

Spatial Strategy – Winchester Town



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4 Spatial Strategy – Winchester Town

4

Spatial Strategy
Winchester
Town

- 4.1 Winchester Town consists of the six Winchester wards plus the adjoining built up areas. It is a compact, vibrant, distinctive City in a remarkable setting. It has played an important role over the centuries as a seat of political and religious power, and it is still a major centre of civil government, the law and the military. The Cathedral, the College and the Universities are all great Winchester institutions, but the City's character stems not only from its heritage and built environment but also from its thriving cultural life. Exhibitions, concerts, the Cathedral and the summer street theatre festival called the Hat Fair bring thousands of people to the Town. Winchester also enjoys a direct link to beautiful countryside, with tranquil water meadows and the nearby hills of the South Downs.
- 4.2 Winchester is situated on key road/rail networks, with access to Southampton Airport, creating ready access to London and beyond. The quality of its schools and facilities make it popular with both families and professionals, it also has a lively tourist economy attracting residents and visitors all year round.
- 4.3 The challenge for Winchester Town has been the ability 'to absorb and manage change without losing its special character'⁵. This issue still remains relevant and when the Winchester Town Forum launched its vision "Winchester – Towards our Future" in 2007⁶ this was reiterated and reinforced. The vision recognised that there was a need to continue the Town's successful evolution in order to enrich the lives of future generations through the following considerations:-

- care about our history, heritage and setting;
- encourage people to do business here;
- be a natural destination for visitors and shoppers;
- provide new and affordable housing;
- improve transport, infrastructure and air quality;
- become a regional centre for creativity and culture;
- create a green and environmentally friendly city;
- be a town which supports safe and stable communities;

The Town Forum has updated its Vision, but these objectives are retained.

- 4.4 In addition, there is a widely acknowledged desire to ensure that Winchester Town remains the special place that it is, both in terms of its character and setting. To manage these expectations and to allow Winchester to play its part as a thriving County Town, the concept of 'Development with a Purpose' is proposed. The spirit of this is to ensure that the growth and change which is needed is aimed at ensuring that development responds to and deals with matters beyond simply meeting housing or employment requirements: it should be directed towards improving the social, environmental and economic well-being of the whole community.

⁵ Future of Winchester Study WCC 2000

⁶ Winchester Town Forum – Vision for Winchester - Towards our Future 2007



4.5 The spatial vision for the Town encompasses these aspirations:

The vision for Winchester Town is to ensure the Town retains its desirability and prosperity by providing the development necessary to meet the needs of the whole community, ensuring that the local economy thrives on its strengths in higher education, creative and media industries, and other knowledge-based activities, and respecting the town's special heritage and setting.

4.6 To achieve this vision there is a requirement to positively address Winchester's development needs, which can be summarised as :-

- Provide for 4000 new homes (in the period 2011-2031) with a range of house types and tenures – Winchester is home to 36% of the District's population and about 50% of the total District employment provision, with significant patterns of in and out commuting due to the mis-match of workers and residents.
- Ensure sufficient land and premises are available to allow existing businesses to prosper and provide opportunities for new businesses and enterprises to look towards Winchester as a location of choice - of the 32,000 jobs available in the Town (2009 data), some 18,000 jobs are in public administration, education and health, 6,600 in business and financial services and 3,500 in retail and distribution. The actual number of jobs in the Town has declined by some 7.7% during 2003-2009 and is projected to decline further with public administration and education sectors contracting, although health and other services, including art and creative sectors are anticipated to grow. Such growth could offset the decline in other sectors.
- Allow the retail sector to expand and diversify to ensure Winchester retains its place in the sub-regional retail hierarchy - Winchester Town is the largest retail centre in the District and planned and forecast growth should be used to maintain its sub-regional role.
- Accommodate necessary vehicular movements whilst reducing carbon emissions and providing alternatives – the historic fabric has accommodated vehicular traffic but the central area is designated as an Air Quality Management Area due to high concentrations of the pollutants nitrogen dioxide (NO₂) and fine particles (PM10).
- Reduce commuting - the Town experiences large daily commuting flows with about 18,000 commuting in and 10,000 commuting out (about 28,000 total movements a day - 2001 Census data)
- Provide open space and recreational provision to address future requirements and existing deficiencies – there is a shortfall of recreation land available for the size of population, and some housing areas are poorly served in terms of access to play or sports facilities
- Ensure that the impact of new development on both physical and community infrastructure is managed and where necessary new or improved facilities are provided - infrastructure provision has not necessarily kept pace with some of the piecemeal development that has occurred in the Town over the past years.

4.7 A critical issue is how to deliver the amount and type of development required to respond to these needs without compromising the qualities and character of the Town recognised and valued by so many. Winchester's heritage and environment are of international importance with a wealth of historic sites and buildings and a townscape of the highest quality. Its setting is of

particular importance^{7,8} a defining factor is its position in the local topography, overlooked by chalk downland with ancient woodland and a variety of semi-natural habitats. The most important parts of that setting are now within South Downs National Park and the River Itchen is a key component, as a fine example of a chalk stream of European significance, with species-rich river meadows and grassland.

- 4.8 The following strategy seeks to achieve a balance between the varied development needs and the impact on Winchester's environmental assets.

Housing

- 4.9 Locally derived housing requirements⁹ justify the provision of 4,000 new homes in Winchester Town during the period 2011 - 2031. Capacity for some 1,200 dwellings has been identified on sites with planning permission (at April 2011) and through the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA). These assessments will be updated and it is expected that some additional capacity will be identified either within the existing boundary of the Town or on small sites adjoining it, particularly in the longer term, which may result in about 2,000 dwellings being developed within the Plan period. The manner in which this provision is made is important and should be positively managed, through a future Development Plan Document or Neighbourhood Plan, or possibly through a more detailed planning document specifically for Winchester Town.
- 4.10 It is therefore necessary to deliver the remainder of the housing requirement (2,000 dwellings) through a strategic allocation. Consideration has been given to the alternatives of allocating one large site or a number of smaller sites. It has been concluded that there are significant benefits in allocating a single site which is of sufficient critical mass to meet most of its infrastructure needs, including educational and community facilities, on site. A development of 2,000 dwellings would provide a new (two or three form) primary school as part of the development. It would be more difficult to secure the provision of a new school in smaller developments, and there is lack of land available for a new school to be delivered independently. Likewise, larger scale development can support additional bus services, in order to make significant improvements to public and community transport both for the development and the wider area, as well as other infrastructure. There is also better potential for renewable energy provision, district heating facilities and other measures to reduce the carbon footprint of the development.
- 4.11 All the options for substantial growth around the town have been assessed and the site at Barton Farm, to the north of the town, is considered the most appropriate and sustainable. This site has an extensive history being initially identified as a 'reserve' Major Development Area in the adopted Local Plan Review 2006 and has been subject to public inquiries, which confirm that 2,000 dwellings can be provided sustainably on the site. The benefits of allocating this site are that it can deliver a range of housing needs, including substantial affordable housing provision, ensure necessary social and physical infrastructure provision, is in one ownership (and, therefore, deliverable) and it can substantially mitigate adverse environmental impacts.

⁷ *Winchester Landscape and its Setting Landscape Design Associates 1998*

⁸ *Winchester District Landscape Character Assessment WCC/HCC 2004*

⁹ *Housing Technical Paper – WCC - 2011*

Employment and Commerce, including Retailing

- 4.12 About half of the jobs available in the District are provided in Winchester Town (approx 32,000)¹⁰. The Council's Economic Strategy¹¹ sets out a number of key issues to be addressed in the Town:-
- promotion of knowledge based industries – to 'future proof' the economy through diversification and promotion of knowledge and low-carbon enterprises;
 - reduce commuting – to balance the in and out daily commuting flows;
 - provision for creative industries – to retain graduates from the universities by providing the right start-up accommodation;
 - additional retail and speciality shopping – to retain the distinctive specialist shops that make Winchester an attractive retail destination, and to ensure that the retail mix remains appropriate;
 - develop the early evening economy – to promote opportunities for local businesses during the evening lull (5-8pm);
 - promote the visitor economy – to retain Winchester's attraction to tourists and provide adequate visitor facilities and accommodation.
- 4.13 Being a County Town, Winchester has always been a centre of employment, but the economic structure of the Town is now changing in response to wider economic issues. The Town has predominantly service sector jobs, particularly in health, public administration, finance and education. The updated employment study¹² acknowledges that Winchester Town has seen an employment decline in the periods 2003-2007 and 2008-2009 and, whilst the public sector is expected to decline further, Winchester might experience a growth in the health and education sectors. The report also anticipates uplift in other sectors such as distribution and retail, business and other services, including creative industries, and suggests that these sectors combined could offset the negative growth in public administration.
- 4.14 The implications of this, together with a reassessment of employment densities for typical office uses, which include the more efficient use of office space through hot-desking and home working, means that more jobs can be accommodated in the same space. Given the amount of existing available space, the implication is that some of the requirement for business space could be accommodated within the Town either in existing premises or through the redevelopment of these sites.
- 4.15 A key impact of the employment offer in the Town is the generation of large commuting flows. Whilst this issue cannot be separated from the need to increase the supply of housing, particularly more affordable homes, it forms a useful basis to establish the amount of employment development needed and also the type. Considered with the contraction of the public sector, this offers Winchester Town an opportunity to diversify its economy through the promotion of its creative and cultural industries, linked to its Universities. This Plan provides for the allocation of land at Bushfield Camp to realise this aspiration. In addition, the Town needs to maximise the opportunities offered by its existing stock of employment and commercial premises, with those sites offering the greatest potential being retained rather than lost to alternative uses. An area of the Town that lends itself to this form of redevelopment is the area around Winchester Station, with its mix of commercial, retail, residential and office space.
- 4.16 A further development need for the Town is the anticipated growth in the retail sector and the need to ensure land is available at the right location and time for these requirements to be met during the Plan period. The updated

¹⁰ Review of Employment Prospects etc DTZ 2011

¹¹ Winchester District Economic Strategy 2010 – 2020 WCC/WDSP

¹² Review of Employment Prospects and Employment Land – DTZ - 2011

retail study¹³ identifies the need for substantial additional retail floorspace (in the region of 9,000 sq m) in the Town during the Plan period over and above that already permitted at Silver Hill and Weeke, which are expected to accommodate growth in the short to medium term.

- 4.17 Winchester Town is the largest retail centre and should continue to act as the principal centre in the District to maintain its sub-regional role. The retail study advises that any large scale growth (1000 sq.m. or more) should generally be concentrated within Winchester town centre. Following the 'Town Centres First' approach advocated in Policy DS1, retail growth should normally be accommodated in the town centre. Short to medium term development needs can be accommodated through existing commitments and, due to this and the likely impact of larger schemes, developments outside the defined town centre of more than 1000 sq. m. (gross) should be subject to an assessment of their impact on the town centre. Whilst this Local Plan does not allocate land to deliver additional development, it establishes the strategy for any future site allocations which may be needed through Part 2 of the Local Plan.

Transport and Access

- 4.18 In July 2011 the City Council in partnership with Hampshire County Council approved the Winchester Town Access Plan¹⁴, which acknowledges that Winchester faces a number of factors which combine to give it traffic levels and problems far beyond that which would normally be associated with a town of its size. It experiences many of the problems associated with ancient city centres, such as narrow ancient streets and footways that allow limited scope for improving provision for road users and pedestrians.
- 4.19 The Access Plan focuses on improving accessibility and air quality, reducing the level of traffic in the city centre and therefore improving the situation in terms of localised congestion. It has four key aims:
- to ensure that the vitality and resilience of the local economy is strengthened by planning for movement and access which is economically and environmentally sustainable;
 - to lead a transition to cycling, walking, public transport and low-carbon modes of travel, including low emission private and commercial vehicles;
 - to reduce the negative effects of transport-related carbon emissions on all neighbourhoods, including the Town's historic environment, particularly in relation to air quality and the safety of pedestrians and cyclists;
 - to enhance the social and cultural wellbeing of Winchester by providing access for all.
- 4.20 In addition to these aims, the Access Plan includes a number of strategic priorities which link with spatial planning aims and objectives for Winchester Town and the delivery processes for the development strategy. The Access Plan acknowledges that its aims can be achieved through reducing the distance that people have to travel in their daily activities through 'self containment' policies such as providing good local facilities, employment and community based facilities which can be accessed by means other than the car. There is also the recognition that through new development there are excellent opportunities to incorporate established good practice and, on occasion, to innovate in design and layout for example through the use of shared spaces in appropriate locations, with the aim of creating new ways of integrating travel solutions into the places people live and how they access work and other facilities.

¹³ Retail and Town Centre Uses Study update – NLP - 2012

¹⁴ Winchester Town Access Plan WCC/HCC - 2011

- 4.21 A statutory Air Quality Management Area (AQMA) has been declared within the town centre, due to the amount and type of pollutants recorded. An Air Quality Action Plan has been produced and this, in conjunction with the Access Plan, will help in reducing nitrogen dioxide levels to the benefit of human health and designated wildlife sites.
- 4.22 The Access Plan is supported by action plans covering the short and long term. The short term plan includes many committed improvements such as improvements to the High Street and Market Street and an approach to support the park and ride facilities on offer by a corresponding reduction in town centre parking spaces. The Plan identifies the opportunity to explore reducing car parking capacity within the Town centre by up to 15% (500 spaces) during the period to 2016, recognising that such space could be put to more economically beneficial use.
- 4.23 Other longer term proposals have been identified but funding is not secured. There is therefore scope for these to be implemented through developer contributions or more directly through development schemes. Overall, the aim of the Access Plan is to contribute towards sustainable development through the provision of better accessibility and improved safety for all highway users.

Open space and recreational facilities

- 4.24 When compared to the updated standards in this Local Plan, there is a shortfall of land available for the size of the population, as set out in the table below:

Type of Open Space	Existing Provision	Policy CP7 Requirement	Surplus / shortfall
Allotments	11.7 Ha	8.8 Ha	+ 2.9 Ha
Equipped Children's/Young People's Space	5.0 Ha	22.1 Ha	-17.1 Ha
Informal Green Space	23.7 Ha	35.3 Ha	- 11.6 Ha
Natural Green Space	86.1 Ha	44.2 Ha	+ 41.9 Ha
Parks, Sports & Recreation Grounds	42.8 Ha (sports) 20.3 Ha (parks) 63.1 Ha (total)	33.1 Ha (sports) 33.1 Ha (parks) 66.2 Ha (total)	+ 9.7 Ha (sports) -12.8 Ha (parks) -3.1 Ha (total)

- 4.25 Some housing areas are poorly served in terms of access to play, sport, or other facilities. It is therefore necessary to secure on-site provision through development schemes and for future allocations of additional land to be provided. In the meantime the priority will be to retain existing provision and secure improvements, whilst making additional provision where possible.
- 4.26 Green infrastructure also forms a valuable contribution to the setting of Winchester Town, through extensive tree coverage and areas of open land such as the Water Meadows, which come into heart of the town providing public access to the wider countryside. Some of this countryside is now within the South Downs National Park. The River Itchen also passes through the Town and is protected by European legislation recognising the exceptional quality of this chalk river and its environs.

Community and physical infrastructure

- 4.27 The current situation regarding existing and planned infrastructure provision is set out in the Council's Infrastructure Study¹⁵. Of particular current concern in Winchester Town is primary school provision. The provision of a new school is required as part of the strategic allocation at Barton Farm. Policy CP6 enables further provision to be made and the Education Authority is bringing forward proposals to address shortfalls in primary school places.
- 4.28 Another key item of community infrastructure is the provision of health facilities. The nature of these will vary in response to changes in both population numbers and age structure with an ageing population requiring greater and more specialised provision. Existing health provision is evolving in response to changes to NHS structures and management practices. It may be required to expand, or make new provision, to address both the changing needs and growth of the local population.
- 4.29 These development needs all present challenges in terms of ensuring that Winchester Town remains an attractive place, with its setting and environmental assets conserved and utilised to ensure that the development required occurs in the right place and at the right time. Its setting and attractiveness are of great importance but must not be seen as an embargo on all change and consequential development. The Town has its own needs and the following strategy allows these to be achieved in accordance with the vision expressed previously.

Policy WT1 - Development Strategy for Winchester Town

The spatial planning vision for Winchester Town will be achieved through:-

- provision of about 4000 new homes (2011-2031) to meet a range of community needs and deliver a wide choice of homes including affordable homes to ensure social inclusion. This will be achieved through:
 - development and redevelopment of existing premises and sites and other opportunities within and adjoining the defined built-up area of Winchester, to deliver some 2000 new homes .
 - a new neighbourhood to the north of Winchester at Barton Farm for about 2,000 homes, of which 40% should be expected to be affordable, and associated support facilities and services in accordance with the requirements of Policy WT2;
- opportunities for economic development and diversification through:
 - retention of existing employment land and premises (in accordance with policy CP9) and new development or redevelopment to provide for new business growth to broaden Winchester's economic base through growth in sectors including knowledge, tourism, creative and media industries and more specifically start-up premises to encourage entrepreneurship;
 - provision of additional retail floorspace through existing planned developments at Silver Hill in the short to medium term and future additional provision of about 9,000 sq. m. to 2031 to support Winchester's role as a sub-regional shopping centre for existing and new communities;

¹⁵ Infrastructure Study WCC 2010

- promotion of the town centre as the preferred location for new development that attracts high visitor numbers such as retail, commercial and offices, leisure, culture and tourism. Proposals for new floorspace of 1,000 sq. m. or more outside the defined town centre will need to demonstrate that it would not have a harmful impact on the town centre;
- provision of education facilities to meet the needs of the Town, through the provision of a primary school in conjunction with Barton Farm and an additional primary school on a site to be identified;
- additional open space and recreational provision, including:
 - opportunities to address any under-provision of open space, to be secured through new allocations and in conjunction with development;
 - retention of existing open space and recreation provision and not releasing this for alternative purposes, given the amount of the existing shortfall;
- retention of existing and provision of new green infrastructure to ensure that the Town retains its well-treed character, attractive green setting, its well-defined urban edge, and access to open space and adjoining countryside;
- implementation of the Winchester Access Plan and the Winchester Air Quality Action Plan to ensure that transport provision and access to and within the Town provides opportunities for sustainable transport provision and reduces pollution and carbon emissions;
- exploring the employment opportunities presented by the site at Bushfield Camp in accordance with Policy WT3;
- ensuring that all new development is of the highest design quality in terms of architecture and landscape, fully considers and respects the context of its setting and surroundings to reflect local distinctiveness, and the historical and cultural heritage of the Town, and makes a positive contribution to the quality of the area.

4.30 This policy will be delivered through the implementation of the following policies, WT2 and WT3, in addition to other proposals coming forward through the development management process. Where necessary, sites will be allocated for specific uses in Local Plan Part 2, in accordance with this strategy for Winchester Town and other policies in this Plan.

Policy WT2 - Strategic Housing Allocation – North Winchester

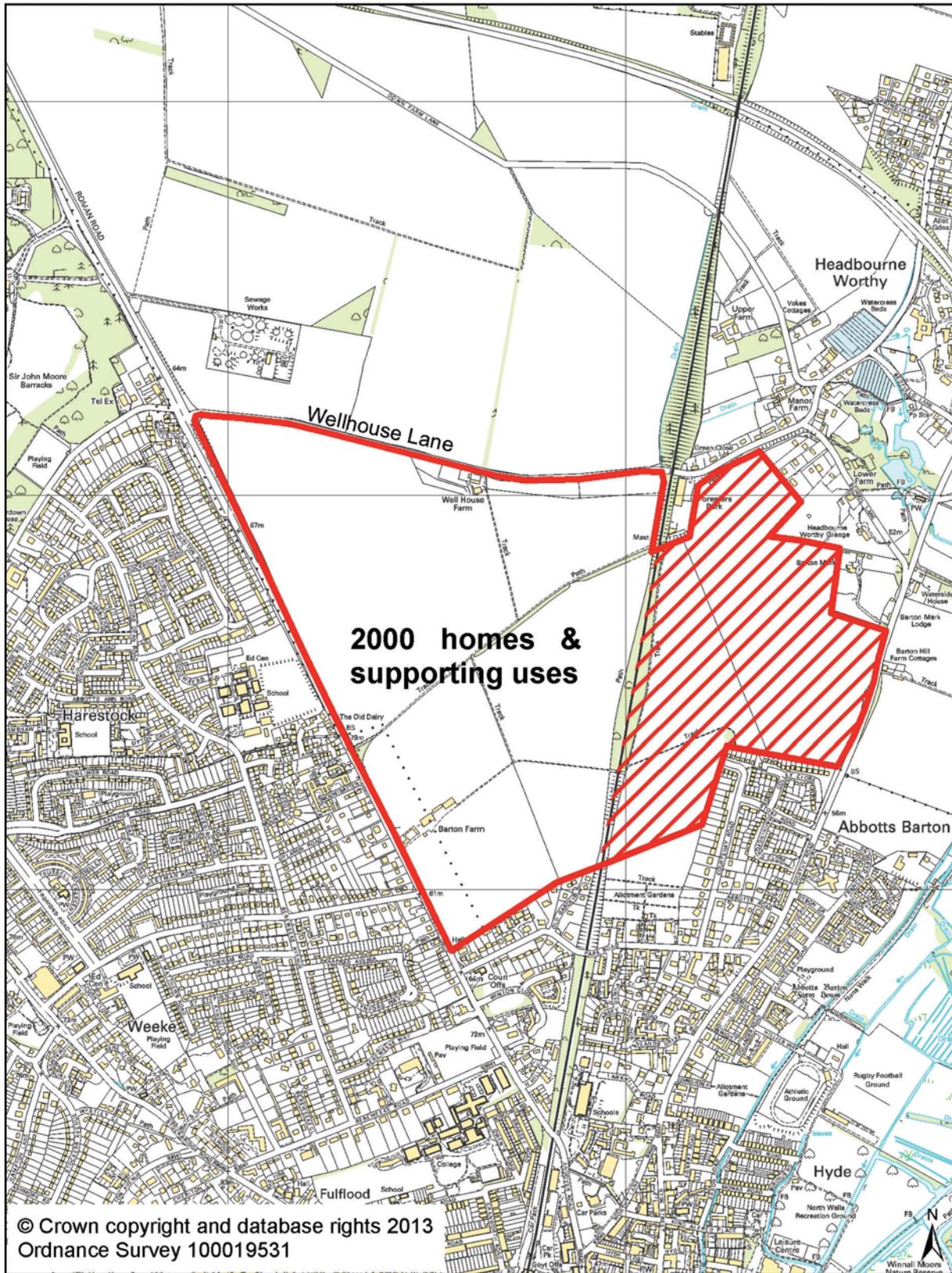
Land at Barton Farm, Winchester, as shown on the following map, is allocated for the development of about 2,000 dwellings together with supporting uses. Development should accord with the Development Strategy for Winchester Town (Policy WT1), other policies in this Plan and the following site-specific requirements:

- the creation of a distinctive, well integrated suburb of Winchester Town which respects its local context, and enhances the standards of sustainable design in the locality;
- the proposal should follow an organic sequence of development, in accordance with an approved phasing plan, with the timely provision of infrastructure and community facilities to the benefit of

- the new community at the earliest possible time, as set out in the Infrastructure Delivery Summary at Appendix E;
- development proposals should be accompanied by a comprehensive masterplan for approval, which includes an indicative layout and phasing plan and sets out details of how this will be achieved. The masterplan should reflect the location of the site and minimise its impact on the setting of Winchester and local landscape, to incorporate the highest standards of contemporary urban design and the effective use of the site through the application of appropriate densities, layout and form;
 - the development should be designed to meet the housing needs of all sectors of the community, including families, the young and older people to ensure equality and social cohesion. House types and affordability should be matched so far as possible to the local employment base in order to reduce the need for in and out commuting;
 - provision of a new local centre, with a range of shopping facilities to meet locally-generated needs, small-scale employment uses, pre-school facilities, and primary education. The potential for relocating all or some of the facilities on the current Henry Beaufort secondary school site should be investigated;
 - improved accessibility to the town centre and the railway station by sustainable transport systems to reduce the need to travel by car, including public transport provision and enhancement, footpaths, cycleways, bridleways, and green corridors. Measures to mitigate the traffic impacts of the proposed development on the strategic and local road networks should be included and funded, including the provision of a park and ride 'light' scheme within the northern part of development;
 - provision of publicly accessible land to the east of the railway line to help meet requirements for green infrastructure, and to mitigate potential environmental impacts, in addition to substantial areas of on-site open space to meet all the recreational needs of the new community, including the retention and enhancement of existing routes within the site to provide links between existing and proposed green infrastructure;
 - avoid harmful impacts on water resources, given the proximity of the site to the River Itchen which is designated as a European site of nature conservation interest. The development should provide a fully integrated Sustainable Drainage System to mitigate against any potential flood risk, apply a flood risk sequential approach to development across the site, and ensure adequate separation from the Harestock Waste Water Treatment Works;
 - protection and enhancement of landscaping and mature trees along the ridge which runs from east to west across the site, along Well House Lane and Andover Road, and within the area to the east of the railway line;
 - the provision of major new structural planting, especially to soften the impact of development in views from the north and to reduce the impact of noise and light pollution arising from the development of the site.

- 4.31 The housing trajectory set out in Appendix F expects that this site will start to deliver housing in 2014/15 and that this will continue over a 13 year period, rising to 250 dwellings per year at the peak of development.
- 4.32 Development of the site will be monitored to ensure the proposed development and required infrastructure is provided in accordance with the trajectory and policy requirements. If at some point in the future it becomes clear that the site is failing to deliver the level of housing proposed, the implications for the Council's ability to ensure adequate housing land supply across the District will be assessed. It may be that other sources of supply can maintain adequate housing provision or it may also be necessary to bring forward additional sites for housing purposes in accordance with the development strategy established in this Plan. This will be undertaken through the production of Local Plan Part 2 or subsequent reviews.
- 4.33 The schedule at Appendix E summarises the infrastructure requirements for this site, including expected funding sources and timescale for provision (these may be subject to change or updating over time). This site will require a range of transport related infrastructure as specified in the policy including new roads/junctions to serve the development plus off-site highway improvements to mitigate the traffic impacts as determined through a full transport assessment. Footpaths and cycle routes will also be required, particularly within the greenspaces and to integrate with adjoining areas, and land will need to be laid out for open space, recreation and green infrastructure. The local centre will include shops, workspace, a community building, primary school and health practice building. These will be provided through partnerships between the developer and the various service providers at appropriate stages of the development, as specified in the planning conditions and obligations set when planning consent is granted.

Map 4 – WT2: Strategic Allocation – North Winchester



Key:

-  North Winchester Site Boundary
-  Green Infrastructure

Employment Site - Bushfield Camp Winchester

- 4.34 Bushfield Camp lies on the southern edge of Winchester Town, between the established areas of St. Cross and Badger Farm. This area comprises approximately 43 hectares of land to the south of Whiteshute Lane, of which approximately 20 hectares was previously occupied by the military camp. The site lies in a unique position being close to attractive countryside, the strategic highway network and the urban fabric of Winchester.
- 4.35 The future of the site, which is in private ownership, has been the subject of uncertainty, detailed discussion and various planning proposals over many years. Previous site assessments have concluded that “the scope for any form of built development is limited”. However, the Council is committed to working positively with the landowner to identify a sustainable solution for the site, given its sensitive location.
- 4.36 The area was used by the Army during the Second World War and, until closure of the camp in the 1970s, had a number of buildings and other military infrastructure. It is gradually reverting to its previous character, although large concrete areas, building remnants and roadways remain in situ. There is some archaeological interest on the site which will require further investigation prior to any development.
- 4.37 The site is in a sensitive location, forming part of the Winchester – Compton Street Local Gap and the South Downs National Park lies to the south east, beyond St Cross Road. The River Itchen to the east is designated for its biodiversity interest as a Special Area of Conservation (SAC) and the Habitats Regulations Assessment identifies development at Bushfield Camp as having the potential to have a ‘significant effect’ on the River Itchen SAC and other designated sites ‘in combination’. Therefore it will be necessary for further work in relation to this aspect to resolve issues of water resource and quality, atmospheric pollution and recreational activity, in relation to any development proposals.
- 4.38 The topography of the site means it is visible from a wide area, as identified in the Winchester City and its Setting report, which recognises the significance of the site to the setting of the City as a whole, and particularly to St Cross. Whilst the site is not within the South Downs National Park its proximity will be a consideration for the extent of developable land, the type of land uses which would be acceptable and the design and layout of the site to minimise adverse impacts on the setting of Winchester.
- 4.39 A positive planning solution is needed for the site, which contributes to the spatial development strategy for Winchester Town and the importance of its setting. It must also ensure that the important characteristics of the site are retained, including realising the recreational potential of the area, and prevent an unplanned or piecemeal planning outcome. The characteristics of the site may suit a form of business development that requires such a unique location, rather than uses which could and should be accommodated within or adjoining the town.
- 4.40 Its development should help realise the Vision for Winchester and the Community Strategy’s aims for the wider District and must be compatible with the policy framework set out in this Plan. Consequently, Bushfield Camp is allocated for employment uses. This recognises the opportunity for the site to contribute towards social, economic and environmental aspirations for Winchester and for a form of development which ensures that the key aspects of the site are retained in perpetuity.

Policy WT3 - Bushfield Camp Employment Site

Land at Bushfield Camp, Winchester, as defined on the following map, is allocated as an Employment Site. A comprehensive, conservation led approach is required for the site, given its location in the Winchester – Compton Street Local Gap, its proximity to the South Downs National Park and the River Itchen Special Area of Conservation, and the presence of a Site of Importance for Nature Conservation Interest, existing trees and archaeological remains.

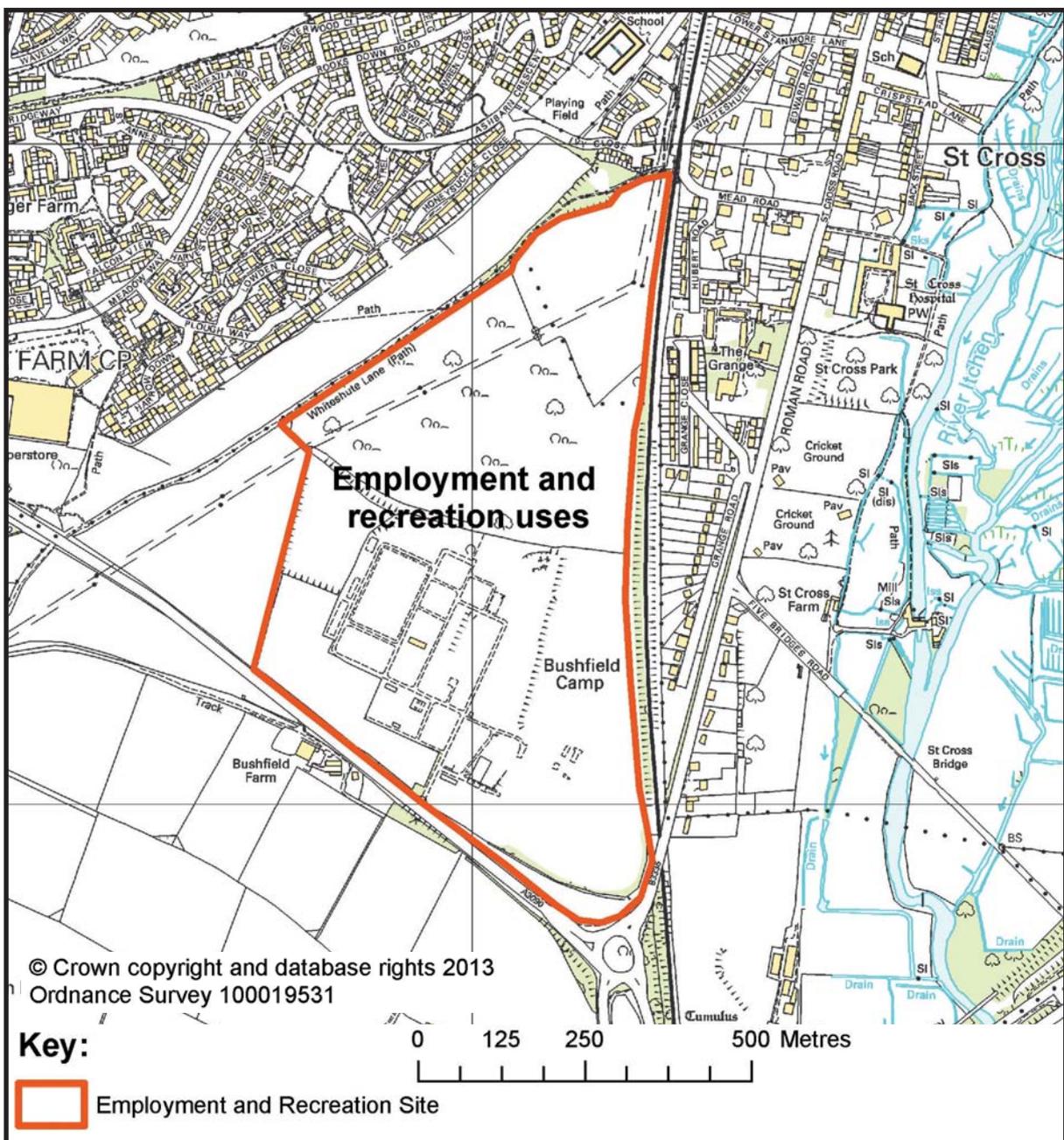
Proposals must resolve the long term future of the site by securing sustainable development and delivering a high quality, accessible scheme which meets the following criteria:-

- limits the total area of development to 20 hectares of land, prioritising use of the previously occupied area;
- delivers necessary social, economic or environmental development which could not otherwise be accommodated within or around Winchester, does not compete or detract from the town centre, is compatible with the provision made elsewhere through this strategy, and reflects other policy statements prepared by the Council including the Vision for Winchester;
- secures and lays out for public use the undeveloped part of the site for recreational purposes in perpetuity, but allowing for appropriate strategic landscaping;
- promotes non-vehicular access to and within the site, through the creation of new routes and extensions/diversions of existing routes to ensure that the site integrates with surrounding areas and to minimise and mitigate its impact on the strategic highway network;
- exploits the site's proximity to the Winchester South Park and Ride site to access the site without reliance on the private car;
- includes a Sustainability Appraisal and Habitats Regulations Assessment to consider the potential effects on biodiversity, on-site and on the River Itchen, and the possible in-combination effects of the development on nearby sites of national and international importance. The development proposals must meet the tests of the Habitats Regulations and be accompanied by a full set of measures to avoid or mitigate the local and wider impacts of the development;
- prepare a green infrastructure strategy to both enhance the development and mitigate potential impacts on the water environment and biodiversity. This should include the provision of multi-functional green links throughout the site and with the adjoining area;
- be of exemplary design and configuration so as to have an acceptable impact on the setting of Winchester, the South Downs National Park and the wider area, retain key views, and take into account its unique gateway location and the various designations that affect the site and its surroundings;
- maximises the use of sustainable construction techniques and materials so that it achieves high levels of sustainability and delivers a zero/low carbon scheme.

Only schemes which incorporate an innovative and progressive approach, resulting from assessing the needs of the town and community views, and satisfy the above criteria and other relevant policies of this Plan will be favourably considered.

4.41 The above policy enables the development of this site to meet future, currently unidentified, needs. Therefore, the details of delivery of this site cannot be specified at this stage, but the above policy sets out the parameters and requirements to be taken into account. Given the site's sensitive location there will, however, be infrastructure requirements to be fulfilled and delivered in a timely manner. Current information suggests these will be particularly in the areas of transport and access, open space and green infrastructure provision, avoidance and mitigation of impacts on designated sites, water supply and drainage, and energy supply. However infrastructure requirements will need to be investigated in detail prior to submission of a planning application and the necessary measures will be secured through planning conditions and obligations relating to any consent.

Map 5 – WT3: Employment Site – Bushfield Camp



Spatial Strategy – South Hampshire Urban Areas



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5 Spatial Strategy – South Hampshire Urban Areas

Spatial Strategy South Hampshire Urban Areas

- 5.1 South Hampshire Urban Areas is a local response to meet the challenges presented by a significant part of the District being located within the Partnership for Urban South Hampshire (PUSH). The City Council is a member of PUSH, a grouping of local authorities in southern Hampshire which has been formed to develop a joint economic and spatial strategy. The local authorities cooperated through PUSH to develop the spatial vision for the South Hampshire sub-region which was incorporated into the South East Plan. PUSH has also commissioned a number of technical studies and reports to inform the emerging strategies of its partner authorities, these can be viewed on the PUSH website <http://www.push.gov.uk/>.
- 5.2 The PUSH strategy aimed to improve the sub-region's economic performance to at least match the regional average, with a target of achieving a Gross Value Added (GVA) of 3.5% per annum by 2026. However in response to the worsening economic outlook PUSH commissioned a refresh of its Economic Strategy¹⁶. This recommended a strategy that is more aligned to current circumstances. In particular it seeks to improve learning and skills to ensure that the sub-region develops a skilled workforce that can underpin higher levels of economic growth. The new strategy was adopted by PUSH in 2010 and formed the basis for an updated Spatial Strategy – 'South Hampshire Strategy' (PUSH October 2012).
- 5.3 South Hampshire has a dense and complex settlement pattern, and there are substantial areas of undeveloped or underused land within the urbanised parts of the sub-region. The refreshed Economic Strategy reiterates PUSH's support for the growth of the cities of Southampton and Portsmouth as the drivers of a sustainable and growing economy. Development up to 2016 is focussed primarily on sites allocated in adopted Development Plans, on brownfield sites and on urban extensions. After 2016 this focus will continue, but the strategy also provided for major greenfield development concentrated in two 'Strategic Development Areas' (SDAs), one to the North of Fareham and one to the North/north-east of Hedge End. The Fareham SDA adjoins the Winchester District boundary.
- 5.4 The principle of the North of Fareham SDA has been established in the adopted Fareham Core Strategy (2011), and work has already commenced on preparing an Area Action Plan to guide the development of the SDA. The City Council will continue to work closely with Fareham Borough Council to help bring forward this development.
- 5.5 The SDA North/North East of Hedge End however will not proceed as Eastleigh Borough Council has formally resolved not to plan for the SDA, following the receipt of a Feasibility Report supported by a number of evidence studies. The emerging Eastleigh Borough Local Plan 2011- 2029 proposes alternative sites, which do not require any land within Winchester District to provide the housing and supporting infrastructure. That Plan includes a proposal for a Botley bypass and land in Winchester District is reserved to enable this to be completed through saved Local Plan 2006 Policy T12, if it is required by the County Council as Highway Authority. The status of Policy T12 will be reviewed by Local Plan Part 2 taking account of any plans by the highway authority relating to the timing and implementation of the by-pass, including the need for developer contributions.

¹⁶ Refresh of PUSH Economic Strategy; DTZ, October 2010

- 5.6 Therefore, the spatial vision for this area reflects these matters and seeks to bring forward large scale developments that will contribute to the updated PUSH strategy. Here the development strategy focuses on large-scale development concentrated to form new urban extensions, rather than dispersing similar numbers amongst the smaller settlements which also lie within the PUSH area.

The vision for the South Hampshire Urban Areas is to develop a series of sustainable new neighbourhoods/communities to contribute towards meeting the PUSH strategy of improving economic performance by providing sustainable opportunities for large-scale, high quality housing, economic development and associated uses.

- 5.7 To achieve this vision, the South East Plan requires the PUSH part of Winchester District to accommodate an increase of 6,740 dwellings (2006-2026). The PUSH South Hampshire Strategy 2012 updates this to 6,000 dwellings from 2011 to 2026. Development from all sources within the PUSH part of the District are expected to meet the South East Plan's requirement, having regard to completions since 2006 and capacity in the rural settlements within the PUSH area.
- 5.8 In line with the PUSH urban-centred strategy, the assessment of options and the public comments, the major greenfield development which will be required within the PUSH part of the District to meet this will be focused on the urban areas that fringe the District, at West of Waterlooville and Whiteley. A total of about 6,000 dwellings are proposed in these locations, which will also focus housing development in areas where there are already large existing and planned employment allocations, supporting the economic growth objectives of PUSH. Planning consents for the West of Waterlooville Major Development Area will provide about 2,500 new dwellings in the Winchester District. This leaves the need to allocate land to accommodate the remainder of the 6,000 requirement of about 3,500 dwellings, through a large urban extension North of Whiteley.
- 5.9 Given the new communities being planned and developed in this area, the existing population base will change considerably. The emphasis is to provide mixed communities with provision of a range of housing types and tenures with 40% affordable dwellings. In terms of existing employment provision there is a focus on manufacturing and the service sector, which together with construction, retail and distribution are anticipated to grow. There is substantial employment land provision in Whiteley with some 5,000 workers in the locality. Whiteley Town Centre is undergoing a comprehensive redevelopment programme which will provide 29,000 sq metres of retail and other town centre uses, to create a redesigned, attractive focal point for both existing and new residents.
- 5.10 The South East Plan sets requirements for the provision of commercial floorspace in the PUSH area, in line with the PUSH strategy of economic growth. There are separate requirements for the South West and South East parts of the PUSH area, with Winchester falling within the South East sub-division. PUSH has agreed an Employment Floorspace Policy Framework¹⁷ which allocates floorspace targets at a District level.
- 5.11 Existing permitted and allocated sites will provide the land needed to deliver this floorspace and these are concentrated particularly at Whiteley and West of Waterlooville. Studies undertaken to inform the floorspace targets highlight the importance of the logistics sector for the PUSH area, partly reflecting the proximity of the ports. The location of employment land commitments supports the development strategy outlined above and means that there is no need for further new employment allocations for the South Hampshire Urban Areas. In addition, there will be significant employment floorspace provided within the North of Fareham SDA adjoining the District's boundary, which in part

¹⁷ PUSH Employment Floorspace Policy Framework – 2009

mitigates the need for any further employment allocations in the Winchester part of PUSH.

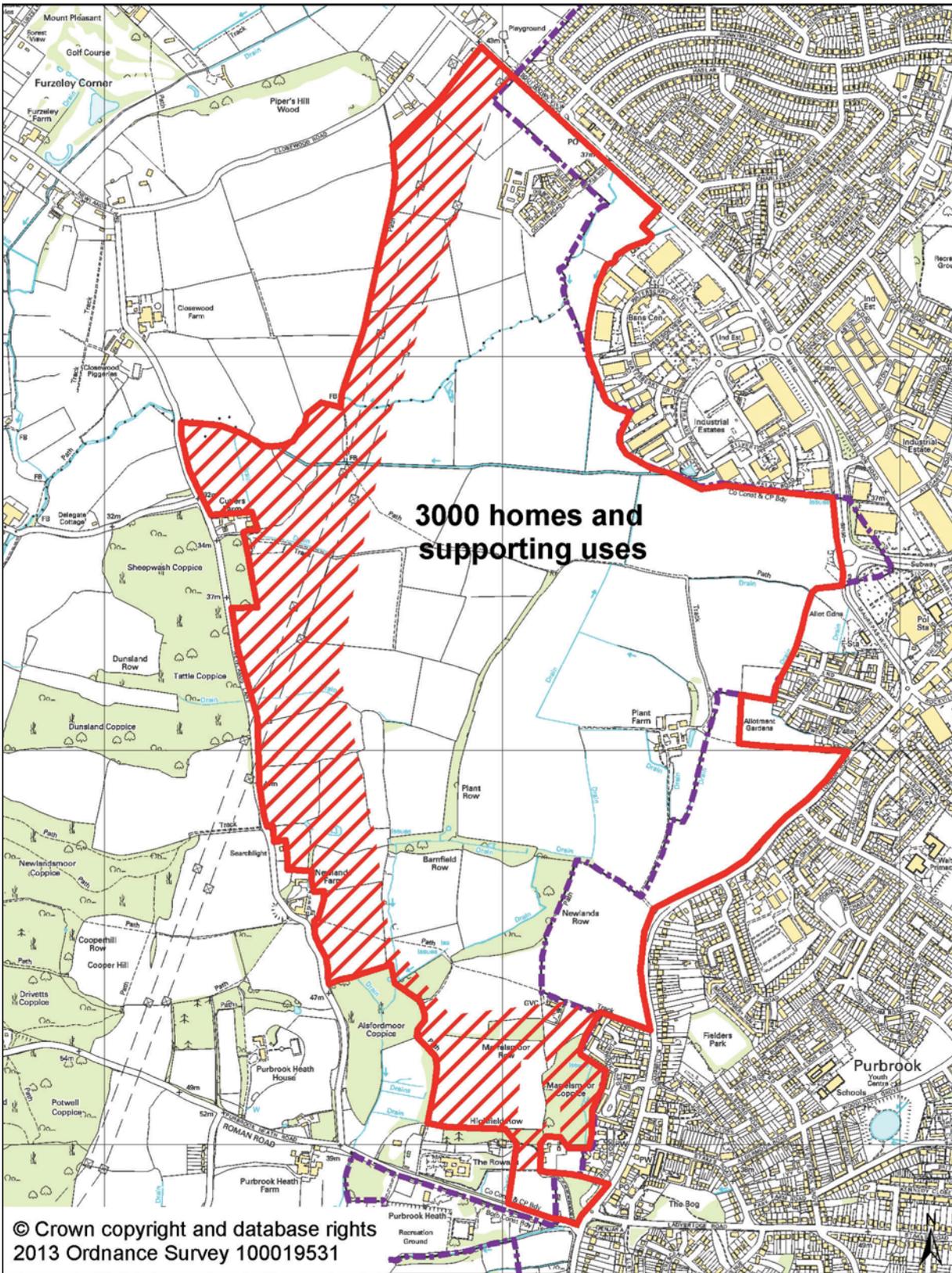
Policy SH1 - Development Strategy for South Hampshire Urban Areas

The vision for the South Hampshire Urban Areas will be achieved through the provision of:-

- new housing to meet a range of community needs and deliver a wide choice of homes including affordable to ensure social inclusion;
- a new community to the West of Waterlooville consisting of about 3,000 homes (about 600 in Havant Borough), of which 40% is expected to be affordable, and associated employment provision, support facilities and services, in accordance with the requirements of Policy SH2;
- a new community to the North of Whiteley consisting of about 3,500 homes, of which 40% is expected to be affordable, which should support existing employment provision and provide new and expanded infrastructure, facilities and services, in accordance with the requirements of Policy SH3;
- peripheral green infrastructure associated with the North of Fareham Strategic Development Area, which is located within the adjoining Fareham Borough, in accordance with the requirements of Policy SH4;
- commercial floorspace at Whiteley, Segensworth and West of Waterlooville (mostly already committed), which will contribute to achieving the economic strategy for the PUSH area and help to provide balanced new communities nearby;
- protection of important natural assets, particularly habitats of national and international importance, and Gaps which are important in defining the urban structure of the area.

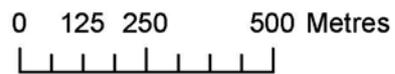
- 5.12 This policy will be primarily delivered through the implementation of policies SH2, SH3 and SH4, in addition to other proposals coming forward through the development management process and existing commitments, such as the redevelopment of Whiteley town centre. It may also be necessary through Local Plan Part 2 to identify smaller sites for specific uses in accordance with the strategy for South Hampshire Urban Areas and other policies in this Plan
- 5.13 Planning permission has now been granted for a Major Development Area of about 3,000 dwellings to the West of Waterlooville (almost 2,500 in the Winchester District and about 600 in Havant Borough), including the former 'reserve' site for 1,000 dwellings. About 2,350 of these dwellings will be developed within Winchester District during this Plan period and this is consistent with the adopted Havant Borough Core Strategy, which also confirms the allocation of the MDA.

Map 6 – SH2: Strategic Allocation – West of Waterlooville



Key

-  West of Waterlooville Site Boundary
-  Green Infrastructure
-  Winchester District Boundary



Policy SH2 - Strategic Housing Allocation – West of Waterlooville

Land to the West of Waterlooville (as shown on the following map) is allocated for the development of about 3,000 dwellings together with supporting uses.

The development should deliver the agreed vision for the West of Waterlooville major development area which aims to create a sustainable urban extension to Waterlooville, integrated with Waterlooville town centre and forming the fourth quadrant of the town. It should accord with Policy DS1, in addition to the following site-specific requirements:

- be integrated with Waterlooville town centre including measures to enable good pedestrian and cycle access across Maurepas Way;
- retail provision within the development should be within a modest local centre which is subservient to Waterlooville town centre;
- provide about 23 hectares of employment land, including uses which will help link the development to the town centre, create a vibrant commercial area and include some mixed housing/commercial areas;
- provide a new access road through the development between the A3/Ladybridge Road roundabout and the A3/Maurepas Way roundabout with public transport provision and other measures to reduce traffic generation. The development should fund any off-site transport improvements necessary to achieve this and to accommodate traffic likely to be generated by the development;
- provide primary school places and contributions to off-site improvements to secondary education to accommodate the development, along with other physical and social infrastructure.

- 5.14 Development of this site has commenced. The housing trajectory set out in Appendix F expects that this site will continue to deliver housing until 2024/25, rising to about 300 dwellings per year at the peak of development.
- 5.15 Due to the economic situation the build rate has been slower than originally anticipated, however the dwellings now being built are in demand and the rate of development on the site is expected to increase.
- 5.16 The schedule at Appendix E summarises the infrastructure requirements for this site, including expected funding sources and timescale for provision. These have been secured through the planning conditions and S106 agreements associated with the planning permissions.
- 5.17 Development to the north of Whiteley provides the opportunity to secure important infrastructure and community facilities, and to locate new residential development close to major employment areas. In particular, development in this location provides the opportunity to complete the Whiteley Way as a new road primarily aimed at serving the new development, but which will provide a new link to the Botley Road. The development should also provide for a new secondary school and two new primary schools which, in addition to meeting the needs of the new development, will also serve to meet existing shortfalls in educational facilities in the area.

- 5.18 The overall site area is approximately 202 hectares, of which around half is either constrained or required to mitigate potential environmental impacts. This significantly reduces the developable area, but the site should be capable of delivering about 3,500 new dwellings. This will be dependant on the preparation of a comprehensive masterplan, based on sound urban design principles, and the ability of the site to either avoid or mitigate its potential environmental impacts.
- 5.19 The development will be expected to provide a range of housing types. Particular attention should also be paid to the need to cater for an increasingly ageing population, and a range of housing options should be provided aimed at meeting the varying needs of the elderly. A percentage of the housing should be affordable in line with the Council's affordable housing policies.
- 5.20 The Sustainability Appraisal and the Habitats Regulations Assessment identify a number of potential risks to internationally important sites, particularly the Special Protection Area on the Upper Hamble. This will require a full package of measures to be implemented to either avoid or mitigate harmful impacts. This will also include off-site measures to improve access to, and the management of, Whiteley Pastures. The mitigation measures will need to be consistent with both the PUSH Green Infrastructure Strategy, and the Solent Disturbance and Mitigation Project, once it is completed, which might require further off-site measures to mitigate potential impacts. The full package of measures should demonstrate that harmful impacts on any European site would be avoided or adequately mitigated, otherwise the scale of the development would need to be reduced accordingly.
- 5.21 A comprehensive green infrastructure strategy will be required to support any proposals for development. This will need to show how a network of multi-functional open spaces and links will be integrated into the development area to achieve a range of aims including a net gain in biodiversity, helping to mitigate or avoid potential risks to protected sites of European importance, and providing the necessary buffers between these sites and the development. In addition, the green infrastructure will provide for recreational open space provision including children's play, allotments and areas for dog walking, in recognition of the site's proximity to protected European sites. Development should also incorporate a sustainable drainage system and maximise the advantages of the site's landscape setting, including existing trees and hedgerows. A key feature will be to ensure that the development area links with the adjoining countryside and creates an enhanced recreational experience for adjoining communities.
- 5.22 Initial transport assessments¹⁸ undertaken during the preparation of this Plan, indicate the need for a range of mitigation measures in order to reduce the traffic impact on both the local and strategic network, including improvements to junction 9 of the M27 motorway, junction improvements and traffic calming as required to the local network. A key feature of this development is to achieve the completion of Whiteley Way. In addition, a package of smart choices aimed at providing a genuine modal shift away from the private car to more sustainable modes of transport is needed through the preparation of a public transport strategy to include potential bus subsidies and links with local rail connections.
- 5.23 The development will be required to provide a range of social infrastructure to meet the needs of the new community, including two new local centres with multi-functional community buildings, educational facilities and access to adequate local health provision.

¹⁸ Winchester LDF Transport Assessment Stage 2 MVA - 2009

Policy SH3 - Strategic Housing Allocation – North Whiteley

Land to the North of Whiteley (as shown on the following map) is allocated for the development of about 3,500 dwellings together with supporting uses. The development should reflect Whiteley's predominantly wooded character and setting by maximising the opportunities presented by the substantial areas of green space within and adjoining the allocated area, which are either unsuitable for built development or needed to mitigate potential impacts on protected sites. Development proposals should be accompanied by a comprehensive masterplan which includes an indicative layout and phasing plan, and sets out details of how this will be achieved

The development should also complement and take advantage of facilities in the nearby town centre and major employment at the Solent Business Parks. It should accord with Policy DS1, in addition to the following site-specific requirements:

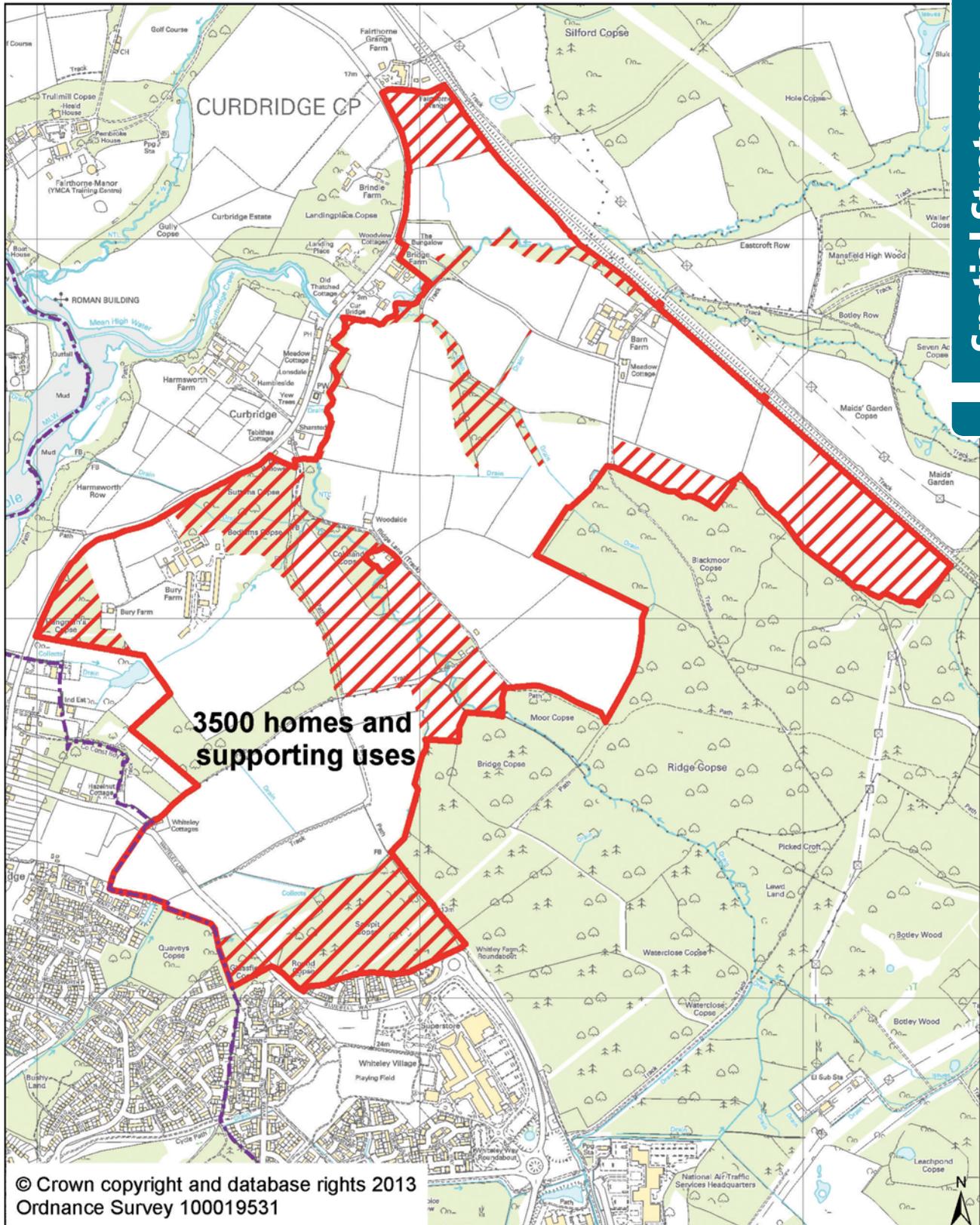
- protect and enhance the various environmentally sensitive areas within and around the site, avoiding harmful effects or providing mitigation as necessary. This will include any measures as necessary to mitigate the impact of noise and light pollution on the adjoining areas. The existing woodlands on and adjoining the site should be used to create attractive neighbourhoods with a distinctive sylvan character, improve biodiversity, provide recreational facilities including areas for children's play, and possibly be managed to as a source of renewable energy (woodfuel);
- provide for pre-school facilities, additional primary school places and a secondary school to accommodate the development, along with other physical and social infrastructure (as set out in the Infrastructure Delivery Summary at Appendix E), including provision, as required, for primary health care in the locality to serve the new community;
- provide a comprehensive assessment of existing access difficulties affecting Whiteley, agree solutions prior to planning permission being granted, and incorporate specific proposals to ensure that these are implemented at an early stage of the development;
- undertake a full Transport Assessment to ensure that the package of mitigation measures are incorporated into the scheme, including pedestrian and cycle links, a public transport strategy and any off-site contributions as deemed necessary;
- complete Whiteley Way at an early stage of development, in an environmentally sensitive manner which does not cause undue severance for the new community or encourage traffic from adjoining areas to use the new route to gain access to the strategic road network;
- provide measures to ensure that smarter transport choices are made to achieve a modal shift which minimises car usage, manages the impact of private cars on the highway network, and implements measures necessary to accommodate additional traffic, to include improvements to junction 9 of the M27 to be agreed with the relevant highway authorities. These should improve Whiteley's level

of self containment and make a significant contribution towards reducing commuting levels;

- **avoid harmful impacts on water resources, given the proximity of the site to European sites of nature conservation interest. The development should provide a fully integrated Sustainable Drainage System to mitigate against any potential flood risk and apply a flood risk sequential approach to development across the site;**
- **undertake a full assessment of the impact on habitats and bio-diversity (especially those of national and international importance such as the River Hamble and the Solent) of development both on site and in combination with other nearby sites;**
- **include a Green Infrastructure Strategy which sets out measures to avoid harmful impacts and mitigate the local and wider impacts of the development, including their phasing and long-term management. The strategy will also need to include any off-site measures required to mitigate harmful impacts on European sites;**
- **assess the potential for prior extraction of minerals resources before development commences.**

- 5.24 Proposals for the development of this site are being prepared, with a number of technical studies completed and various community engagement exercises undertaken, prior to the submission of a planning application.
- 5.25 The housing trajectory set out in Appendix F expects that this site will start to deliver housing in 2015/16 and that this will continue over a 15 year period, rising to about 300 dwellings per year at the peak of development. If at some point in the future it becomes clear that the site is failing to deliver the level of housing proposed, the implications for the Council's ability to ensure adequate housing land supply across the District will be assessed. It may be that other sources of supply can maintain adequate housing provision or it may also be necessary to bring forward additional sites for housing purposes in accordance with the development strategy established in this Plan. This will be undertaken through the production of Local Plan Part 2 or subsequent reviews.
- 5.26 The schedule at Appendix E summarises the infrastructure requirements for this large site, including expected funding sources and timescale for provision (these may be subject to change or updating over time). This site will require a range of transport related infrastructure as specified in the policy including new roads/junctions to serve the development and off-site highway improvements to mitigate the traffic impacts, to be determined in detail through a full transport assessment. Footpaths and cycle routes will also be required to provide pedestrian and cycle access and integrate with adjoining areas. Land should be laid out for open space, recreation and green infrastructure and can help contribute to the measures that will be needed to avoid and mitigate the impacts of development on nearby nature conservation sites. Two local centres will be needed given the size and shape of the site, which should include small-scale shops, workspace, a community building, education and health facilities. Due to shortfalls in both primary and secondary education locally these facilities should be brought forward at the earliest opportunity. There is a need for a new household waste recycling centre in the area which the development should contribute towards, either by providing a site if appropriate, or through a financial contribution.
- 5.27 Infrastructure and facilities will be provided through partnerships between the developer and the various service providers at particular stages of the development, as specified in the planning conditions and obligations set when planning consent is granted.

Map 7 – SH3: Strategic Allocation – North Whiteley



Key:

-  Winchester District Boundary
-  North Whiteley Site Boundary
-  Green Infrastructure



Strategic Development Area - North of Fareham

- 5.28 The Strategic Development Area (SDA) to be located to the North of Fareham, as proposed by the South East Plan (Policy SH.2) and adopted Fareham Core Strategy, will comprise 6,500 – 7,500 new homes. This SDA will be focused towards the City of Portsmouth and help deliver the strategic growth required in the South Hampshire sub-region. The South East Plan indicates that this SDA will be located within Fareham Borough and the Fareham Borough Core Strategy confirms this, including areas of open space, green infrastructure and green buffers to be incorporated within the layout.
- 5.29 Although none of the built element of the SDA will be within Winchester District, the SDA is a strategic issue which the Winchester District Local Plan Part 1 - Core Strategy needs to address. The South East Plan and the Fareham Core Strategy require that green buffers are provided to ensure that the SDA does not coalesce with Wickham or Knowle. Some of the land involved will be within Fareham Borough, and the City Council would encourage its location adjoining areas of new green infrastructure, so as to reinforce the buffer between the SDA and Knowle and Wickham. It is also necessary for this Plan to define the general extent of open land within Winchester District which should be retained as a gap between the SDA and these settlements. It may be possible to accommodate some natural green infrastructure on land within Winchester District, provided it does not include buildings and maintains the open and rural character of the land and enables its long-term management to be secured. The overriding requirement is to retain the open rural nature of this land and to prevent changes which would urbanise its undeveloped character¹⁹. The uses and management of the area must help to secure an effective, viable and long-term gap between the SDA and the separate settlements of Knowle and Wickham.
- 5.30 Although the Area Action Plan for the SDA will only cover land within Fareham Borough, the City Council will work closely with the Borough Council to plan for and deliver the SDA, particularly elements that affect the open land within Winchester District. Policy SH4 below sets out the planning framework for the areas within Winchester District and there may be a need for a Supplementary Planning Document for this land in the future.

Policy SH4 - North Fareham SDA

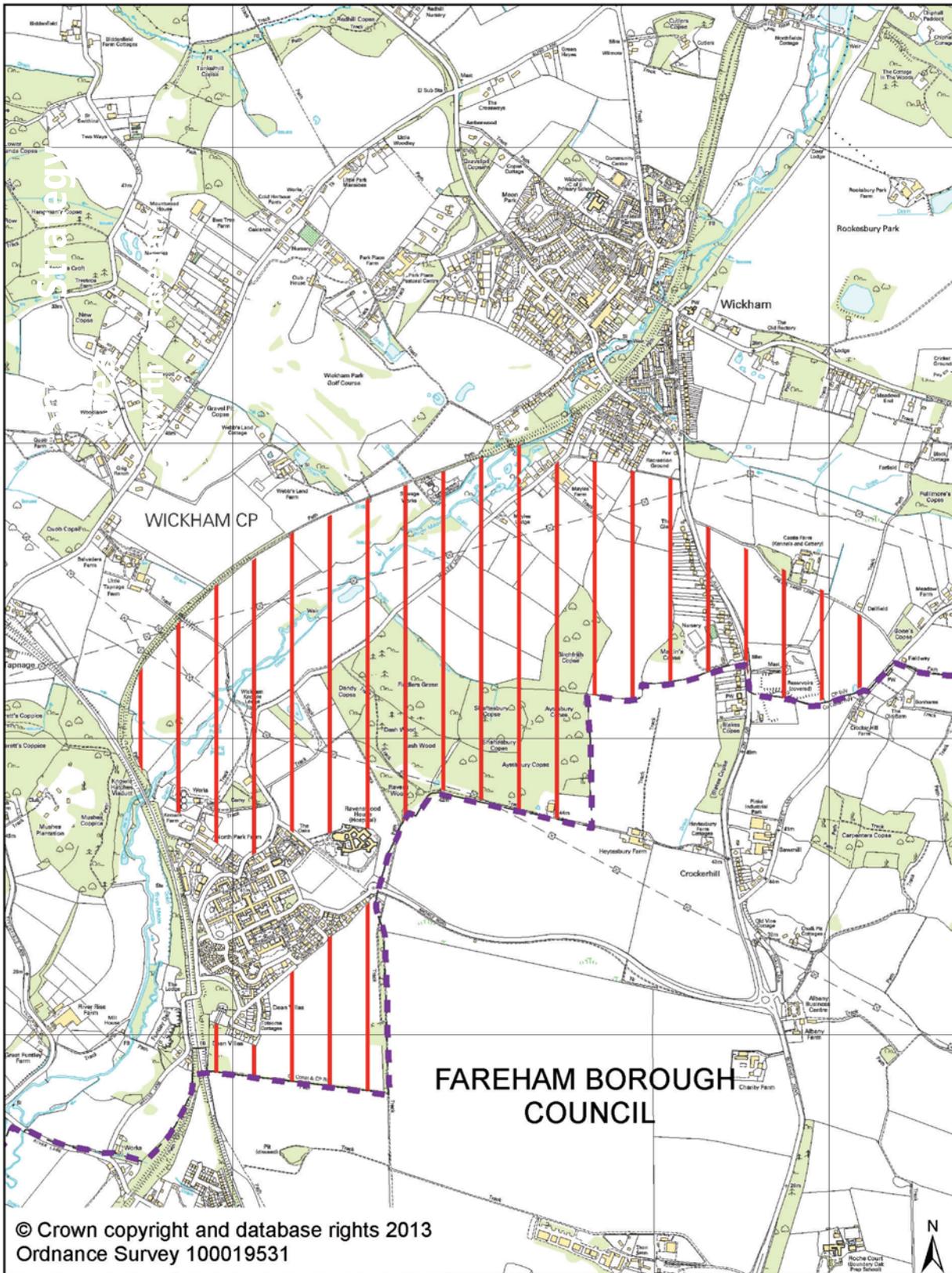
The City Council will cooperate with Fareham Borough Council to help develop a Strategic Development Area of between 6,500 - 7,500 dwellings together with supporting uses, centred immediately to the north of Fareham.

Land within Winchester District (as shown on the plan below) will form part of the open areas, required by the South East Plan, to ensure separation between the SDA and the existing settlements of Knowle and Wickham. The open and undeveloped rural character of this land will be retained through the application of Policy CP18 - Gaps.

- 5.31 This policy aims to assist the implementation of the Strategic Development Area and Fareham Borough Council is currently preparing an Area Action Plan.

¹⁹ Fareham SDA Site Assessments WCC - 2009

Map 8 – SH4: North Fareham SDA



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 Ordnance Survey 100019531

Key

- | | Settlement Gap
- - - District Boundary

0 250 500 Metres

Spatial Strategy - Market Towns and Rural Area



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6 Spatial Strategy - Market Towns and Rural Area

Spatial Strategy Market Towns and Rural Area

- 6.1 This spatial area includes the 50 or so smaller settlements within the District, which range from market towns of a few thousand population to small hamlets of a few dwellings originally serving the agricultural industry. It includes that part of the South Downs National Park that is within Winchester District. The Local Planning Authorities have a duty to seek to foster the economic and social well being of the local communities within the National Park, and must meet the purposes of the National Park, which are:
- to conserve and enhance the natural beauty, wildlife and cultural heritage of the area;
 - to promote opportunities for the understanding and enjoyment of the special qualities of the National Park by the public.
- 6.2 Government guidance advises that in rural areas housing should be located where it will enhance or maintain the vitality of rural communities and that policies should promote sustainable economic growth through diversification and well designed new buildings that respect the character of villages and the countryside. Therefore, in this spatial area most new development should be focused in or near to local service centres, with some limited development in other smaller rural settlements to meet local community and employment needs. Small communities should not be regarded as unsustainable simply because of their size or location but significant development should not be directed to settlements which are remote from, or have poor public transport links to, the services residents need. This philosophy lies at the heart of the market towns and rural areas strategy.
- 6.3 Community engagement throughout the preparation of the Core Strategy has emphasised the importance of maintaining rural character and retaining individual settlement identity. But small scale, appropriate development may be allowed, not only to support the retention of services but to provide new opportunities to meet local community needs.
- 6.4 The vision for this spatial area reflects these aspirations:-
- The vision for the market towns and rural area is to support development that serves local needs in the most accessible and sustainable locations, promotes the vitality and viability of all communities, and maintains their rural character and individual settlement identity.*
- 6.5 The Council's Economic Strategy²⁰ and Retail Study²¹ have both identified specific needs in relation to this spatial area. Retail provision varies from fully functional centres in the market towns and some of the larger villages, to individual shops in the more rural settlements. The updated retail study suggests that retail needs in the short to medium term will be met by existing commitments, particularly at Bishops Waltham. There is not expected to be a need for further floorspace growth until the longer term (post 2021), with the updated study recommending that some 1,000 sq. m. (net) could be needed by 2031. However, these long-term projections need to be treated with some caution and it will be necessary to undertake further assessments of future retail growth before any retail allocations are made in the Local Plan Part 2.

²⁰ Winchester District Economic Strategy 2010 – 2020 – WCC/WDSP

²¹ Retail and Town Centre Uses Study 2012 - NLP



- 6.6 New Alresford, Bishops Waltham and Wickham are identified as 'district centres' and have potential to deliver additional retail/leisure floorspace. However, given the modest and long-term nature of the floorspace needs, provision should be limited mainly to expansion for more local shops and any significant development (over 1,000 sq. m. net) should normally be directed to Winchester Town. In order to protect the centres outside Winchester Town, schemes over 500 sq. m. (gross) outside defined centres should be subject to an assessment of their impact on existing centres.
- 6.7 The economic strategy identifies a number of success factors for this spatial area including supporting diversification, buying local, and sharing premises. There is also a higher incidence of home working in this area. Eight key issues are identified in the economic strategy, from the need to manage woodlands effectively, to ensuring that sufficient tourist accommodation and attractions are available of the right quality to maximise this sector of the economy, to understanding the demands for bio-fuels and the processes involved in their production and the cost of rural housing compared to the level of rural wages. In addition, access to services and public transport and the need for both communications and broadband services that allow businesses to thrive in more remote locations are key issues. These issues are often interrelated, particularly with access to services and jobs and the cost of rural housing.
- 6.8 The recent economic assessment²² acknowledges that this area will be affected by the loss of jobs in public administration, but also that there are opportunities for growth in the business services, transport and communications sectors. These may arise partly due to the presence of one or two large employers in this part of the District. Whilst the rural nature of this spatial area may be seen as a constraint, there are numerous opportunities to address local needs and maximise attractive rural settings. Tourism, local food production and niche markets all offer opportunities for the local economy to be more resilient to wider changes.
- 6.9 The majority of housing requirements for the District will be met in the urban areas of South Hampshire and Winchester Town. Within the Market Towns and Rural Areas the aim is to identify and meet local housing needs within the settlements in which they arise. Some settlements have an ageing population and those in an attractive setting with a school are often popular with in-migrants. The key objective is to ensure that the right amount and type of development occurs, so that existing communities can remain viable, with access to the services they need.
- 6.10 The vision will be delivered through the application of the following rural development strategy and supporting policies. This strategy has been compiled following an assessment of a package of measures including population, access to public transport and the provision of services and facilities (shopping facilities, health, education, community uses and employment opportunities). In addition, all settlements have been assessed as to how well they relate to each other, and the interdependencies between them.²³

Policy MTRA1 - Development Strategy Market Towns and Rural Area

The spatial planning vision for the Market Towns and Rural Area will be achieved through:-

- identifying and providing for the needs of each settlement, to fulfil its needs relative to its role and function;
- the provision of new homes to meet the local housing needs of the settlements in this spatial area. A range of housing types, sizes and tenures, including affordable housing, should be provided to meet a

²² Review of Employment Prospects etc DTZ 2011

²³ Rural development Strategy Background Paper 2010 WCC

range of requirements, including those of older persons and people with disabilities and support needs to ensure social inclusion;

- retention or redevelopment of existing employment land and premises, and development of new sites or buildings, to provide and improve local employment opportunities for both existing and new businesses and to support entrepreneurship;
- the retention and improvement of rural shops and community facilities, including expansion at an appropriate scale in keeping with the location and the community they serve and their role in the hierarchy of retail centres;
- development proposals which maintain and enhance important local character and built or natural features and retain settlement identity.
- development should be of an appropriate scale so as not to exceed the capacity of existing services and infrastructure or should be accompanied by any required improvements to physical and community infrastructure provision, including rural transport initiatives and communications technology.

- 6.11 This policy and the following policies in this section (MTRA2, MTRA3, MTRA4 and MTRA5) will be delivered through a combination of proposals coming forward through the development management process and, where necessary, the allocation of sites for development through Local Plan Part 2 or through Neighbourhood Plans, in accordance with the above strategy and other policies in this Plan.
- 6.12 In terms of infrastructure provision the scale of development anticipated is not generally reliant on the funding of specific elements of infrastructure. However, individual development proposals which are brought forward through site allocations or the development management process may require specific items of infrastructure or facilities and these will be identified and secured through the relevant planning application or allocation processes.
- 6.13 The following policy (MTRA2) applies to the larger market towns and smaller local centres. These have varying needs and capacity for some growth, which should be at a scale to reflect their role and characteristics. The strategy is that each of these settlements should meet its own needs for housing and employment and community services and should continue to function as a service centre for smaller neighbouring communities. The remainder of settlements within the District, including those that lie within the South Downs National Park, will be subject to an approach to development to allow the flexibility to address their local needs, but development which does not meet local needs is unlikely to be supported.
- 6.14 Local needs and aspirations can be identified through a range of Community Planning tools including Parish Plans and Neighbourhood Plans. Neighbourhood Plans in particular provide communities with the ability to allocate sites for development following the strategy expressed in this Plan.

Market Towns and Larger Villages

- 6.15 The two main settlements in the Market Towns and Rural Area are New Alresford and Bishops Waltham, which both have higher levels of population, service provision and connections with surrounding communities. Not only do they generate a range of development needs, but they also have more opportunities for these to be delivered.

- 6.16 Both Bishops Waltham and New Alresford are situated in 'gateway' locations to the South Downs National Park and are keen to exploit the tourism and other benefits that this opportunity provides. They also acknowledge that they act as service centres for a wider rural population providing a number of key facilities such as medical provision, shops, libraries, education and sports facilities.
- 6.17 Colden Common, Denmead, Kings Worthy, Swanmore, Waltham Chase, and Wickham each have quite different characteristics, but all act as a focal point for their own communities and sometimes smaller surrounding villages.
- 6.18 All these local communities wish to maintain and improve local facilities, including public transport. They acknowledge the importance of providing for local housing needs, especially for affordable housing and older persons' housing, with some limited growth for economic purposes, particularly for new 'start-ups' and to address the changing requirements of businesses. They all recognise that they have a strong community identity, but at the same time are nervous about the threats they perceive to their particular character, through inappropriate development. In addition, some settlements are concerned about the impact of adjacent major development, for example the Fareham SDA to the south of Wickham.
- 6.19 An assessment of their population, service provision and connections, together with how many surrounding smaller villages rely on them for specific services/facilities, indicates that these are sustainable locations appropriate for development to meet local needs, whilst protecting their individual identity. Some of these settlements may have more previously developed land available for development than others, and some abut the National Park or have defined Local Gaps.

Policy MTRA 2 - Market Towns and Larger Villages

The Local Planning Authority supports the evolution of the larger settlements in the Market Towns and Rural Area to maintain and improve their role and function and to meet a range of local development needs through :-

In Bishops Waltham and New Alresford, provision for about 500 new homes in each settlement and provision for about 250 new homes in each of the following settlements:- Colden Common, Denmead, Kings Worthy, Swanmore, Waltham Chase, and Wickham.

Economic and commercial growth will be supported to maintain and improve the shopping, service, tourism and employment roles of these settlements where consistent with their role in the hierarchy of retail centres. Proposals for new floorspace of 500 sq. m. or more outside defined centres will need to demonstrate that it would not have a harmful impact on the centre. There should be improvements to public transport provision, where possible, and development should be appropriate in scale and result in a more sustainable community by improving the balance between housing, employment and services. Existing facilities, services and employment provision should be retained or improved to serve the settlements and their catchment areas.

Housing, employment, retail and services should be accommodated through development and redevelopment opportunities within existing settlement boundaries in the first instance. Sites outside settlement boundaries will only be permitted where, following an assessment of capacity within the built-up area, they are shown to be needed, or to

meet a community need or realise local community aspirations identified through a Neighbourhood Plan or other process which demonstrates clear community support. Uses which are essential to the role and function of the settlement, or to maintaining the balance between housing, employment and services, may be relocated if they can be re-provided in a location which is as at least as suitable and accessible and if proposals for the re-use of vacated land and premises are also acceptable.

All new development should be appropriate in scale and design and conserve each settlement's identity, countryside setting, key historic characteristics and local features, particularly as identified in Village Design Statements, the District Landscape Assessment or other guidance. Development should protect areas designated for their local, national, or international importance, such as Gaps and the South Downs National Park.

- 6.20 This policy will be delivered through a combination of development within existing defined built-up areas and planned greenfield releases or other allocations, particularly where necessary to meet specific local housing and employment needs and wider community aspirations. The need for any greenfield sites will be assessed, and allocations undertaken as necessary, through Local Plan Part 2, the South Downs Local Plan or a Neighbourhood Plan/community plan, with existing settlement boundaries retained in the meantime.
- 6.21 Specific schemes will be delivered through the development management process and development in these locations will be required to be accompanied by the timely provision of infrastructure and, where possible and practical to do so, address existing deficiencies.

Other Settlements in the Market Towns and Rural Area

- 6.22 The remainder of the settlements in the Market Towns and Rural Area are very varied in terms of their size, character and level of service provision. Some have large populations but a poor level of service provision whilst others may have unusually good service provision for their size, often reflecting their historic importance. Many others are very modest both in terms of their population and the level of service provision. This is typical of a diverse rural area where there is a high degree of personal mobility and choice, which creates a complex pattern of settlement dependencies.
- 6.23 Although many of these settlements may be very small, and do not necessarily perform well on traditional 'sustainability' criteria, almost all acknowledged through community engagement the need for some new housing, often smaller, more affordable housing for older people. These settlements are particularly concerned about the impact of development on the character of their village and want development to contribute positively to their village, with a priority for the use of brownfield sites.
- 6.24 In addition to housing, some were supportive of small-scale business development and/or live-work units and the need to improve broadband for both domestic and commercial use. The value of local services is recognised and these need to be retained or improved wherever possible.
- 6.25 The diversity of settlements means that some can accommodate more change than others, and the following development strategy reflects this. In villages which currently provide reasonable local facilities, such as schools or a local shop/Post Office, or which have a population that could support these facilities, the emphasis is to maintain the vitality of these communities.

In these villages a modest level of development may be allowed which could help, for example, to retain the local school or Post Office, provide affordable accommodation, or encourage more small businesses and opportunities for young people. In others the development requirements may relate to very specific concerns that have been identified in a community plan or Neighbourhood Plan.

- 6.26 A key challenge is to allow some development to respond to local needs where appropriate and justified, whilst ensuring that this spatial area retains its overriding characteristics of being countryside with dispersed settlements of varying sizes. It would not be appropriate or acceptable to allow uncontrolled or sporadic development to occur across the District. For this reason the following policy subdivides all the settlements into two categories – those with existing settlement boundaries and those without. The intention is that these boundaries are retained in their existing form, but where a community wishes to review its settlement boundary through the preparation of a future development plan document or Neighbourhood Plan this will be supported. The purpose is to ensure that change is possible but through a controlled and considered process.
- 6.27 A substantial number of the settlements that lie within the rural part of the District are also within the South Downs National Park, where development proposals will be required to comply with National Park purposes, to conserve and enhance the natural beauty, wildlife and cultural heritage of the area and to promote opportunities for the understanding and enjoyment of the special qualities of the Park by the public. It is also a duty to seek to foster the economic and social well-being of the local communities within the National Park. It will be necessary for development in these settlements to respect this designation which may limit the scope for development (see also policy CP19).
- 6.28 There may also be opportunities for sites to be brought forward as ‘exception sites’, to allow small scale rural affordable housing schemes to be permitted on sites where market housing would not be permitted. Such sites specifically respond to demonstrable local affordable housing needs and are covered elsewhere in this Plan (see policy CP4)
- 6.29 The following policy identifies for clarity which settlements may be considered suitable for development/redevelopment opportunities and potentially for proportionate greenfield releases, whereas in others, due to their size and nature, there is a more restrictive approach.

Policy MTRA 3 - Other Settlements in the Market Towns and Rural Area

Within those settlements in the Market Towns and Rural Area listed below the purpose of development should be to meet local needs through development, commensurate with their size, character and function:

- within the defined boundaries of the following settlements development and redevelopment opportunities will be supported -
Cheriton, Compton Down, Corhampton, Droxford, Hambledon, Hursley, Itchen Abbas (part), Knowle, Littleton, Micheldever, Micheldever Station, Old Alresford, Otterbourne, South Wonston, Southdown, Southwick, Sparsholt, Sutton Scotney, Twyford, West Meon.
- within the following settlements, which have no clearly defined settlement boundary, development and redevelopment that consists

of infilling of a small site within a continuously developed road frontage may be supported, where this would be of a form compatible with the character of the village and not involve the loss of important gaps between developed areas -

Abbots Worthy, Avington, Beauworth, Beeches Hill, Bighton, Bishops Sutton, Bramdean, Chilcomb, Compton-Street, Crawley, Curbridge, Curdridge, Durley, Durley Street, East Stratton, Easton, Exton, Gundleton, Headbourne Worthy (part), Hundred Acres, Itchen Stoke, Kilmeston, Lower Upham, Martyr Worthy, Meonstoke, New Cheriton/Hinton Marsh, Newtown, North Boarhunt, Northbrook, Northington and Swarraton, Itchen Abbas (part), Otterbourne Hill, Ovington, Owslebury, Shawford, Shedfield, Shirrell Heath, Soberton, Soberton Heath, Stoke Charity, Tichborne, Upham, Warnford, Wonston, Woodmancott.

Other development proposals may be supported to reinforce a settlement's role and function, to meet a community need or to realise local community aspirations. These should be identified through a Neighbourhood Plan or process which demonstrates clear community support.

All new development should be appropriate in scale and design and conserve each settlement's identity, countryside setting, key historic characteristics and local features, particularly as identified in Village Design Statements, the District Landscape Assessment or other guidance. Development should protect areas designated for their local, national, or international importance, such as Gaps and the South Downs National Park.

The Countryside

- 6.30 Very small communities which are no more than a collection of houses or isolated dwellings are not covered by the above policies and are considered to be within the wider countryside. Development will be limited to that which has an essential need to be located in the countryside. This may include development which is necessary for agricultural, horticultural or forestry purposes, and certain types of open recreational uses which require a countryside location.
- 6.31 In addition, there are a number of existing buildings within the countryside of the District, some of which are no longer in use and others which are occupied by existing users or businesses which may need to expand. These existing structures are often an accepted part of the landscape and it is considered appropriate to provide for them to be used productively, through re-use, or for them to be redeveloped.

Policy MTRA 4 - Development in the Countryside

In the countryside, defined as land outside the built-up areas of Winchester, Whiteley and Waterlooville and the settlements covered by MTRA 2 and 3 above, the Local Planning Authority will only permit the following types of development:

- development which has an operational need for a countryside location, such as for agriculture, horticulture or forestry; or
- proposals for the reuse of existing rural buildings for employment, tourist accommodation, community use or affordable housing (to meet demonstrable local housing needs). Buildings should be of permanent construction and capable of use without major reconstruction; or
- expansion or redevelopment of existing buildings to facilitate the expansion on-site of established businesses or to meet an operational need, provided development is proportionate to the nature and scale of the site, its setting and countryside location; or
- small scale sites for low key tourist accommodation appropriate to the site, location and the setting.

Development proposed in accordance with this policy should not cause harm to the character and landscape of the area or neighbouring uses, or create inappropriate noise/light and traffic generation.

- 6.32 Across the District there are a number of large commercial and educational/training establishments set in the wider countryside: IBM (Hursley), Defence establishments (Winchester, Worthy Down and Southwick), Sparsholt College (Sparsholt), Marwell Wildlife (Colden Common), and Arqiva (Crawley). These establishments are primarily involved in business and training activities which support the District's economy and it is important that they can continue to thrive. They also employ large numbers of people with a range of skills that the Council wishes to retain locally.
- 6.33 Increasingly these organisations are looking to meet modern business needs through adaptation and expansion of their existing buildings. Often these establishments occupy former country estates outside of any defined settlement, where development would normally be constrained. Marwell Wildlife (Colden Common) also lies within the South Downs National Park. However, the City Council and the NPA recognises the value of these organisations and their contribution to the local economy and wish to work with them to plan for their future needs.

Policy MTRA 5 - Major Commercial and Educational Establishments in the Countryside

The Local Planning Authority will support the retention and development of major commercial and educational establishments which occupy rural locations in the District, where this will help them continue to contribute to the District's economic prosperity. Because of their sensitive rural locations, masterplans should be prepared prior to development which identify the site opportunities and constraints, promote sensitive land and building stewardship, promote sustainable development, and maximise sustainable transport opportunities, whilst limiting impacts on the surrounding environment and communities.