Port includes text stating that any proposal will need to demonstrate via a project level HRA that it will not have an adverse effect on the integrity of any European sites, including on the adjacent Solent and Southampton Water SPA and Ramsar site.	Policy ECON3 updated to reflect this point.
Loss or damage to offsite supporting habitat for qualifying bird populations of the Avon Valley SPA and Ramsar site; Dorset Heathlands SPA; New Forest SPA; Solent and Southampton Water SPA and Ramsar site.	<p>HRA screening identified that the Local Plan Part 1 allocates a number of development sites in areas where certain qualifying SPA and Ramsar bird species may make use of offsite habitat for foraging, roosting and loafing.</p> <p>Strategic site allocation policies for SS2, SS4, SS5, SS 6, SS12, SS13 and SS 15 include a requirement to undertake site-specific bird surveys to confirm their contribution to in-combination loss of supporting habitat for SPA/Ramsar qualifying bird populations and, if necessary, to inform design of appropriate mitigation as part of site-specific development and masterplanning. If required, site specific mitigation must be deliverable and capable of being implemented successfully.</p>	<p>Incorporated into the supporting text of the site policies listed.</p> <p>Monitoring requirements are also addressed in the councils Recreational Mitigation Strategy for European Sites SPD</p>
Water quality: capacity in sewer and WwTW infrastructure – effects on any hydrologically connected European sites, including the Solent and Southampton Water and Avon Valley European sites from these allocations	Local Plan Part 1 allocation policies SS 1, SS2, SS 3, SS 4, SS 7, SS 11, SS 15 include a requirement for proposers of development to provide a connection to the nearest point of adequate capacity in the sewerage network, as advised by the service provider, and/or to work cooperatively with the service provider to deliver a suitable sewer connection to the nearest WwTW with adequate capacity.	<p>Incorporated into the supporting text of the site policies listed.</p> <p>The Infrastructure Delivery Plan also sets out the requirements for this element.</p>
Water quality: effects of treated wastewater discharges on Solent and Isle of Wight Lagoons SAC, Solent Maritime SAC, Solent and Dorset Coast pSPA, Solent and Southampton Water SPA, and Solent and Southampton Water Ramsar site	<p>Local Plan Part 1 includes a commitment to continue partnership working with the other PUSH authorities, Natural England, the Environment Agency, and the water companies to procure and analyse further evidence and to secure timely mitigation if emerging evidence indicates it is needed.</p> <p>In advance of further information becoming available via Integrated Water Management Strategy (IWMS) partnership working, Local Plan Part 1 includes a requirement for a nutrient budget to be calculated for development proposals for more than 200 houses and for all EIA developments and that they achieve nutrient neutrality.</p>	The Local Plan will address this through continued working with other authorities and bodies.
Water quality effects on the River Avon SAC and Avon Valley SPA and Ramsar site	Strategic allocation policies for sites draining to WwTWs that discharge to the Hampshire Avon (SS 13, SS 14, SS 15, SS 16, SS 17, SS 18) identify the potential impacts from phosphate discharges on the River Avon SAC and Avon Valley SPA and Ramsar	<p>Incorporated into the supporting text of the site policies listed.</p> <p>A Memorandum of Understanding has been signed between the</p>

Adverse effects on integrity not ruled out	Recommendation	NFDC action
	site and require the approach to mitigation set out in Policy ENV1.	relevant cross-boundary authorities on how this issue will be addressed going forward.

- 13.7 The draft HRA was based on the draft of the Local Plan Part 1 version as prepared for the Cabinet meeting on 6th June 2018. Subsequent to the Cabinet meeting, the HRA was amended to take account of any changes made to the Local Plan Part 1, including any changes requested by Council or made in response to the recommendations of that version of the HRA. That amended HRA report was then published alongside Regulation 19 consultation on the Proposed Submission Local Plan Part 1.

14. Implementation and Monitoring

- 14.1 SEA/SA legislation and guidance requires that the significant effects of the policies in the Local Plan that have been identified through the SA are be monitored as the plan is implemented, in order to assist in decision-making. It is also incumbent on this planning authority to adhere to mitigation requirements under the Habitats Regulations and related national policies for elements such as recreational impacts, effects on air quality, and phosphate levels (Avon Downlands part of the district only)
- 14.2 An Annual Monitoring Report (AMR) will report on the extent to which policies and proposals are being implemented in accordance with the objectives of the Plan. NFDC has updated the framework for monitoring, as originally set for the previous Core Strategy (2009). It includes revised indicators and targets (where appropriate) based on the ten objectives of the Local Plan Review. Indicators to monitor effects are set out alongside each SA objective in **Table 14.1** below.

Table 14.1: Monitoring the Sustainability Effects of the Local Plan Planning Strategy

Local Plan Objectives	Policies addressing the objective	Targets	Monitoring Indicators	Data Source
SO1: Landscape and the countryside	STR1-STR4, Saved Policy DM2, ENV2, ENV4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To ensure planning permissions are granted in accordance with the policies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> % of planning permissions granted in accordance with policy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> NFDC applications data
SO2: Biodiversity and environmental quality	STR1-4, ENV1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provision of at least 8 hectares of natural recreational greenspace per 1,000 population located on the development site or directly adjoining and well connected to it for all developments of 50 or more net additional dwellings Provision of appropriate recreational mitigation secured for development of 49 or less additional dwellings. To ensure planning permissions are granted in accordance with the policies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Area of land provided or improved for the purposes of recreational habitat mitigation to the New Forest SPA and SAC Developer contributions secured for access management / monitoring on New Forest & Solent SPAs & SACs Number of projects in adopted recreational Mitigation Strategy delivered Number of visits to new areas/projects Applications refused due to impact on local nature conservation interests 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> NFDC applications data NFDC mitigation schemes NFDC Developer contributions data
SO3: Built environment and heritage	STR1-4, Saved Policy DM1, ENV3, IMPL2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To ensure planning permissions are granted in accordance with the policies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> % of planning permissions granted in accordance with policy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> NFDC applications data
SO4: Housing provision	STR1, STR3-5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To deliver at least 10,500 dwellings over the plan period 2016-2036 To provide a five year housing land supply of deliverable sites 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Housing Trajectory showing: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Annual dwelling completions, ii. Annual average no. of additional dwellings required to meet housing targets. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hampshire County Council/New Forest District Council annual dwelling completions/losses monitoring

Local Plan Objectives	Policies addressing the objective	Targets	Monitoring Indicators	Data Source
SO5: Housing needs, mix and affordability	STR1, STR3+4, HOU1-5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify affordable housing needs within the District. • To ensure all planning permissions for housing sites of eleven or more dwellings provide affordable housing in accordance with Policy HOU2. • Provide for the needs of gypsies and travellers for pitches (1 additional permanent gypsy and travellers pitch for required in the period 2016-2036, and 4 additional plots for travelling showpeople) • To ensure planning permissions are granted in accordance with the policies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Percentage of affordable housing provided on sites of more than 10 dwellings • Gross affordable housing completions • Net additional gypsy and traveller pitches 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hampshire County Council/New Forest District Council annual dwelling completions monitoring • Housing needs and market assessment studies • NFDC applications data

Local Plan Objectives	Policies addressing the objective	Targets	Monitoring Indicators	Data Source
SO6: Economic opportunity	STR1, STR3-6, ECON1-4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To address the projected employment need of around 126,000sqm of employment floorspace across the Plan Area over the plan period (equating to around 32ha of land), including meeting the target set out in the PUSH Spatial Position Statement of 32,000sqm of employment floorspace within the Totton and the Waterside part of the Plan Area • To retain suitable and viable employment land in order to maintain opportunities for future businesses • To ensure planning permissions are granted in accordance with the policies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quantum of floorspace/land permitted and completed for employment development by B Class Use • % of planning permissions granted in accordance with policy • Status and use of permissions for the change of use of existing employment sites for non-employment uses granted 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hampshire County Council/New Forest District Council employment floorspace completions/losses monitoring • NFDC applications data
SO7: Sustainable towns and villages	STR1, STR3, STR4, ECON5, ECON6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To maintain healthy vibrant town centres and defined shopping frontages with a mix of appropriate commercial uses • To ensure planning permissions are granted in accordance with the policies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Status, type and use of permissions granted within defined shopping frontages • % of planning permissions granted in accordance with policy • Shop Vacancy Rates 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hampshire County Council/New Forest District Council commercial floorspace completions/losses monitoring • NFDC applications data • NFDC Retail Survey

Local Plan Objectives	Policies addressing the objective	Targets	Monitoring Indicators	Data Source
SO8: Rural areas and tourism	STR1, STR3, STR4, HOU5, Saved Policies CS19 + CS21	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To ensure planning permissions are granted in accordance with the policies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> % of planning permissions granted in accordance with policy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> NFDC applications data
SO9: Climate change and environmental sustainability	STR1, STR3, CCC1, CCC2, Saved Policy DM4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To ensure planning permissions are granted in accordance with the policies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> % of planning permissions granted in accordance with policy Applications refused because of flood risk/coastal erosion Applications refused on basis of hazard zones/hazardous substances Number and detail of permissions granted contrary to Environment Agency advice on flooding. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> NFDC applications data
SO10: Infrastructure provision and sustainable access to opportunities and facilities	STR1, STR3, STR7, STR8, Saved Policy CS7, CCC2, Saved Policy DM26, IMPL1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provision of public open space to standard of 3.5ha per 1000 population No net loss of existing open space To ensure planning permissions are granted in accordance with the policies To ensure CIL receipts and residual S106 monies are spent on appropriate infrastructure. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> New recreational development permitted Monitoring of site specific allocations Applications approved for new or improved community facilities Applications approved for new utilities Applications approved that result in the net loss of community facilities Monitoring of S106 / CIL spend. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Population forecasts and NFDC planning/open space records. NFDC applications data NFDC Developer contributions data

15. Conclusions

- 15.1 The Local Plan 2016-2036 (Part 1: Planning Strategy) Proposed Submission plan has been subject to a detailed appraisal against the SA objectives. The policy approaches and site allocations within the Local Plan have been chosen by a combination of political and planning considerations, but they reflect options that are judged to perform positively against the SA objectives, and therefore represent a sustainable approach.
- 15.2 The Local Plan proposes the development of around 10,500 dwellings and 18ha of employment land by 2036. As a result of the scale of development proposed to meet objectively assessed need, and that a significant proportion will be on greenfield land (with elements on designated Green Belt), the SA has identified the potential for adverse effects on a number of the environmental objectives including biodiversity, landscape and climate change. However, the Local Plan also includes strategic and development management policies that will help to protect and enhance the economic, social and environmental conditions of the District. Together with site-specific policies these will mitigate the potential significant negative effects of the overall scale and distribution of development proposed.
- 15.3 The vast majority of the growth planned will be delivered within and adjacent to the existing urban areas of the District, ensuring that new residents are in close proximity to the District's centres of employment, education, health and open space.

Strategic policies

- 15.4 The strategic policies will have **positive effects** on most SA objectives, but in particular on Objective 2 (Accessible Opportunities, facilities and Services), Objective 3 (Safe and Healthy Environments) Objective 4 (A Thriving Economy), and Objective 10a (Managing Climate Change - To minimise contributions to climate change) as the policies will help to achieve high quality development that provides beneficial access to services and promote economic opportunities to local people.
- 15.5 Some **negative effects** have been identified. In particular on Objective 5 (Protecting Biodiversity and Wildlife), Objective 7 (Protecting Landscape and Townscape), and objective 10b (Managing Climate Change) due to the potentially adverse impact of development on internally designated nature conservation sites, landscape impacts on greenfield sites, and adverse contributions to climate change. But it is judged that these are outweighed by the positive effects identified and/or can be dealt with through mitigation measures.

Strategic site policies

- 15.6 Where **significant effects**, either positive or negative, have been identified, they have been clearly marked and explained throughout this report. Proposed mitigation, where possible, has also been described for addressing significant negative effects (**chapter 13**).
- 15.7 The site-specific policies will have mainly **positive effects** on the SA objectives, in particular on Objective 1 (Meeting housing need), Objective 5 (Protecting Biodiversity and Wildlife) and Objective 10b (Managing Climate Change) due to policies that allocate land for development to meet local community needs with a mix of dwellings types and affordability. The strategic site policies also address adverse effects raised in the HRA through the delivery of land to mitigate recreational impacts on the integrity of international nature conservation sites. The SA therefore concludes that these sites are considered sustainable.
- 15.8 Some **mixed effects** have been identified. In particular on Objective 7 (Landscape and Townscape) due to the effect of sites (**SS5-SS13**) that are located in the Green Belt and also related townscape impacts. The site-specific policies address these issues through concept plans and the criteria set out for each strategic site that will mitigate the issues identified.